



**\*Call to Worship****Kathy Meier**

ONE: Christ Jesus, friend of the poor, the meek and the merciful, has been  
given all glory in this world and in the world that is to come.

**ALL: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth, serve  
the Lord with gladness!**

ONE: God has placed everything under Christ's wounded feet, anointed the one  
who wore a crown of thorns, as King of our hearts and Lord of our lives.

**ALL: Enter his gates with thanksgiving, come into his courts with  
praise. Let us praise the Lord!**

*written by Bruce Prewer***\*Opening Hymn      All Creatures of our God and King      #22, vs. 1-3**

**1** All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing  
Alleluia, Alleluia! O burning sun with golden beam,  
O silver moon with softer gleam:

***[Refrain]*****O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**2** O rushing wind with voice so strong, you clouds that sail in heav'n along,  
O praise God, Alleluia! O rising morn, in praise rejoice,  
you lights of evening find a voice: ***[Refrain]***

**3** O flowing water, pure and clear, make music for your God to hear,  
Alleluia, Alleluia! O blazing fire who lights the night,  
providing warmth, enhancing sight. ***[Refrain]***

**Invitation to Generosity**

Invitation

**Kathy Meier**

Offertory

**Music:      "The Mercy of God is an Ocean Divine"      Sarah Park**  
*[by R. K. Carter]*

**\*Response      Accept, O God, The Gifts We Bring      #379, 2 lines**  
Accept, O God, the gifts we bring of spirit and of clay,  
transform them into blessings on those we serve today.

Offering Prayer

**Kathy Meier**

**Children's Moment****Rev. Chad Delaney**

- King of Kings and Lord of Lords...Glory Hallelujah!  
Jesus, the prince of peace...Glory! Hallelujah!

Loving God,

We ask for Your blessing on all the children, that they may experience love and unity in their lives. Help them to feel connected to each other and to You, knowing that they are part of a larger family of faith. Teach them the value of working together, sharing their gifts and talents, and supporting one another in times of need. Fill their hearts with love, compassion, and understanding, so they may build strong, healthy relationships with those around them. May they find joy in community and a sense of belonging in Your church. Guide them in the ways of peace and reconciliation, helping them to be peacemakers in a world that often feels divided. Let Your love be the foundation of their lives, and may they always know they are cherished and valued by You. Amen.

**Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer****Rev. Chad Delaney**

God of all Life, we pray today that your KINGDOM might come on earth as it is in heaven.

Into places of conflict and violence  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the hearts of politicians and leaders  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the hearts of ones bereaved by war and those in despair  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the hearts of ones made hungry and the homeless  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the hearts of ones who are ill or fearful  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the hearts of those who has been abused and pressed down  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the hearts of those who are addicted and held captive  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the hearts of the tired and lonely  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the heart of one we wish to pray for...  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Into the heart of our church and world.  
**may Your Kingdom come.**

Father and Mother of us all,  
 We pray that you would rule within our worship and our life together as your people. We believe that Christ reigns over our work in the world and within our families, our church, and community.  
 Help us bear the fruit of your love in what we do each and every day—  
 in how we make decisions about how we give our time and resources,  
 in how we offer our hands and direct our feet,  
 In how we engage with our friends and our enemies,  
 in how we speak and in how we think,  
 in how we rest and in how we do the work of ministry...  
 God Reign in our lives, may your Kingdom truly come within and through us.

God of Grace, unite us now in your Spirit as we pray the prayer...

## **Communion**

Meditation

**Cathy Hakala-Ausperk**

**Communion Hymn**

**Take our Bread**

**#413, vs. 1-2**

*[Refrain]*

*Take our bread, we ask you; take our hearts, we love you.*

*Take our lives, O Father, we are yours, we are yours.*

**1** Yours as we stand at the table you set;

yours as we eat the bread our hearts can't forget.

We are the sign of your life with us yet,

we are yours, we are yours. *[Refrain]*

**2** Your holy people standing washed in your blood,  
 Spirit-filled yet hungry we await your food.  
 We are poor, but we've brought ourselves  
 the best that we could; we are yours, we are yours. *[Refrain]*

Prayer

**Sally Hoffman**

Words of Institution

**Music: "Jesus Shed his Blood for Me"**

**Sarah Park**

*[by W. H. Doane]*

## **Scripture**

### **2 Samuel 5:1-10**

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, 'Look, we are your bone and flesh. <sup>2</sup>For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The Lord said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel.' <sup>3</sup>So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel. <sup>4</sup>David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for forty years. <sup>5</sup>At Hebron he reigned over Judah for seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years. <sup>6</sup>The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, 'You will not come in here, even the blind and the lame will turn you back'—thinking, 'David cannot come in here.' <sup>7</sup>Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David. <sup>8</sup>David had said on that day, 'Whoever wishes to strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates.' Therefore it is said, 'The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.' <sup>9</sup>David occupied the stronghold, and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inwards. <sup>10</sup>And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.

## **Sermon**

### **Rejecting God**

**Rev. Chad Delaney**

Rejecting God

One of my favorite moments in the classic Christmas movie "A Christmas Story" is when Ralphie gets excited about joining the Little Orphan Annie Secret

Society. With his membership, he receives a secret decoder pin, allowing him to decode a special radio broadcast. After waiting eagerly and working hard to reach this point, he finally decodes the message, only to be let down when it turns out to be an Ovaltine ad urging, "Be sure to drink your Ovaltine." You feel for him in that moment! Ralphie learned something discouraging about people and the world in those moments.

