

Worship Resources - [Renewal](#)

Pentecost 23, Year B,

31st October, 2021

Revelation 21:1-6a / John 11:32-44 NRSV

Prelude

Annie Center

Welcoming Announcements

Pass the Peace

Call to Worship (Responsive)

One: See how God loves us!

All: God loves us enough to swallow up death forever.

One: See how Christ loves us!

All: Christ loves us enough to share our loss and grief.

One: See how the Spirit loves us!

**All: The Holy Spirit loves us enough to offer us words
of hope we can trust.**

Invocation

God of all, send your Spirit to this place so that those gathered here, in this sacred moment, may know your presence. Make us one with the saints, and with our sisters, siblings and brothers in faith around the world.

Be with us God, not only here but in every moment of our lives. Help us to know you, To be guided by the Holy Spirit, And to live Christ. Now and forever. Amen.

Opening Music (Lyric Video)

[To God be the Glory](#)

words by Fanny Crosby, music by William Doane,
performed and posted to YouTube by Northern
Baptist Association, used with permission

Scripture Reading: Revelation 21:1-6a NRSV

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them.

he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."

Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

Candle Lighting

This morning our candle lighting takes on new significance. We light one candle to represent the divine spark among us and within us, but another candle to symbolize those whose light has passed on to become part of that divine light. We now take time to view and remember those saints that have recently gone on before us, to become part of the great cloud of witnesses among us.

All Saint's Day

A Time of Remembrance

Dorsey Harris
Stephanie Herkelrath
Lois Thomsen
Jimmy Barnes
Phyllis Harris
Peggy Cochran
Betty DeBon
Grace Edmark
Carol Bowers
Charles Walker

A Time of Sharing

Prayer of Calling and Remembrance (Resources)

Living God, in whom there is no shadow or change, we thank you for the gift of life eternal, and for all those who, having served you well, now rest from their labours.

We thank you for all the saints remembered and forgotten, for those dear souls most precious to us. Today we give thanks for those who during the last twelve months have died and entered into glory.

(Names may be mentioned here....)

We bless you for their life and love, and rejoice for them “all is well, and all manner of things will be well.”

God of Jesus and our God, mindful of all those choice souls who have gone on ahead of us, teach us, and each twenty-first century disciple of every race and place, to follow their example to the best of our ability: to feed the poor in body or spirit, to support and comfort the mourners and the repentant, to encourage the meek and stand with them in crises, to affirm those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, to cherish and learn from the merciful, to be humbled by, and stand with, the peacemakers.

Let us clearly recognise what it means to be called the children of God, and to know we are to be your saints neither by our own inclination nor in our own strength but simply by the call and the healing holiness of Christ Jesus our Saviour. **Amen!**

Hymn (Lyric Video)

[In the Bulb, There is a Flower](#)

written by Natalie Sleeth,
performed and posted to YouTube by DisciplesNet Church,
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A Time of Prayer

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Holy One

of days and nights, of sinners and saints, of right and left and everything between and beyond, We are grateful for all Your presence that abides in every corner of our living.

You lurk quietly in the loneliest places in our hearts, keeping watch. You grieve with us in our devastations, our losses, our fears. You journey with us in our celebrations, our defeats, and even in the monotony of our days. You delight in us, and love us.

May we live in that love and delight, knowing that as we sink into You we might become more like You, wanting life and grace for this world and all peoples and creatures that live upon it.

We pray for this world, for the places and precious people who are striving to recover from hurricanes and floods and raging fires.

We pray for peace among nations, and make us instruments of that peace.

We pray for our children and our youth that they may be surrounded by protection, and also be challenged to be all of who they have been created to be.

We give you thanks, for all of the saints in our lives, those who are living and those of blessed memory.

We pray this prayer for Love's sake, Amen.

Gospel Lesson: **John 11:32-44 NRSV**

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.

He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."

Jesus began to weep.

So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days."

Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me.

I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Message

Renewal

Rev. Glenn Brumbaugh

All Saints Day. What exactly is it? Traditionally it has been a day to remember all the saints and martyrs of the faith throughout Christian history. It always falls on the day after All Hallows Eve, otherwise known as Halloween. In anticipation of tomorrow's meaning, we have taken time this morning to remember those saints from our own congregation, and from our own lives, who have passed on to the next part of their journey. We think of them as our saints, those members of our faith community whose presence built and sustained much of what we see around us in this building, as well as laying the foundation for Northaven just up the road. Their efforts in such things as teaching, leading, driving, organizing and motivating made this a vibrant community of faith when they were in their prime.

Some, like Betty, had their beginnings in the old location in Phinney Ridge, before this building was even built. They had a deep love for the worship traditions of their time, and the community that existed around them then. This morning we saw their pictures, and probably remembered the vibrant people they were in this life, and the many memories made with them. While my time with them was limited, I was fortunate to forge a relationship with most of them in my short time here. Times of remembrance like these can be nostalgic and a little melancholy, can't they? We remember good times spent together, and the joy we shared, but that is tempered by the sense of loss that those times have come to an end.

