**ALL SAINTS’ SUNDAY (A) – SUNDAY 01 NOVEMBER 2020**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**OPENING SENTENCE**

**Presider:** + O God, light of the hearts that see you, life of the souls that love you, strength of the thoughts that seek you: to turn from you is to fall, to turn to you is to rise, to abide in you is to stand fast forever. Although we are unworthy to approach you, or to ask anything at all of you, grant us your grace and blessing for the sake of Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

***People: Amen.***

**COLLECT FOR PURITY**

**Presider:** Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

***People: Amen***

**HYMN OF PRAISE**

**Presider:** We seek and find you in Creation, O God, in the world you have made and the people you have called. Your vulnerable, powerful Lamb is our shepherd and guide, leading us to share the shelter of your abundant life. We recognize your presence with us, and we offer you praise and thanksgiving for both the comfort and the challenge we find. May the Risen One, your Shepherd-Lamb, lead us to act for your justice and peace: so that all may drink from your springs of the waters of life, and find their tears of sorrow and pain wiped away. We pray in the name of your Christ, our Savior we pray.

***People: Amen.***

**COLLECT OF THE DAY**

**Presider:** The Lord be with you.

***People: And also with you.***

**Presider:** Let us pray. God of all people from every tribe and language; you call true witnesses who sing your praise, live your grace, and work for peace: may we share their faith and acknowledge our need for you, that we might bring the nourishment of your love to a hungry world; through Jesus Christ, whose body we are.

***People: Amen.***

*We read each month from the various biblical translations authorized by our Church. This month we read from the New International Version (1978)*

**FIRST LESSON**  Revelation 7:9-17

**Reader:** A reading from Revelation. 9 I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” 11All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12saying: “Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!” 13Then one of the elders asked me, “These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?” 14I answered, “Sir, you know.” And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. 16Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat. 17For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” This is your Word;

***People: Thanks be to God.***

**RESPONSE** Psalm 34:1-10, 22 *(Please say together in unison)*

***1I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.
2I will glory in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
3Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.***

***4I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.
5Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.
6This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.
7The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.***

***8Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.
9Fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing.
10The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.***

***22 The Lord will rescue his servants; no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.***

**SECOND LESSON** John 3:1-3

**Reader:** A reading from the First Letter of John. 3 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. This is your Word;

***People: Thanks be to God.***

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**Presider:** By your Word, O Light of this whole universe, we live, move and have our being. As you have illumined the hearts of people at many times in the past, we pray, eternal God, for your awakening within us.

**Presider:** From delusion to truth, and to your righteous way:

***People: Lead us, source of all, our Father and our Mother.***

**Presider:** From darkness to light and into your gracious will:

***People: Lead us O Christ, our Friend and our Brother.***

**Presider:** From death to eternal life and into your infinite joy:

***People: Lead us Divine Spirit, enlivening Power within, for we seek your awakening touch.***

**GOSPEL** Matthew 5:1-12

**Presider:** The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

***People: Glory be to you, O Lord Christ.***

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2and he began to teach them. He said:

3“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

8Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

12Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Continue to speak to us, Lord.

***People: Praise be to you, O Christ.***

**SERMON** The Rev. M. C. Gillette

*(A brief period of silence follows the sermon)*

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** *(Please say together in unison)*

***I believe in one God who creates, loves, cares for, and corrects all people, who acts in history, and who promises never to leave us alone. I believe in Jesus of Nazareth who is Lord, Christ, and Redeemer, who wants not to be idealized, but to be followed. I believe that we live in the presence of the Holy Spirit without whom we are nothing; filled with the Holy Spirit we are able to become creative, free, and full of life. I believe in the church of God in Jesus Christ, a community where we find companions and courage for the struggles of life, where we grow in the understanding of our faith through worship, fellowship, and acts of liberation. I believe that God has called us to a partnership for the continuance of his mission in this time and place, and that, though we live in the midst of confusion, turmoil, exploitation, and oppression, and in the grip of the forces of death, we are called to be instruments of peace and justice. I believe that God brings about changes in people, in nature and in the whole cosmos; that God makes the whole creation a new heaven and a new earth of justice, peace, harmony, and life in all its fullness. Amen***

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**Leader:** In your comforting presence, we remember the poor and the homeless, the widows and the exploited women, the undernourished children and the victims of war, terrorism and unjust socio-economic systems. Where the mind is without fear, where the head is held high, into that haven of freedom O Lord, let our world awake.

