

GATHERING

WELCOME AND PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION

PRELUDE:

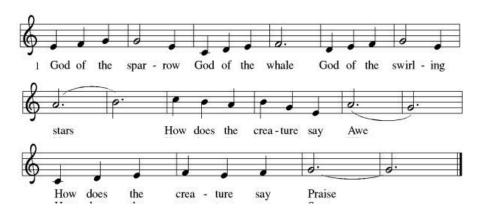
GOD OF THE SPARROW
ACCOMPANIMENT: NANCY COLLINS

GREETING/OPENING PRAYER

WORD

Psalm 145: 8-14

Please join in singing the response with your device muted.



Reader:

God is all mercy and grace - not quick to anger, is rich in love.

God is good to one and all; everything he does is suffused with grace.

Creation and creatures applaud you, God; your holy people bless you.



Reader:

They talk about the glories of your rule, They exclaim over your splendor,

Letting the world know of your power for good, the lavish splendor of your kingdom.

Your kingdom is the kingdom sternal; you never get voted out of office.



First Reading: Romans 6: 12-23

I can anticipate the response that is coming: "I know that all God's commands are spiritual, but I'm not. Isn't this also your experience?" Yes. I'm full of myself—after all, I've spent a long time in sin's prison. What I don't understand about myself is that I decide one way, but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise. So if I can't be trusted to figure out what is best for myself and then do it, it becomes obvious that God's command is necessary.

But I need something *more*! For if I know the law but still can't keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it, but I can't *do* it. I decide to do good, but I don't *really* do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time.

It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge.

I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?

The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.

The Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the eleventh chapter. *Glory to you, O Lord.*

"But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.' For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The Gospel of our Lord **Praise be to God.**

SERMON

MEAL

SETTING THE TABLE

THANKSGIVING

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Congregation please read response as printed in bold italics

Do this to remember me. (Please lift bread for all to see)

Do this to remember me. (Please lift cup for all to see)

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 trespasses,

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation.

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever, and ever.

HOLY COMMUNION

Eating and drinking in communion.

SENDING

BLESSING/BENEDICTION

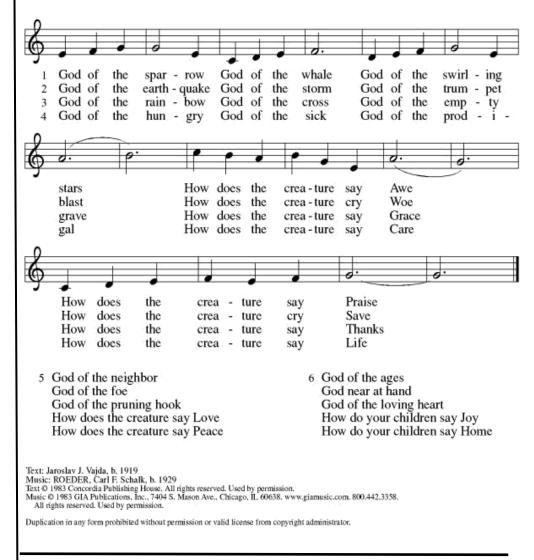
Go in Peace! Serve the Lord! Thanks he to God!

SENDING HYMN

GOD OF THE SPARROW

Accompanied by Nancy Collins

Please join us by singing along at home. Please keep your audio muted..



Please join us for Fellowship & Coffee after Worship.

Just stay right here.