



“Reform to Transform”

Worship Service

Wednesday, August 19, 2020 at 7 p.m.

**Please join out loud ON MUTE in responses printed in BOLD.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Karen Brown, Brea Parrish & Annette Snyder

In the midst of a world where people hunger and thirst
Come worship a God who feeds the hungry.

In the midst of a world where people are abused and oppressed
Come worship a God who calls for compassion and justice.

In the midst of a world filled with wars and rumor of war
Come worship a God who desires nothing less than peace for the world.

In the midst of a world of spiritual emptiness
Come worship a God who gives life meaning.

In the midst of COVID-19 and social injustice
Come worship a God who wants justice, oceans of it, and equality, rivers of it. *(Amos 5:24)*

Come worship a God whose grace and love knows no end.

Song: "Woke Up This Morning with My Mind Stayed on Jesus"

Lea Gilmore

CHORUS

Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus
I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus
I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus
Ha-le-lu, Ha-le-lu, Hal-le-lu-yah

VERSES

1. Singing and Praying with my mind...
2. Working for justice with my mind....
3. There's nothing wrong with your mind . . .

CHORUS

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Kenneth E. Kovacs

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Rev. Dr. Phyllis Felton

SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 15: 21-28

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶ He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

DIALOGUE MEDITATION**Reform to Transform**

Rev. Dr. Phyllis Felton and the Rev. Michele Ward

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Ray Meute, Jr. and Rev. Jessica Lowry

Let us bring the needs of our Presbytery, from Cumberland to Annapolis to Highland to Baltimore, the needs of our church, of the nation and of the world. We bring all in need to God's loving care, saying: Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ you promise to hear us when we pray to you in his name. Like the foreign, Canaanite woman who through faith would not relent from Jesus' deliverance of her daughter, we are hopeful through your love and mercy and offer our prayer. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Empower the church throughout the world in its life and witness. Break down barriers that divide, that united in your truth and love, the church may confess your name, share one baptism, sit together at one table, and serve you in one common ministry. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for congregations ministering to the needs of their communities during this pandemic. We pray for our churches that are anxious about the future, worrying about how they will survive this storm. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Renew our nation in the ways of justice and peace for our brothers and sisters of color, and for our first responders and those entrusted with keeping the security of all. Guide those who make and administer our laws to build a society based on trust and respect. Dismantle the racism and supremacy that oppresses and bring us to that world which we all long for and cry out for; free us from crime and violence; guard your youth from the perils of drugs and materialism. Give all citizens a new vision of a life of harmony and equity. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As President Lincoln prayed so we pray “With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds....” Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Look with compassion on all who suffer. Support with your love those suffering from COVID-19, those grieving the death of a loved one, those suffering isolation, those losing their jobs or facing financial insecurity, those dying alone. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We remember those in prison, those denied dignity, those who live without hope, those who are homeless or abandoned. As you have moved toward us in love, so lead us to be present with them in their suffering in the name of Jesus Christ. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, in your loving purpose answer our prayers and fulfill our hopes for the new earth and the new heaven. Gracious God, keep reforming us so that we will be transformed, for the sake of Jesus Christ and for all of God's children, we pray. **Amen.**

HYMN: "Goodness is Stronger than Evil" (Glory to God Hymnal, 750)

Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.
Victory is ours; victory is ours through God who loves us.

The Sending (A Responsive Reading)

Guy Moody & Audrey Trapp

We believe that God is revealed as the one
who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;

**We believe that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity,
is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;**

We believe that God calls the church to follow in this way;
for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;

We believe God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;

We believe that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger,
helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;

**We believe that for God pure and undefiled religion
is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;**

We believe that God wishes to teach the church
to do what is good and to seek the right;

We believe that the church must therefore stand by people

**in any form of suffering and need,
which implies, among other things,
that the church must witness against
and strive against any form of injustice,
so that justice may roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;**

We believe that the church as the possession of God
must stand where the Lord stands,
namely against injustice and with the wronged;
that in following Christ the church must witness
against all the powerful and privileged
who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

**We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit.
This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.**

Benediction

Guy Moody

And so, let us go forth, repaying no one evil for evil. Girded by faith, let us first look inwardly. May we recognize and confess bias we hold against others. Then, let us walk together, calling out evil and injustice in the world. And remember the words we learned from the prophet Micah, written so long ago, yet still so true, do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God. **Amen.**

Invitation to Small Groups – Breakout Rooms

Facilitators:

Kate Foster-Connors

Deborah McEachran

Tom Harris

Ray Meute, Jr.

Ken Kovacs

Guy Moody

Susan Krehbiel

Susan Moody

Jessie Lowry

Audrey Trapp

Worship Leaders

Thanks to the following individuals for their leadership in tonight's worship service:

The Rev. Karen Brown, Elder Annette Snyder, Brea Parrish and In the Loop Ministry Group for the Call to Worship.

Ms. Lea Gilmore, music leader at Govans Presbyterian Church, for her music.

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth E. Kovacs, pastor at Catonsville Presbyterian Church for the Welcome

The Rev. Dr. Phyllis Felton, pastor at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, for her message.

The Rev. Michele Ward, associate pastor at Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church, for her message.

The Rev. Ray Meute, Jr., pastor at Highland Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Jessie Lowry, pastor at Christ Our Anchor Presbyterian Church, for Prayers of the People.

Elder Guy Moody, a member of St. John United Church and Moderator of the Presbytery of Baltimore and Elder Audrey Trapp, a member at Faith Presbyterian Church and Vice-Moderator Elect for the Sending and Benediction.

The Rev. Amy Carlson, the Rev. Jennifer DiFrancesco and Frank Perrelli (staff) for their technical assistance.

Worship Notes

"Woke Up This Morning with My Mind Stayed on Freedom/Jesus" is a Black Spiritual that was repurposed during the Civil Rights Movement.

The Prayers of the People was adapted from The *Book of Common Worship*

The hymn **"Goodness is Stronger than Evil"** is based on text by Bishop Desmond Tutu set to music by John Bell from the Iona Community and can be found in the Glory to God hymnal, #750.

The Responsive Sending was adapted from Articles 1 and 4 of *The Belhar Confession*, found in *A Study of The Belhar Confession and its Accompanying Letter* by Eunice T. McGarrah Published by the Office of Theology and Worship General Assembly Council Presbyterian Church (USA)

For more information about the service or related questions, please contact Susan Krehbiel, skrehbiel@baltimorepresbytery.org