***People: Lord hear our prayer; let our cry come to you.***

**Leader:** In your comforting presence, we remember those who cannot and may not read and write, those who are denied the power of knowledge and skill, those who are rendered voiceless through exploitation and oppression for being ignorant, those whose questioning faculty has been taken away, and the ones who are tormented and mentally ill. Where knowledge is free, where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sands of dead habit, into that haven of freedom, O Lord, let our world awake.

***People: Lord hear our prayer; let our cry come to you.***

**Leader:** In your comforting presence, we remember those who work without getting their due, the landless laborers, the child laborers, the bonded laborers, the dispossessed and those who are unjustly treated or falsely accused. Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection, into that haven of freedom O Lord, let our world awake.

***People: Lord hear our prayer; let our cry come to you.***

**Leader:** In your comforting presence, we remember the victims of discrimination because of color, race, class, caste, nationality, religion, and traditions. Help our leaders and all those who serve in the Government. Grant them the will to do everything they can to build a society of equality and justice. Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls, into that haven of freedom, O Lord let our world awake.

***People: Lord hear our prayer; let our cry come to you.***

**Leader:** In your comforting presence, we remember those who suffer from any grief, pain, or trouble, especially those whose names we raise up now, either silently or aloud *(we will keep a 10-second silence)*. We remember those who have died, especially our beloved departed, those who have lost their lives in service to others, and those whose names we raise up now, either silently or aloud *(we will keep a 10-second silence)*. Where mourning has turned to dancing, O Lord, we remember those good gifts we have been given. We pray with glad hearts for those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week, especially those whose names we raise up now, either silently or aloud *(we will keep a 10-second silence).* We thank you for the joy and laughter in our lives.

***People: Lord hear our prayer; let our cry come to you.***

**Leader:** In your comforting presence, we remember those who labor in your church. Let the Church be a foretaste of the coming reign of God in the world, let her work in partnership with all humanity for reconciliation, justice and peace to make this world an *oikumene -* a happy home for all creation. Where words come out from the depths of truth, where the mind is led forward by you into ever-widening thought and action, into that haven of freedom, O Lord let my world awake.

***People: Lord hear our prayer; let our cry come to you.***

**Presider:** Eternal God, our Father and Mother, we commit our struggles and sufferings into your son's wounded hands, our hopes and aspirations into his praying hands, our poor, hungry and exploited people into his just and caring hands, our living and departed into his hands that hold the key to the future. Blessed be the Lord, forever. ***People: Amen.***

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

**Presider:** If we have placed our only hope in the things we can see and touch, and have denied ourselves or those around us that greater and more powerful hope in the glory of things unseen, Lord, have mercy.

***People: Christ, have mercy.***

**Presider:** If we have chosen to nurse our grief for the loss of who – and what – are dear to us with the bitterness of those who weep without hope or faith in your saving love, Lord, have mercy.

***People: Christ have mercy.***

**Presider:** If we put the saints on pious pedestals, and restrict ourselves to a diminished respect for our own capacity to grow in the knowledge and love of God, Lord, have mercy.

***People: Christ, have mercy.***

***All: God of love, we thank you for your patience. Across the ages, and through the years of our own lives, you have given us many guides and helpers to inspire us, and have assured us that one day we shall be as Christ Jesus is; yet we have been slow to hear, reluctant to learn, and sluggish in our efforts to obey your Word and your will. We repent of our lack of faith and love, and ask that your Son, whose compassion and presence uplifted the saints and made them strong, may deal mercifully with our sins and empower our renewed good intentions, that we might turn them into right action. We pray through Christ Jesus our Savior and Redeemer.  Amen.***

**Presider:** My friends, the victory that overcomes the pessimism and recriminations of the world comes through faith. For who is victorious except those who put their trust in Jesus, the Holy One of God? It is in his name that I declare to all repentant people: Your sins are forgiven you. Be at peace.

***People: Thanks be to God!***

**THE PEACE**

**Presider:** Having been forgiven and made whole through our Peacemaker, let us live together in Peace. God's Peace challenges us and guides us towards the acts of justice, peace and integration of the whole creation. Let us say `Shalom' to one another and give each other a sign of reconciliation and peace. The peace of the Lord be with you:

***People: And also with you.***

**OFFERTORY SENTENCE**

*(The Presider gives this or another Offertory Sentence)* O God, you have given us a new and living way to offer ourselves to you. Though unworthy we come to you, as we are, by that Way which is your Son Jesus of Nazareth; and in his name we ask you to accept and use us and our gifts however it best pleases you. All that is created is yours and everything that we can offer already belongs to you.

