

Worship Service for June 28th, 2020

It's been a good week. Last Sunday on Father's day I was able to spend some time with family. Also the part finally came for the lawn mower and so I was able to cut the grass but much to the chagrin of my daughter I cancelled my order for a couple of goats. This week we continue our series on the Lord's Prayer so if you haven't already you may want to watch Part 1 of the series that I did last week. So let us begin today's service with prayer.

Gathering Prayer

On this second Sunday of summer, we gather to worship you O God,
We have come seeking comfort, inspiration, community and insight.
We have come to open ourselves to your presence in our midst.
We have come to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and to ask for your help in our learning and our growing.
As You have gathered us into a community of care and worship.
May your power preserve us.
May your wisdom instruct us.
May your hand protect us.
May your way direct us.
May Christ be in us, with us and over us,
this day and forever more. Amen

Our opening song is

"God our Father Let Your Kingdom Come:" by Sam Hargreaves, from Resound Worship's "Songs For Sunday"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvF38rVh-sY>

Scripture: Revelation 11:15-19,

¹⁵ The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said:

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever."

¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying:

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign."

¹⁸ The nations were angry, and your wrath has come.

The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your people who revere your name, both great and small—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.”

¹⁹ Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.

Meditation - Hallowed Be Thy Name... Thy Kingdom Come

Unlike the child who in Sunday school was asked to recite the Lord’s prayer it does not go Our Father who art in heaven, Harold be thy name – this week we will continue to explore our series on the Lord’s prayer

A retired vice-principal I knew told me of an experience in his school, where there was a girl who would come to class each morning ten minutes late. One morning he finally called her father. Soon the three of them were standing in the hallway discussing what should be done.

The father’s solution was simple. “I want you to know,” he said to the vice-principal, “that my daughter has my permission to come to school whenever she wants. If she is only ten minutes late, that should be lots good enough for you.” Then, turning to the daughter, he said, “If you have any more trouble with these people, just let me know.”

Rightful authority: that’s the question the three of them were struggling with. Can someone in authority expect obedience and respect from those he or she is responsible for? Respect for rightful

authority seems less common than it used to be.

A young mother proudly describes the antics of her four-year-old. “She likes to have her own way,” the mother says with a smile. “Of course, when she really crosses the line, we send her to her room and tell her she can only come out when she’s willing to do what we ask.”

“But, you know,” the mother continues, “she always gets her way in the end.”

Rightful authority: is there any such thing? Do certain people in the world have the rightful authority to direct the actions of others? I think that you would agree that this is a currently heated debate

Then there’s that other question: does God have rightful authority in his world? Is it true that God has a right to respect and obedience—or is it not?

Most people would likely answer no.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name....

“Hallow”—that old-fashioned-sounding word—means “to honour as holy.” To “hallow” God’s name means to offer him respect, in a very special way. In our day, it seems, it doesn’t happen very often.

In years gone by, most churches left their doors unlocked. No

one ever stole from them. No one ever went in and caused damage. Even thieves had respect for God. But things are now quite different. Now all churches that I know of keep their doors locked, some have installed security systems—and many have even been broken into.

Respect for God and for God's authority has all but disappeared. "Oh my God!" is now the standard expression of surprise. What used to be known as profanity is now standard English usage on prime time TV. Just try reading the comments section of things that are posted on social media. The misuse of God's name is commonplace, showing no respect at all—and no one says a word.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name....

What is "respect," anyway? "Respect" is a word that grants another person certain rights. Respect for a person in authority means those rights include the right to give you direction, but as we all understand that respect must be earned. Respect for God means recognizing that God—the Lord, the Ruler of all—also has the right to give you direction, and that he alone deserves our worship and our praise.

The old King James version of the Bible tells us that we should "fear" God. When I was a child in Sunday School, I learned that "fearing God" did not mean being afraid of him, but, rather, having reverence for him. So Psalm 111, in the King James

version, reads, “The fear (meaning, “reverence”) of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” [Psalm 111:10]. True wisdom begins with true respect for God.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name....

Remember what we learned last Sunday: our God is in heaven—Creator, Ruler, Lord over all. But he is also our Father who loves us and comes to us and names us as his children, and who longs for us—as brothers and sisters of each other—to also love him.

Now, what’s the first thing we’re to pray for, in this prayer that Jesus gives us? That God’s name would be hallowed. In other words, we’re praying, “God, may you be given the reverence and respect that you deserve.”

Why would Jesus ask us to pray that way? Because we live in a world where God is not offered reverence and respect. If the world honoured God already, these words would not be needed.

So we’re taught to pray, “*Hallowed be Thy name....*”

Suppose for just a moment that when we pray this prayer, it is actually answered. Not everywhere in the world, but at least somewhere. Maybe just in our little corner: in our neighbourhood, or in our office, or in the groups that we belong to. What changes when that happens?

Here’s what changes: the broken pieces of people’s lives begin coming back together. Whenever people recognize and respect God

for who he is, everything else begins falling into place as well.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name....

That is something we are called to pray for. But maybe we will pray that prayer—as we have prayed it for years—and not see the world change much at all. The world does not change easily.

But there is one place where change can always happen. It can happen right here—in God's church, among all of us who belong to his family. And as change happens among us here—as you and I hallow God's name, and give him the honour and reverence that he has a right to—the part of the world around us begins to change as well.

