

Worship for 7 November 2021
Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church

One: Come, people of God. Come, all of you, rich and poor, young and old.

ALL: God is the Creator of all.

One: Come now and worship our generous and faithful God.

ALL: God calls us to life and to share in all of God's abundance.

One: Come and worship and let us sing songs of joy and thanks.

ALL: We worship with our lives, with our hearts and our voices and our actions. Amen.

*Hymn of Invitation #317 – “In Christ There Is No East or West”

Prayer of Confession

God of favor, we have not been true to you. You have chosen the poor in the world, but we have dishonored them. You plead the cause of the afflicted, but we crush them. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have favored the rich and despised the poor. We have dismissed the needy with empty words. Soften our hearts and make straight our ways. Heal our unbelief and turn us back to You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture – Isaiah 58:6-9a; Matthew 25:31-46

Reflection – “Mission Possible!”

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.

Offering/Offertory

*Doxology #606

Affirmation of Faith

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

*Hymn of Thanksgiving #516 – “For the Bread Which You Have Broken”

Announcements & Blessing

- Today: We welcome Rev. Dr. Fred Holbrook who is leading us in worship today. He is the Interim General Presbyter and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the James. (More on the reverse).
- Nov. 14 & 21: Guest preacher, Ms. Shelly Barrick Parsons, will lead the congregation in worship.

Isaiah 58:6-9a

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus said: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

"Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Guest Minister

The Rev. Dr. Fred A. Holbrook, Interim General Presbyter and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of the James was graduated from Union Presbyterian Seminary with a D.Min. concentrating on ministry with young adults. He began with the POJ in December 2018 following interim pastorates in Lynchburg, VA and Overland Park, KS. Fred's earlier pastorates included Charlotte, NC and Fishersville, VA before serving as executive director of Massanetta Springs Conference Center. He and his wife, Laura, have done ministry together throughout their careers. Currently, she is the Director of Family Ministries and Congregational Care at First Presbyterian Church, Charlottesville. They have three adult children—Bekah and her husband, Jonny, and grandson, Avery, of Glen Allen; Philip and his wife, Erin, including three grandchildren, Liam, Claire, and Kellen of Charlottesville; and Mary Beth and her husband, Gurunath, of Austin, TX. Fred describes himself as a pastor/musician and loves playing 12-string guitar, singing, and playing the Great Highland Bagpipes!

#317 – “In Christ There Is No East or West”

1) In Christ there is no east or west, In him no south or north;
but one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide earth.

2) In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord close-binding humankind.

3) Join hands, disciples of the faith, whate'er your race may be.
All children of the living God are surely kin to me.

4) In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north.
All Christly souls are one in him throughout the whole wide earth

TEXT: John Oxenham, 1908; alt.; Public Domain
MUSIC: African-American spiritual; Jubilee Songs, 1884;
adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1940; Public Domain

#516 – “For the Bread Which You Have Broken”

1) For the bread which you have broken, for the wine which you have poured,
for the words which you have spoken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.

2) By this promise that you love us, by your gift of peace restored,
by your call to heaven above us, hallow all our lives, O Lord.

3) With the saints who now adore you seated at the heavenly board,
may the church still waiting for you keep love's tie unbroken, Lord.

4) In your service, Lord, defend us; in our hearts keep watch and ward;
in the world to which you send us let your kingdom come, O Lord.

TEXT: Louis FitzGerald Benson, 1924, alt.; Public Domain
MUSIC: V. Earle Copes, 1959; Public Domain

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Let us pray:

All: Loving God, through your goodness, we have this bread and cup to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. May we know your presence in the sharing of this bread, so that we know your touch in all bread, all matter. We celebrate the life that Jesus has shared among his community through the centuries, and shares with us now. Made one in Christ and one with each other, we offer these gifts, and with them ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice. Amen.

One: Among friends, gathered round a table, Jesus took bread ... [*Minister continues ...*] The gifts of God for the people of God.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE [From pews]

One: Let us give thanks together:

All: We offer you praise, dear God, and hearts lifted high, for in the communion of your love Christ comes close to us, and we come close to Christ. Therefore, with the whole realm of nature around us, with earth, sea and sky, we sing to you. And with our loved ones, on earth and in your heavenly host, with brothers and sisters around the world, we join in the song of your unending greatness. Amen.

Adapted from the Iona Abbey Community, Scotland