



## Call to Worship

Welcome!... How observant were you as you traveled here this morning? Did you take note of the fields between the houses? There's still evidence of farm life, isn't there? Even out in this suburb we call the "Long Green Valley." On many of those fields, corn or wheat or some other grain was planted earlier this year. It's now time for these crops to be "gathered in." It has been for several weeks. Isn't it comforting to know that this "harvest" continues, even when it seems like our world has drastically changed?

Come, friends, let's worship the Lord, who created all that we see, as well as much that we do not see. Let's be thankful. We don't have to wait for an official "Thanksgiving Day" to be grateful, you know. God is good! And we are like those fields we passed on the way here. God is in the process of gathering *us* in. We are the harvest of the Lord. "Come, ye thankful people, come! Raise the song of harvest home." Please stand, if you are able, and turn to #94 in the hymnal, and let's sing our gratitude and praise.

Hymn - "Come, ye thankful people" #94

## Opening Prayer

Lord of the harvest, who made this world and the seasons which govern it, thank you. The changing colors, the slight chill in the air, the honk of the geese overhead, the scent of crunching leaves underfoot, all these signs and more speak of your steady presence in this world, O God. Your handiwork is awesome to behold, to savor, to enjoy. We praise you!

Lord of the harvest, as other changes in the wind trouble us, we turn to you. Perhaps we should rather say - you gather us in. It is by your hand that we each have come to this moment in time, to this place. Thank you. May your Holy Spirit blow through this room, like the Autumn wind, quickening our step, clearing the air, bringing forth the right kind of change. Help us to really listen to what you have to say, and to respond with childlike trust to the call of your Son, Jesus Christ, to follow where he leads.

This we pray in his name. Amen.

# Gospel Story in Action

Luke 19:1-10

*(begin in the back of the sanctuary)*

This morning, our Gospel story takes place on the road as Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem. Before they got to the town of Jericho, they came upon a blind beggar who obnoxiously kept crying out to Jesus, “Have mercy on me!” While some wanted this guy to shut up, the Lord called for him and asked what he wanted. “Let me see again,” the blind beggar responded. “Receive your sight,” Jesus then said. And the man could see. Glory, hallelujah! That episode happens just before our Gospel lesson for today. Listen and Watch.

*(pick a willing person from the rear pews of the sanctuary)*

<sup>1</sup> Jesus” (point to the volunteer) “entered Jericho and was passing through it. <sup>2</sup> A man was there named Zacchaeus;”

*(pick another willing person from the sanctuary)*

he was a chief tax collector and was rich. <sup>3</sup> He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead

*(send the second volunteer up to stand behind the lectern)*

and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way.<sup>5</sup> When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him,

*(give a piece of paper with the following written on it to “Jesus” to read)*

“Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.”

<sup>6</sup> So he hurried down

*(motion for “Zacchaeus” to come to Jesus)*

and was happy to welcome him.

*(they shake hands or hug or...)*

<sup>7</sup> All who saw it began to grumble and said,

*(give a piece of paper with the following written on it to another person in the pews to read)*

“He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.”

<sup>8</sup> Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord,

*(give a piece of paper with the following written on it to “Zacchaeus” to read)*

“Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.”

<sup>9</sup> Then Jesus said to him,

*(give a piece of paper with the following written on it to “Jesus” to read)*

“Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.”

# Zacchaeus Was a Tax Man

AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D (“The Church’s One Foundation” #311)

Zacchaeus was a tax man who one day climbed a tree,  
For he was short in stature and said he could not see.  
And yet he had a problem that mattered even more:  
He did not see the suff-‘ring his greed had caused the poor.

O Lord, you saw Zacchaeus — so wealthy, yet alone.  
You said, “Come down — and hurry! I’m coming to your home.”  
For you broke bread with sinners and saw within each one  
A person loved and treasured — God’s daughter or God’s son.

It was not just the treetop that helped Zacchaeus see;  
Your love and welcome showed him how diff-‘rent life could be.  
He said that he’d start over and work to make things fair;  
He’d speak the truth, bring justice, and find new ways to share.

O Christ, you bid us welcome and help us all to see!  
May we respond by building a just society.  
Then children won’t be hungry and all will share your bread.  
Then those who now must struggle will live in joy instead.