We should not expect the whole world to change. God gives people freedom to choose. Often, people choose not to hallow his name. Instead, they choose to ignore him, or disobey him—to do whatever they want to do. That's the way it has always been. We should not be surprised.

But change can come in our own hearts. That is always possible. Change can come in our own families and in our own homes. And whenever that happens, the change begins to spill over. Whenever that happens, the world begins to change in spite of itself.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come....

Who, any more, knows anything about kingdoms? Kings and kingdoms are the stuff of Game of Thrones or the Lord of the Rings, aren't they?—no more than that.

I think that most of us remember being taught the role of the monarchy in society or have at least watched "The Crown" and realize there was a time when the king was in charge of his kingdom. A good king would rule his kingdom wisely, a poor king selfishly. Either way, the king expected to be obeyed. To be a citizen of the kingdom meant doing what the king wanted you to do.

And, the Bible tells us, Jesus came preaching about the Kingdom of God.

For Jesus, however, the Kingdom of God was not a place you could point to on a map. Nor did that kingdom come with flags and marching armies. It came quietly, as a personal presence.

It also came with power: wherever Jesus went, sickness and suffering and death fled away. And it came with an invitation: "The kingdom of God is at hand!" says Jesus, as he begins his ministry. "Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!" [Mark 1:15].

It is an invitation that requires a response. A young man once came to Jesus with some deep and significant questions. As he was about to leave, Jesus said quietly, "You are not far from the

Kingdom of God" [Mark 12:34]. Not far—but still outside. "Not far" is not the same as "a part of." To enter the Kingdom requires a decision.

It takes a decision. No one ever forces you to enter. It is a free choice. It is what happens when you transfer the title deed of your life to the One who is the King. It happens whenever a person opens the door of his or her heart, and allows the King to be enthroned at its very centre.

Thy kingdom come....

We are to pray for the coming of the Kingdom. We are to pray that the whole world will choose to enter the Kingdom of God. We are commanded to pray that it will happen. Do you think it ever will?

Suppose that it did. Suppose the first law of the Kingdom—that we love our neighbour as we love ourselves—became the standard for the whole world. Suppose that everyone, everywhere, began to love one another, just as Jesus has loved us.

What would happen to war? What would happen to everyone who is hungry? What would happen to broken families, and child abuse, and poverty, and crime? Would we ever need to protest again?

If the Kingdom truly came, it would mean the end of the world as we have known it. It would mark the beginning of a world we

scarcely dare to dream of. Nothing would stay the same. Nothing at all. That is what Jesus commands us to pray for.

Will it ever happen?

The answer is yes, no, and maybe.

Yes: in the end, the Kingdom will come. That will happen because our God is the Lord, and he will have the final word. The Book of Revelation, at the very end of the Bible, gives us a picture of the way it will all turn out. We read part of that story a few minutes ago. Listen to it again, this time from the old King James version: “The kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” [Rev. 11:15]. Yes, the Kingdom will come. That is the end of the story. In God’s time, and by his decision, the Kingdom will come.

But—no, Scripture nowhere suggests that the whole world will ever freely choose the Kingdom of God. When the Kingdom comes, it will happen in spite of the choices the world makes and not because of them. If you doubt that, consider the evidence: new conflicts, new economic problems, new protests, new illnesses, new things to be afraid of.?

Yet—maybe. Maybe the Kingdom will come, in our time, in those little corners where we pray it in. Maybe it will come in our families, in our church, in our neighbourhood. Maybe it will.

And when that happens, it just might also happen that the part

of the world we live in will begin to wonder if there is a God worth knowing after all.

The Kingdom can come in that corner of the world where we have the right to extend the invitation.

That place is here, and that time is now. We serve a King who always keeps his word. And he is the one who invites us to pray.

Thy kingdom come....

Thanks be to God, so let us Pray

Pastoral Prayer

From the comfort of our homes we gather to worship. Whether through printed word, or through the gift of technology we are a community seeking connection with you the Divine.

In this time of racial injustice and unrest we pray that we might experience the grace and humbleness of your Son. Help us to humble ourselves, for the sake of our brothers and sisters. Lord, teach us to strive for your Kingdom. Give us your grace that we might always extend grace to others.

In this time of pandemic and calls for racial justice we pray that we might be like you O God a Divine Parent, loving beyond our comprehension. Through this love you birthed the universe, the vastness of galaxies and the preciousness of infants. Father God, teach us to embrace our siblings with the love that only a parent knows. And give us your patience to never give up on one another or the causes of justice in our world.

In this time fear and anxiety, Holy Spirit, commune with us. Equip us, strengthen us, convict us and encourage us toward becoming a more holy and complete church. We confess that we have pushed you aside, squelching your work within us because we are afraid of what a Spirit driven life will mean. We ask, Holy Spirit, that your power would be made known in your church and in your people. We pray that you would build the

beloved kingdom of God here in our midst.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Help us love one another as you have loved us
Help us feed the hungry as you have fed us in our time of need. Help us
comfort the mourning as you our loving parent comfort us. Help us heal the
sick and lift up the broken-hearted, as you, the great physician of body and
mind, have done for us. In confidence we pray the words that Jesus taught
us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily
bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass
against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For
thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Our closing Song is “The Lord’s Prayer” by Hillsong Worship.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCxqjEz5hJ4>

Please enjoy and have a Blessed Week, until we meet again.