

## SEPTEMBER 19<sup>th</sup> WORSHIP SERVICE

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### WORDS OF WELCOME

#### **INTROIT:** “*Spirit Song*”

CCLI Song # 27824 John Wimber © 1979 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing (Admin. by Vineyard Music USA) For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com CCLI License # 11251098

1. Oh let the Son of God enfold you with His Spirit and His love  
Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul  
Oh let Him have those things that hold you and His Spirit like a dove  
Will descend upon your life and make you whole

#### ***Chorus***

***Jesus oh Jesus, Come and fill Your lambs***

***Jesus oh Jesus, Come and fill Your lambs***

2. Oh come and sing this song with gladness as your hearts are filled with joy  
Lift your hands in sweet surrender to His name  
Oh give Him all your tears and sadness give Him all your years of pain  
And you'll enter into life in Jesus' name (Chorus)

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP:**

L: God watched over us when we slept last night

***All: God was there when we awakened this morning***

L: God is in this place and time, among us now

***All: God is in the singing, the silence, the reflection, our prayers and in one another.***

L: Let us worship God!

#### **HYMN OF INVOCATION: #293** “*Sweet, Sweet Spirit*”

Song #21305 Contributors: Doris Akers Text: © 1990, Manna Music  
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1. There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place,  
And I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord;  
There are sweet expressions on each face,  
And I know they feel the presence of the Lord. (Chorus)

***Chorus: Sweet Holy Spirit, Sweet heavenly Dove,  
Stay right here with us, filling us with Your love.  
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise;  
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived,  
When we shall leave this place.***

2. There are blessings you cannot receive  
Till you know that Spirit's fullness and believe;  
You're the one to profit when you say,  
"I am going to walk with Jesus all the way." (Chorus)

**PROFESSION OF FAITH: #885** *“United Church of Christ Statement of Faith  
in the Form of a Doxology”*

**We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God,  
and to your deeds we testify:**

**You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image,  
and set before each one the ways of life and death.**

**You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.**

**You judge people and nations by your righteous will  
declared through prophets and apostles.**

**In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior,  
you have come to us and shared our common lot,  
conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.**

**You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,  
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,  
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.**

**You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,  
to be your servants in the service of others,  
to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil,  
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.**

**You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,  
courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing,  
and eternal life in your realm which has no end.**

**Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.**

**SINGING THE FAITH: #499** *“In All Our Living”*

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- 1. In all our living we belong to God and in our dying we are still with God;  
So whether living, or whether dying, we belong to God; we belong to God**
- 2. God sent Christ Jesus to be our shalom, to show us mercy and healing love;  
So in our living, and in our dying, Christ is our shalom; Christ is our shalom.**

**SCRIPTURE:**

**Romans 5:1-5 (NIV) – Peace and Hope**

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5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

## **Galatians 5:13-18, 22-26 (NRSV) --**

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<sup>13</sup> For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. <sup>14</sup> For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>15</sup> If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

<sup>16</sup> Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

### **The Fruit of the Spirit**

<sup>22</sup> By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

### **REFLECTION:**

#### Strength to Carry On Romans 5:1-5 Galatians 5:13-18, 22-26

In Paul's letter to the Philippians, he tells them, I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. I chose to day's scriptures and the profession of faith as reminders that we are never alone and that with God all things are possible, true there is cost in discipleship but there is also much joy in it as well, that much good can come from the struggles we must face and go through, and to remind us to take time to notice the bountiful harvest of the fruits of the Spirit.

Our reading from Romans let us know that not all suffering is about punishment. Though God may not protect us from all suffering, God can use that suffering to transform lives through perseverance, building character and giving hope. In suffering often times we gain insight and understanding into others sufferings granting us greater understanding and compassion as well as insight into our own character giving us better understanding of who we are. Often times in suffering the revelation of God's presence is made known to us. In persevering in suffering, though at the time we feel as if we are being beat down never to rise again, we are often amazed at what we have learned and how we have grown as a person and have been strengthened through the experience and in that experience hope and joy.

A while back I read a story of a family who lost their home to a fire and though they suffered injuries the humans, the family survived the fire. They were greatly grieved though over the loss of the family pets and at watching their life go up in smoke. Following the fire, they stayed with a family member and were warmed by the outpouring of support but also found humor in some people using the fire as an opportunity to get rid of their junk. What brought them the most comfort was the visit by the Red Cross volunteer who really understood what they were facing and helped guide them through the steps to begin getting their lives back together.

As they sat down to Thanksgiving dinner that year just shortly after the fire with extended family, usually a specific family member offered the prayer of grace before the meal, but this day she asked the father of the family who suffered the fire to offer the prayer. The wife was shocked, you see her husband was a man who put his faith in humanity but had little to do with religion. To her amazement he graciously accepted the offer and as he prayed, not only did he offer thanks for the food, but for their very lives and outpouring of support and guidance. Lastly, he prayed to heal so he could work and give back to others in need. It was in this time of suffering that his eyes were opened to the presence of God in humanity and in that suffering, there was also perseverance, character, and hope.