As human beings, we have a very linear sense of time that has a finality to it. Time keeps moving on and we have a beginning and an end to our existence here. Throughout our lives, events begin, progress, and come to an end. Many have families and children, they grow up and move on into their own lives, and start families of their own, and the process repeats itself over and over. We go to school, get jobs, move through our careers, retire, and live out our golden years until we come to our own final moment here. But is that all there is to our stories?

Our scripture readings this morning speak of a different sense of time, of a different way of being. In our gospel story, we have the family and friends of Lazarus experience the very human tragedy of death. Their dear brother and friend fell ill, and before he could be healed, died. For them, that is the way of things. His linear path came to its end. There is nothing beyond that in this life for him. Yet Jesus sees possibilities that would never occur to those in mourning. He knows the Father, knows that God's time is different. There is no end. There is always the possibility of renewal, of resurrection. Everything is working towards the kin-dom, the restoration of the created order.

This is the final sign in John that the message Jesus presents, the possibilities he presents, are beyond anything this crowd can imagine, and fully comprehend. They are stuck in a world of beginnings that have endings. Jesus offers them a reality that has no boundaries, one that is always in motion and full of possibilities. He offers them hope where they see none. Likewise, our passage in Revelation is offering hope to those a generation later. The early Christians suffering oppression and persecution under the Romans see in the imagery of Revelation hope for their future, an end to suffering and a new world to look forward to.

We often think of the world being replaced at the end of time with some alternate reality or location. But what the bible is consistent about is the kin-dom of heaven drawing near, the kin-dom of God on Earth. God is seeking to bring about change and renewal, to move us back to the original perfection of creation. But God's time frame is cosmic, ours is terrestrial. We can't see time from an eternal lens. Our expectations are based on what we can conceive, on what fits into our short lifespan, and sense of history. So quite naturally, when something ends, we often feel loss and sadness. When a human life finishes its journey here, we no longer experience it in a real, sensory way. But it carries on in our memories, in the real accomplishments of that life.

From the lives of the saints we remembered earlier in the service, we have the very real testament of this building, of this ongoing community of faith that has made its impact to so many in the years of its existence. We have our relationships with those who have gone on and the way those interactions have influenced who we are today.

Our forefathers and mothers paved the way for who we are and where we are today. Their time and place led to this time and place, just like our time and place will lead to the future

generations' time and place. We remember past generations as future generations will remember us. The world of our ancestors changed and became our world. Change is the one constant we can count on, whether we like it or not. Often as we age and begin to see our way of life and doing things fade away and a new order emerges, we try to keep things from changing by trying to hold on to the past, to the familiar, to what we know.

But God's ways are bigger than us, God's time is beyond our comprehension. While we may feel loss when people, when traditions and institutions fade and die, we can take comfort in the fact that God is always on the move, always seeking to renew and bring the kingdom closer and closer. What we feel as loss is often just the winter before the spring. When we see death, it's just the dormant seed waiting to spring into new life. Often we grieve the loss of the familiar, of those norms that we found comfort in. Yet that is part of the mystery of faith. We need to trust that there is renewal and resurrection to come, that God is making all things new. What emerges may not be what we expect, and may not be exactly what we'd like, however it is what is needed, and part of the larger picture beyond our limited vision.

Change is often hard, but nobody said discipleship was easy either. Ours is to continue to seek God at work, and follow that work where it leads, even if it's to something unexpected, and maybe even uncomfortable, as change often is. I hope and pray that we have the faith to move the mountains we are called to move and to seek the Spirit's leading in new realities and possibilities, while honoring the work of those who came before that got us to the here and now. May it be so. Amen.

A Call to Serve

Brothers and sisters, Dr. Martin Luther King reminds us:

“I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be.

You can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be.”

The invitation to bring our tithes, pledges, and offerings is an invitation to support one another, those within this community and beyond, to become all of what we are called to be.

Our tithes, pledges, and offerings—both monetary and other—enable us to give thanks to God for the resources we have been given and enable us to be resources for others.

As we give to this ministry,
we help others become what they can be
and we become more of what we can be.

Give generously and watch the miracles of God
unfold in our lives and our ministry together.

As we listen to the following selection from Annie, let's reflect not only the saints that have gone before and their work that has brought us to this place, but also on the current needs around us, and what we are being called to in our own work, here and now, and in the future.

Time for Reflection

Annie Center

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Now, as God's saints in this time and place, we have the opportunity to feed others from the abundance of all we have, to swallow up the pain and suffering of others, to wipe away the tears of children who are lonely and fearful. May the gifts we offer, and the lives we lead, reveal the One for whom we have waited and who invites us to spread grace over all the world. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

HYMN (Lyric Video)

[New Earth, Heavens New](#)

written by Harris Loewen, performed and posted to YouTube by Manchester Church of the Brethren, used and reported under CCLI Streaming License 20261246

Benediction

May God, who comes to us in the things of this world, bless your eyes and be in your seeing.

May Christ, who looks upon you with deepest love, bless your eyes and widen your gaze.

May the Spirit, who perceives what is and what may yet be, bless your eyes and sharpen your vision.

May the Sacred Three bless your eyes and cause you to see.

~ written by Jan L. Richardson, and posted on The Painted Prayerbook. <http://paintedprayerbook.com/>

Postlude

Annie Center