***People: Amen.***

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

**Presider:** Our Eucharist on this Sunday when we commemorate All Saints is offered to the glory of God, and with joy and thanksgiving for the lives and labor of those saints who have gone on before us to stand in the presence of the Holy Immortal One; in particular, our own dear ones: Jackie Krause; Tom Treptow, Robert and Bette Worley, Euston and Josephine Permenter, Robert W. Hall, Grace Worley, Donald and Jeannette Worley, Wanda McLeod, Mona Marcuse, Betty Jacobson, Charles and Elaine Stevens, Mary Ann Sacre, Christopher, Roscoe . . .

**Presider:** Our Creator God is with us to bless us;

***People: We surrender ourselves to the One who Creates.***

**Presider:** The risen Lord is with us to bless us;

***People: We surrender ourselves to the One who Redeems.***

**Presider:** The transforming Spirit is with us to bless us;

***People: We surrender ourselves to the One who Sustains.***

**Presider:** We do not stand here alone as we proclaim and sing your glory, O God, but rather with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven.

***All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.***

**Presider:** **↑**O God, Redeemer of fallen creation, at the last meal that your Son, Jesus Christ, shared with his disciples before his death, he took bread in his hands of compassion, gave you praise and thanks, and broke the bread. Then he said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

***People: We celebrate through this bread, the self-offering of our Savior Christ.***

**Presider:** **↑**Then, after the meal, he took the cup of wine, offered praise and thanks to you, gave the cup to his disciples and said: Drink this, all of you: This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.

***People: We celebrate through this cup the new covenant of our Savior Christ.***

**Presider:** As this bread is broken and this wine poured out, O Seeker and Savior of the lost, we remember again the poor and oppressed of the earth. We recall that your body was broken that the hungry might be nourished with the bread of new hope and new life.

***All: Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come in glory.***

**Presider:** As this bread was once scattered seed, O Bread of life sown in the earth to die and rise to new life: so gather all peoples together in one humanity of your coming reign. Restore the broken life of your creation; heal the disfigured body of your world; draw all creatures unto yourself through the cross and in the power of your risen life. And grant to all the faithful departed a share in your bliss, that with them we too at the end may be welcomed into your eternal kingdom through your inexhaustible grace, and through the guidance of your indwelling Spirit.

***All: +Sanctify us; ∞sanctify this bread; ∞sanctify this wine, so that together we may be the body of Christ. People: Amen.***

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**Presider:** As our Savior has taught us, so we pray:

***Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your 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 them that 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***

**FRACTION (THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD)**

*(The Presider breaks the consecrated bread. A brief period of silence is kept.)*

**Presider:** *(As the bread is raised and broken)* When we break the bread, do we not share in the body of Christ?

***People: We seek to share your life, gracious God.***

**Presider:** *(As the cup is lifted up)* When we lift the cup, do we not share in the life-blood of Christ?

***People: We seek to share your life, gracious God.***

*(The Communion is administered)*

**POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

**Presider:** Merciful God of all creation, holy Parent of all people through our Lord Jesus Christ who united all things in His fullness, we join your whole creation in exultant praise of your bountiful goodness. You have now touched us with new life and filled us with new hope that your reign will come, that the hungry will be fed, that the oppressed will be set free from evil, that your reconciling work will be done, that love and faithfulness will meet together, that justice and peace will kiss each other, and the whole creation will be filled with your glory. Amen.

***People: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. AMEN***

**BLESSING**

**Presider**: Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold onto what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. And may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always.

***People: Amen.***

**DISMISSAL**

*(The Presider gives this or another dismissal)*  Our worship is over, our service now begins. Let us go forth, rejoicing in the power of the holy spirit.

***People: Thanks be to God!***

**Hymn of Praise:** Based on a prayer from the United Church of Christ posted on **Wild and Precious Life.**

<http://stephenmfearing.wordpress.com/category/easter/>

**Collect of the Day:** Prayers for an Inclusive Church, Stephen Shakespeare

**Confession:** Based on a prayer by Bruce Prewer, and posted on **Bruce Prewer’s Homepage.** <http://www.bruceprewer.com/DocA/61SAINTS.htm>

**Eucharistic Prayer and Other Service Elements:** Adapted from Church of South India Order For The Lord’s Supper (2004)