No matter what you may be facing, remember you are not alone; we are not alone; we can do all things through/with Christ who gives us strength; not only that, but with Christ through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, become stronger, develop character, and always have hope.

One of my favorite songs in church growing up was *"They'll Know We are Christians by Our Love"*. In that song it speaks of being one in the Spirit, and having the desire for unity to be restored. It also speaks of working with each other side by side and guarding each one's dignity. It acknowledges that all we have comes from God and it is through the Spirit's power that brings unity in diversity. That song is all about living life by the Spirit and not legality; God's law written on our hearts and not on stone tablets. It also proclaims that others will know we are Christians not by our moralism and trying to follow a checklist of do's and don'ts, but from the love that flows forth from our lives which has been poured out into our lives by the Holy Spirit.

I think this is what Paul is telling the Galatians in his letter to them. He saw them starting to fall back into a legalistic faith and he wants them to fully embrace the Spirit that is planted within them. He reminds them that freedom in Christ is not about cheap grace being set free to do whatever we want and self-indulge, but about being set free from sin and self-centeredness so that we can live in community loving our neighbor as our self and serving one another in love and what I want each of us to remember each and every day. Even in Romans 6:1-2 Paul says *"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup> By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"* As we allow the Spirit to transform us from within --- the law is not set aside, but is fulfilled as our desires become in alignment with the Spirit.

Paul reminds them and us that when one is walking in the Spirit – a bountiful harvest of fruit comes, including love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This is not however, and exhaustive list. What are some other ways you experience fruit of the Spirit? We could easily add compassion and forgiveness.

This week I had my daughter's family over for supper because I had my son's daughter Jemma after school and she had been missing them and they her. When we sat down to supper Jemma wanted to say a new grace. She prayed for God to bless us and the food and then she thanked God that we love each other and paused and then thanked God that we be kind to each other as well. Someone jokingly interjected into her prayer, "except for Tom" because the two of them like to kiddingly pick on each other and Jemma said "Yeah, except for Tom" and giggled. But, after a brief pause, Jemma back tracked and said, "No, we should be kind to Tom too." This is the prayer of a 6-year-old. What is it that Isaiah prophesied? *"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them."* Isaiah 11:6

Friends, the fruits of the Spirit are bountiful if only have eyes to see, ears to hear, and the willingness to open our hearts and minds to the outpouring of the Spirit into our own lives.

So let us now pause for a couple of minutes and take notice of where we have witnessed the fruits of the Spirit in this past week. If the Spirit moves you to share that experience with the community feel free to do so. If the Spirit moves you to share that experience with a specific individual, present here or not, make sure to follow-up on that nudge.

Let us now close in prayer by singing our Hymn of response together.

**HYMN OF RESPONSE: #283 “Spirit of the Living God”**

Song #198554 Daniel Iverson and Michale Baughen, Daniel Iverson Words and Music - ©1963 Jubilate Music  
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**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

**A TIME OF PRAYER –  
LIFTING UP PRAYER REQUESTS –  
THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**CALL FOR OFFERING:**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

L: Generous God,

*All: Pour out your blessings upon all that we have to offer and guide the use of these offerings that they may be used in accordance with your will and help advance your realm here on earth as it is in heaven so that all may know the joy of living in communion with you, one another and all of creation.*

**SUMM-IT UP:**

**Today – 4:00 p.m. Presentation Lantern Center virtual event**

**Monday – 9:00 a.m. – Noon Pastor’s Scheduled Office Hours**

**1:30 p.m. Beatitudes Study in-person Session 1**

**7:00 p.m. CROP Walk Planning Committee**

**Tuesday – 12:30 p.m. Beatitudes Study Via Sunday Zoom Link Session 1**

**2:00 p.m. EI Assoc. Ad. Council Meeting Via Zoom**

**Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. – Zoom Fellowship Hour via Sunday Zoom Link**

**Next Sunday 1:00 p.m. – EI Assoc. Annual Meeting via Zoom**

**SENDING HYMN: #76 “Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”**

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**Verse 1**

Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,  
The people of God from this dwelling take leave.  
The service is ended. Oh, now be extended  
The fruits of our worship in all who believe.  
The seed of His teaching, receptive souls reaching,  
Shall blossom in action for God and for all.  
God's grace did invite us, and love shall unite us  
To work for God's realm and to answer God's call.

**Verse 2**

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,  
The tasks of our everyday life we will face.  
Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,  
Embracing God's children of each tribe and race.  
With Your grace You feed us, with Your light now lead us;  
Unite us as one in this life that we share.  
Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving  
Give honor to Christ and that name that we bear.

**CHARGE & BENEDICTION:**

**POSTLUDE:**