Tune: Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864

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# Psalm 32:1-7

- <sup>1</sup> Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,  
whose sin is covered.
- <sup>2</sup> Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,  
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- <sup>3</sup> While I kept silence, my body wasted away  
through my groaning all day long.
- <sup>4</sup> For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;  
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.
- <sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you,  
and I did not hide my iniquity;  
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”  
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.
- <sup>6</sup> Therefore let all who are faithful  
offer prayer to you;  
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters  
shall not reach them.
- <sup>7</sup> You are a hiding place for me;  
you preserve me from trouble;  
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.

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Sharing a joy, a concern,  
a word of testimony or praise

Pastoral Prayer

# Come, let us reason

by Ken Medema

♩  
D A7/C# Bm Bm7 Em7

"Come let us rea- son, to - geth-er," that's what

A7sus A D A7/C# Bm Bm7

God says, "Come let us rea - son, to -

Gmaj7/E A7 1. D A7 2. D *fine*

geth - er," says the Lord. Lord.

G F#m Bm Em7 Em7/A D D7

"Tho' your sins be as scar-let, they shall be as white as snow,

G Em7 F# Bm7 E7sus E7 A7sus A7 *D.S. al fine*

Tho' they be red like crim - son, they shall be as wool."

# Returning our Tithes and Offerings

The apostle Paul wrote this to his friends in the city of Thessalonika:

*“We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of everyone of you for one another is increasing... To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* (2 Thessalonians 1:3, 11-12)

... Giving thanks for growing faith ... praying that this growth will continue and will glorify God ... With those words in mind, let's return to God a portion of what we have received. May our faith increase. May our actions glorify God. Will the ushers come forward now to receive our offerings.

Offertory

\*Response - (vs. 2) “Great is thy faithfulness” #327

# Prayer

You have provided all we have really needed, O Lord. Your faithful is great! Help us to be faithful in putting to use what you have provided - in summer, winter, springtime, or harvest. Thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## Isaiah 1:10–18

We turn now to the prophet Isaiah. In these verses from the first chapter, Isaiah speaks a word of judgement to the rulers and people of Jerusalem. Using the names of Sodom and Gomorrah, which God destroyed long before this time according to the book of Genesis, Isaiah makes a connection between the sins of those ancient cities and the current sins of Jerusalem. Please note that the sin we usually think of in relation to Sodom and Gomorrah is not specifically mentioned. Within this word of judgement, we hear an invitation to live in new ways. Listen...

- <sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the LORD,  
you rulers of Sodom!  
Listen to the teaching of our God,  
you people of Gomorrah!
- <sup>11</sup> What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?  
says the LORD;  
I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams  
and the fat of fed beasts;  
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,  
or of lambs, or of goats.
- <sup>12</sup> When you come to appear before me,  
who asked this from your hand?  
Trample my courts no more;
- <sup>13</sup> bringing offerings is futile;  
incense is an abomination to me.  
New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation—  
I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity.

- <sup>14</sup> Your new moons and your appointed festivals  
my soul hates;  
they have become a burden to me,  
I am weary of bearing them.
- <sup>15</sup> When you stretch out your hands,  
I will hide my eyes from you;  
even though you make many prayers,  
I will not listen;  
your hands are full of blood.
- <sup>16</sup> Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;  
remove the evil of your doings  
from before my eyes;  
cease to do evil,
- <sup>17</sup> learn to do good;  
seek justice,  
rescue the oppressed,  
defend the orphan,  
plead for the widow.
- <sup>18</sup> Come now, let us argue it out,  
says the LORD:  
though your sins are like scarlet,  
they shall be like snow;  
though they are red like crimson,  
they shall become like wool.

# Come, let us reason

by Ken Medema

Musical score for the hymn "Come, let us reason" in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Come let us rea- son, to - geth-er," that's what God says, "Come let us rea - son, to - geth - er," says the Lord. Lord. "Tho' your sins be as scar-let, they shall be as white as snow, Tho' they be red like crim - son, they shall be as wool." The score includes various chords such as D, A7/C#, Bm, Bm7, Em7, A7sus, A, Gmaj7/E, F#m, Bm, Em7, Em7/A, D, D7, and A7. It also features musical notations like a repeat sign, first and second endings, and a triplets marking.

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# Benediction

Grant, Lord, that what we have said with our lips,  
 We may believe in our hearts  
 and practice in our lives;  
 And of your mercy keep us faithful;  
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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