



Riverside
Congregational
Church
September 5, 2021

Precious Lord, Take my Hand

Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
Through the storm, through the night,
Lead me on to the light:
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.



Precious Lord, Take my Hand

When my way grows drear,
Precious Lord, linger near,
When my life is almost gone,
Hear me cry, hear my call,
Hold my hand, lest I fall:
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.



Precious Lord, Take my Hand

When the shadows appear,
And the night draws near,
And the day is past and gone,
At the river I stand,
Guide my feet, hold my hand:
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.



Call to Worship

Leader: Where are the teachers in our midst who will guide us as we learn?

All: We follow Christ's example and learn from one another!

Leader: Where are Jesus' disciples, who thirst to know God's ways?

All: We follow Christ's example and learn from one another!

Call to Worship

Leader: Our church school is this sacred space, and our classroom is the world.

All: We follow Christ's example and learn from one another!

Leader: Thanks be to God for new beginnings,
for new opportunities to learn together!

All: We follow Christ's example and learn from one another!

Psalm 125

Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time on and forevermore.

For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, so that the righteous might not stretch out their hands to do wrong.

Do good, O LORD, to those who are good, and to those who are upright in their hearts.

But those who turn aside to their own crooked ways the LORD will lead away with evildoers.

Peace be upon Israel!

James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him?

James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17

But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. For the one who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.”

James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17

Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy, mercy triumphs over judgment.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So, faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Mark 7: 24-37

From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

Mark 7: 24-37

Then he said to her, “For saying that you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” So, she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.”

Mark 7: 24-37

And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”



Reflection:

“Be Opened”

Sing a New Church

Summoned by the God who made us,
Rich in our diversity,
Gathered in the name of Jesus,
Richer still in unity:
Let us bring the gifts that differ
And, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being,
One in faith and love and praise.



Sing a New Church

Bring the hopes of every nation;
Bring the art of every race.
Weave a song of peace and justice;
Let it sound through time and space.
Let us bring the gifts that differ
And, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being,
One in faith and love and praise.



Sing a New Church

Draw together at one table,
All the human family;
Shape a circle ever wider,
And a people ever free.
Let us bring the gifts that differ
And, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being,
One in faith and love and praise.





Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those 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.**

Wonderful Words of Life

Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life;
Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life.
Words of life and beauty, teach me faith and duty:
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life,
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Christ, the blessed One, gives to all wonderful words of life;
Sinner, list to the loving call, wonderful words of life.
All so freely given, wooing us to heaven:
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life,
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.



Wonderful Words of Life

Sweetly echo the gospel call, wonderful words of life;
Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life.
Jesus, only Savior, sanctify forever:
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life,
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.





Benediction