

# Worship Service

BY ANN BELL WORLEY

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## *Prelude*

## *Chiming of the Hour*

## *Call to Worship: Psalm 122:1-2, 9*

I was glad when they said to me,  
“Let us go to the house of the LORD!”  
Our feet are standing  
within your gates, O Jerusalem.  
For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,  
I will seek your good.

## *Processional Hymn*

“Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken” (verses 1-3)

Glorious things of thee are spoken,  
Zion, city of our God!  
God, whose word cannot be broken,  
formed thee for a blest abode.  
On the Rock of Ages founded,  
what can shake thy sure repose?  
With salvation’s walls surrounded,  
thou mayest smile at all thy foes.

See, the streams of living waters,  
springing from eternal love,  
well supply thy sons and daughters,  
and all fear of want remove.  
Who can faint, while such a river  
ever flows their thirst to assuage?  
Grace, which like our God, the Giver,  
never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hovering,  
see the cloud and fire appear

for a glory and a covering,  
showing forth that God is near!  
Thus deriving from their banner  
light by night and shade by day,  
safe they feed upon the manna  
which God gives them when they pray.

*John Newton (1779), alt.*

*Tune: AUSTRIA (Haydn)*

### *Invocation*

Almighty God,  
across the ages you have guided your people through the wilderness,  
assuring us of a home in your eternal city.  
Strengthen us along the way,  
that we might not neglect our call  
to serve the cities and towns where we live.  
Help us to trust in your unfailing presence amid all of our fears.  
Grant us wisdom to discern your way in this world  
even as we hope for the next. Amen.

### *Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7*

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.... Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

### *Meditation*

“Babylon”

Not simply an evil territory  
or a dirty word,  
as we are prone to believe.  
But a place where God’s people were sent  
in exile

on purpose  
on mission  
to offer their culture  
to the culture there  
in love.

For God so loved the world.

Like Israel in exile, still we hope  
for our homecoming in the city of God,  
where there will be no more tears.

Let us hope not  
in closed communion  
in isolated sanctuaries  
apart from the Babylon-world.

Rather let us hope  
in the fullness of God's love  
in the life of the cities and towns  
where we work  
and love  
and worship  
and play.

And remember  
that God so loved not only us,  
but the world.

Let us hope for Babylon  
as we hope for ourselves.

Let us embrace  
its people  
its buildings  
its streets  
and fill them with the beauty  
of God's temple.

Let us hope  
with doors wide open,  
welcome the city in  
and pour ourselves out.

For God so loved the world.

*Ann Bell Worley*

*New Testament Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 18-21*

For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who

live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them....

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### *Hymn*

“Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life”

Where cross the crowded ways of life,  
where sound the cries of clan and race,  
above the noise of selfish strife,  
we hear your voice, O Son of man.

In haunts of wretchedness and need,  
on shadowed thresholds dark with fears,  
from paths where hide the lures of greed,  
we catch the vision of your tears.

From tender childhood’s helplessness,  
from woman’s grief, man’s burdened toil,  
from famished souls, from sorrow’s stress,  
your heart has never known recoil.

The cup of water given for you  
still holds the freshness of your grace;  
yet long these multitudes to view  
the strong compassion of your face.

O Savior, from the mountainside,  
make haste to heal these hearts of pain;  
among these restless throngs abide;  
O, tread the city’s streets again.

Till sons of men shall learn your love,  
and follow where your feet have trod;  
till, glorious from your heaven above,  
shall come the city of our God!

*Frank Mason North (1903)*

*Tune: GERMANY*

### *Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:1, 13-16*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

### *Sermon*

#### *Prayer of Confession*

Pastor: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*(The congregation prays antiphonally – one half reading the statements in bold and the other half responding.)*

**Merciful God,  
we confess that we have hidden our light  
and failed to share the love of Christ.**

We have walked away from the people Jesus came to serve,  
from the cities and towns where he carried out his ministry.

**We have chosen instead to make our home  
in the isolated places where Jesus retreated for prayer.**

And even there,

our prayers have been mostly for ourselves.

**We have deemed our church an escape from (*name of city or town*),  
rather than a sanctuary for it.**

We have deemed ourselves your chosen people  
but forsaken the ministry of reconciliation.

**In your infinite mercy,  
forgive us our sins  
and set us on the path of true righteousness,**

that we may find the joy of our salvation  
as we seek the welfare of the world around us,  
especially our city of (*name*). Amen.

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## *Prayers of the People*

In peace we pray to you, O God,

*(Observe silence between each petition.)*

for the Church and all of its members in cities and towns across the globe:  
may we witness to Christ as we serve the common good;

for all who hold authority in national and local governments:  
may they use their power wisely to benefit the people and the land.

for our city, *(name)*, and for our mayor, *(name)*:  
may we seek the welfare of this community  
and the just and proper use of the resources in our care;

for our congregation, as we respond to these needs of our city  
*(list specific concerns as appropriate)*  
may we be faithful to our calling as God's people in this place;

for all who are sick, and for the poor, the oppressed,  
and the forgotten who walk our streets:  
may they find in us the hope of Christ;

for all of the saints who preceded us in this work,  
and for all who will follow;  
may we share together in the joy of your heavenly city.

## *Offering for Urban Ministries*

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

*Matthew 6:21*

## *Choral Anthem*

"Prayer of Saint Francis"<sup>1</sup>

*Allen Pote (1986)*

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

### *Passing of the Peace*

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**People: And also with you.**

### *Celebration of Communion*

*Words of Institution:* 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

### *Unison Prayer*

In the breaking of this bread and drinking of this cup,  
we accept your forgiveness, O God,  
and renew our commitment to serve the people and places within our  
reach,  
in the name of Christ. Amen.

### *Recessional Hymn*

"All Who Love and Serve Your City"<sup>2</sup>

All who love and serve your city,  
all who bear its daily stress,  
all who cry for peace and justice,  
all who cure and all who bless:

in your day of loss and sorrow,  
in your day of helpless strife,  
honor, peace and love retreating,  
seek the Lord, who is your life.

In your hour of high decision,  
seek the things that serve your peace,  
lest the night of your confusion  
overtake your day of ease.

For all days are days of judgment,  
and the Lord is waiting still,  
drawing near to all who spurn him,  
offering peace from Calvary's hill.

Risen Lord! Shall yet the city  
be the city of despair?  
Come today, our Joy, our Glory:  
be its name, "The Lord is there."

*Erik Routley (1966)*  
*Tune: CHARLESTOWN*

### *Dismissal*

Pastor: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord in *(name of city or town)*  
and the world.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### *Postlude*

## **NOTES**

1 Prayer of St. Francis (SATB, soprano or tenor solo, keyboard, HMC888). Words and Music: Allen Pote. Copyright © 1986 Hinshaw Music, Inc., Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Phone: 800-568-7805. Website: [www.hinshawmusic.com](http://www.hinshawmusic.com).

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