

There are some people who
are so much a part of us
they'll be with us no matter
what.

They are our solid ground, our
NORTH STAR and the small
clear voice in our hearts that
will be with us always.

New Covenant Presbyterian Church

July 4, 2021

Worship Service



1125 Jamison Corner Rd., Middletown, DE 19709

(302) 378-4446 www.newcov-church.org

The Worship of God

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome

Lay Leader: Jane Adams

Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Musical Prelude....



WHO is your NORTH STAR? Jesus Christ is a good place to start. He points us to where we are meant to go and lets us know what we are called to do. It is important to have a steady compass who will always point us in the right direction.

“Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.” Benjamin Franklin

For my own part, I sincerely esteem it (the Constitution) as a system which, without the finger of God, never could have been suggested and agreed upon by such a diversity of interests.”

- Alexander Hamilton, 1787 after the Constitutional Convention

A visitor from Holland was chatting with his American friend and jokingly explained the red, white and blue in the Netherlands’ flag. “Our flag symbolizes our taxes,” he said. “We get red when we talk about them, white when we get our tax bill, and blue after we pay them.” “That’s the same with us,” the American said. “Only we see stars too!”

Do you know what the 49-star American flag said to the 50-star American flag? Nothing. It just waved!

Preparing to Meet God

Call to Worship

L: Take off your shoes!

P: We are standing on holy ground.

L: Shake the dust off of your feet.

P: We are ready to start afresh.

L: Let us worship God and receive Christ’s teachings, that we may be renewed and strengthened to share God’s love with the world.

*Hymn of Praise

For the Beauty of the Earth

#473

*For the beauty of the earth,
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies: **Refrain***

**Refrain: Lord of all, to thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.**

*For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild: **Refrain***

*For thyself, best gift divine
To the world so freely given;
For that great, great love of thine,
Peace on earth and joy in heaven: **Refrain***

Prayer of Confession

Almighty and compassionate God, we come before you this morning to praise you for the freedoms that we as a nation enjoy. You have granted us life and liberty, and because of your loving-kindness, we have the freedom to own property and pursue our personal welfare.

You have been gracious to us in spite of our pulling away from you and living for ourselves, and we thank you for looking upon us so kindly. We give you thanks for leading our forefathers to implement laws that were in accord with true justice and wisdom. And we give you praise that our nation was founded on the principles of truth and the freedom that is found in your Law.

Like the Israelites long ago who strayed from the faith, we too have become a nation that does what is right in our own eyes. And yet, your patience has been great, and you continue to call us back to your way. Give us a fresh outpouring of your Spirit and let us glory in Christ. And now, holy God, we turn to you in silent prayer to share our concerns and to seek your forgiveness.....Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

L: Hear the Good News of God's love for us:

P: ***God comes to us not in the earthquake, not in the storms, not in the mighty deeds, but in the silence - the gentle touch - and in the quiet rain,***

L: God says again, "You are my beloved and I LOVE you and FORGIVE you."

P: ***Because of God's great love, we are blessed with the gift of forgiveness!***

A: ***Thanks be to God!***

Meeting God in the Word

Children's Message

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson *Deuteronomy 10:12 –13, 17–21 What God Requires of a Nation*

So now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? Only to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord your God and his decrees that I am commanding you today, for your own well-being. For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them with food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the Lord your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your own eyes have seen.



L: This is the Word of the Lord.

P: Thanks be to God.

Special Music*Beside a Stream of Living Water*

arr. Thomas Keesecker

Second Lesson*Acts 17: 22 – 28a What It Means to Paul to Be Religious*

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, ‘Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, “To an unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him - though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For “In him we live and move and have our being”; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.”

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

P: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

*On Independence Day 2021 – A Declaration of Incompleteness
New Stars for Our Flag*

Responding to the Word

HymnGod of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand*

#262

*God of the ages, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band,
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,
Our grateful songs before thy throne arise.*

*Thy love divine hath led us in the past,
In this free land by thee our lot is cast.
Be thou our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay:
Thy word our law, thy paths our chosen way.*

*Refresh thy people on their toilsome way.
Lead us from night to never-ending day.
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine,
And glory, laud, and praise be ever thine.*

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

*Cares Chorus: I cast all my cares upon you.
I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.
And anytime I don’t know what to do,
I cast all my cares upon you.*



The Call to Celebrate Our Gifts



God provided all that we need, and so we are called to return a portion of our blessings to God to be used in God's service. We so appreciate all that each of you shares for our church's ministry. May we all give sacrificially for God's glory.

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Special Music

Feed Me, Lord

Patrick Liebergen

The Invitation and Prayer of Consecration

The Words of Institution

The Sharing of the Elements

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Going Out to Serve

Closing Hymn

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

#561

*My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing; Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountainside, let freedom ring.*

*My native country, thee, land of the noble free,
Thy name I love; I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills, like that above.*

*Let music swell the breeze, and ring from all the trees,
Sweet freedom's song; let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break, the sound prolong.*



Blessing

L: Friends, as we celebrate our national freedom today, let us remember that WE BELONG to our Lord -

P: *Who makes us truly free!*

L: You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters;

P: *Only we will not use our freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence,*

A: *But through love, we will become slaves to our God and one another.*

L: May it be so for each of us and may the blessings of ...

Response

*He Is Lord - He is Lord, he is Lord. He has risen from the dead, and he is Lord.
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord.*