We've all had those times when we've felt misled or let down. Institutions, businesses...and sometimes with family or someone we've looked up to. We get our hopes up and expectations high and they get smashed. It's almost a rite of passage..."Welcome to being a human being! Sooner or later you will be let down" Makes for a kind of bitter and cynical way to view life and the people around us.

Today's passage highlights the risk of exalting our leaders. The ancient Hebrews lived in a vulnerable time always seeking stability and security in a world filled with war and "our god vs. your god" mentality. . People wanted a leader that their god favored who would bring them victory. Israel was no different. They wanted a King who would crush their enemies and bring them glory. But for the record...The Prophet Samuel was skeptical. Way back in 1 Samuel we learn that he thought the whole having a "king-thing" was overrated...and God did too. But the people didn't care...they wanted a King.

In 1 Samuel 10:17-19 God sends Samuel to say to the people: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, "I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you." But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses; and you have said, "No! but set a king over us."

God saw their desire for a King as rejection. Why? Because God was their Ruler and Sustainer. Their hope and salvation. God said “I’m right here and can direct you in all the ways you must go.” But the people insisted on a king, complained, and protested until God said, “FINE, whatever I’ll give you a King.”

First they got King Saul who was a disaster and just couldn’t lead effectively. And then came the young upstart - - King David. Now, most of us are familiar with all his heroic stuff. His soothing King Saul's headache with his harp, his victory over Goliath with a slingshot, and all his many contributions to poetry, songs, and worship in the Psalms.

But David also had his issues. Though our passage celebrates King David, but for our modern ears verses 6-8 are hard to read. So much so that the Revised Common Lectionary asks preachers to leave that part out. These are his first actions as King.

"The king marched to Jerusalem...took the stronghold...He said, ‘Whoever wishes to strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates.’

Yikes. He cut off their water supply and destroyed the Jebusites...even the lame and blind. Soon after this, he committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed in battle. His son Absalom despised him and sought to overthrow him. David disobeyed God's instructions regarding the temple's construction. He was often overconfident, prideful, and ruthless. But he also had moments of extraordinary faithfulness and devotion. And —unlike most of our modern-day leaders—at least David would own up to his wrongs, confess, and not hide from his shortcomings.

Overall it's such a mixed bag. Saint and Sinner. However, If we had a rosy, heroic picture of David...we might feel a little misled and disappointed. BUT...I don't think hiding his "shadow" side is the answer either.

To me, all of this highlights the Prophet Samuel's message to God's people way back in 1 Samuel. To idolize and heroize a human being...is to reject God. It's actually a form of idolatry and must be approached carefully and humbly. This is not an unfamiliar message in scripture.

Psalm 146 says, "Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing."

Jeremiah 17:5 says, 'Cursed is the one who trusts in humans, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. That person will be like a bush in the wastelands'

Yet, of course, it still happened thousands of years ago...and YES...it still happens today.

Why is it that we crave leaders and place our hope and trust in them--especially in politics? We ignore their mistakes and focus only on the victories. We place fair and unfair expectations on them. Believe true and false things about them. Some leaders embrace their role and offer servant leadership. Some exploit and take advantage of their followers. Most never admit a mistake. Some leave us disappointed, like holding an Ovaltine ad, while others make us proud to be a human being.



As the political season heats up here in the US, let's keep a faithful perspective. Idolatry is rampant. Hatred, anger, and cults of personality are thriving. People stake their identities on particular candidates or parties. When we exalt a leader and make them an idol, we reject God.

We forget that God is the sustainer and ultimately our source of identity and hope. We forget that God calls EACH of us to contribute to Christ's reign in the world--not to outsource goodness to our political leaders. When we lose sight of this, we can forget our role as God's people.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said: "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. The church must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."

Our leaders are important and make significant societal impacts...we must choose them wisely, hold them accountable, and not turn them into idols. Most of all, let's remember our identity as followers of Jesus Christ---Loving God and neighbor, welcoming strangers, feeding the hungry, showing kindness, compassion, and justice. We are God's people not held the whims and workings of political parties and their leaders. Each of us are called to do the work of ministry no matter who is in the top seat.

Church Family, as we navigate our nation's challenges these next 4 months and beyond, let's remember who we are and whose we are. Let's resist bitterness and cynicism...but instead turn to the Lord. Let's engage in rigorous, respectful, and hopeful dialogue to share responsibility for life's biggest issues. Let's look for what brings us together rather than what tears us apart ! Let's speak truth to

power and bear the life of Jesus with our words and actions--to stand on the Promises of God with all our hearts, souls, and minds. May it be so. Amen.

**\*Closing Hymn**

**“Standing on the Promises”**

**#552, vs. 1, 4**

**1** Standing on the promises of Christ my King,  
through eternal ages let his praises ring;  
glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,  
standing on the promises of God.

***[Refrain:]***

**Standing, standing,  
standing on the promises of God my Savior;  
standing, standing,  
I'm standing on the promises of God.**

**4** Standing on the promises I cannot fall,  
list'ning every moment to the Spirit's call,  
resting in my Savior as my all in all,  
standing on the promises of God. *[Refrain]*

**Benediction**

**Rev. Chad Delaney**

**In Christ we are made whole. In Christ we are called to be love in the world.**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. As we leave this place, may we go with Christ as the Lord of our lives, guiding our steps and lighting our path. May the love of Christ lead us and overflow into the world around us.

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord. And may God's blessings be upon you, now and always. Amen

**Postlude**

**“We are Bound for Canaan Land”**

**Sarah Park**

*[by P.P.Bilhorn]*