

Worship for 27 September 2020
Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church

One: In the sight of Israel's ancestors God worked marvels in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.

ALL: God divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap.

One: In the daytime God led them with a cloud, and all night long with a fiery light.

ALL: God split rocks open in the wilderness, and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep.

One: God made streams come out of the rock, and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

ALL: We will not hide these miracles from our children; we will proclaim the glorious deeds of the Lord!

Hymn of Invitation – “O God, in a Mysterious Way”

O God, in a mysterious way great wonders you perform. You plant your footsteps in the sea and ride upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines of never-failing skill, you treasure up your bright designs and work your sovereign will.

O fearful saints, fresh courage take. The clouds you so much dread are big with mercy and shall break in blessings on your head.

Prayer of Confession

Holy and merciful God, in your presence we confess our failure to be what you created us to be. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love. By your loving mercy, help us to live in your light and abide in your ways, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Scripture – Exodus 17:1-7; Matthew 21:23-32 (see reverse)

Reflection – “Forgotten Miracles”

Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn of Thanksgiving – “Let All Things Now Living”

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving to God our Creator triumphantly raise; who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us, by guiding us on to the end of our days. God's banners are o'er us; pure light goes before us, a pillar of fire shining forth in the night: till shadows have vanished, all fearfulness banished, as forward we travel from light into light.

Announcements

Blessing

Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

Matthew 21:23-32

When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

When has doubt or uncertainty kept you from resting and acting in the belief you hold, and the knowledge you possess? How does the reminder of God's presence and teachings strengthen you to continue moving forward in faith?