

Worship Service - "Why Worry?"

Pentecost, Year C,

5th June, 2022

Romans 8:14-17 CEV / John 14:8-14, 25-27 NRSV

Prelude

Opening Music [Video] [*The Best In Me*](#) **Marvin Sapp**

written by Aaron W. Lindsey, Marvin Sapp, CCLI SONG #6153362,
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Welcome Guests / Announcements

Pass the Peace

Hymn *Holy Spirit, come with power* 26

Call to Worship [responsive]

One: The Spirit is among us now!

All: **The Spirit calls us to rejoice together!**

One: The Spirit is moving in our world now!

All: **The Spirit calls us to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God!**

One: The Spirit is within us, alive in us now!

All: **The Spirit awakens us to the movement of God in the world!**

One: Come, worship God, and be filled with love,

All: **For God is about to rush the world with the Spirit!**

Invocation

God of Spirit, You are the restless breath of love that sweeps through the world. You move where you will, breaking down barriers, Stirring hearts to change, making all things possible. Inspire each one of us to hunger and thirst for justice!

Come, Spirit of God, Sweep through our world bringing great change. May the bounty of your goodness be shared more justly, So all may share in the rich blessings of your creation. And, for us, bring transformation in our praying and living, So that we may act justly, love mercy, And walk humbly with you all the days of our lives. Amen.

Graduate Recognition (Slide Show)

Epistle Reading – Romans 8:14-17 CEV

Only those people who are led by God's Spirit are his children.

God's Spirit doesn't make us slaves who are afraid of him. Instead, we become his children and call him our Father.

God's Spirit makes us sure that we are his children.

His Spirit lets us know that together with Christ we will be given what God has promised. We will also share in the glory of Christ, because we have suffered with him.

Hymn

Blessed Assurance

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A Time of Prayer

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Holy One, We are not sure what it would be like if the Holy Spirit blew through our churches again as it did on the day of Pentecost. However, we want to speak the language that you have given, louder, and more clearly in our lives and church.

So we pray, come Holy Spirit come, pour out your fire of love upon us to be the body of Christ in a world that is often hurting, hungry, and cynical.

We want to bring the good news to the poor, heal the broken-hearted, preach deliverance to captives, bring recovery of sight to the blind and set at liberty all that are bruised.

As your disciples, we pray for all who suffer, are poor, despairing, burdened, blind and battered.

In your loving breeze, we pray for health and wholeness for those who are physically ill, for those who are mentally ailing, for those who are money sick, for those who are spiritually unwell.

We pray for the healing of your creation, and the renewal of the face of the land.

We pray for those who are thirsty, that they would drink from your fountain of living waters and never thirst again. Amen.

Gospel Reading

John 14:8-14, 25-27 NRSV

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.'

Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"?'

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.

Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

'I have said these things to you while I am still with you.

But the Advocate the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

Message – *Why Worry?*

One of the down sides to having friends who listen to NPR all the time is finding out what the latest news is, hearing about all the goings on in our community and the world at large. While I don't keep my head buried in the sand, I like to ration the amount of news I'm exposed to. It just seems like there is so little to find hope in these days. From wars to school shootings, pandemics to the ever increasing cost of food and fuel, there is no shortage of things to cause us concern, things for us to worry about. Often it seems like we lead lives of worry. As children, we worry about fitting in and being accepted by our classmates and peers. As adults, we worry about our jobs and having enough to care for our family, and ourselves as we grow older. If we have children, often we too worry about our kids fitting in and being accepted by their classmates and peers. We also worry about how the events in the world around us might impact those core concerns of our own lives. Will we have a recession? Will inflation make it difficult to put gas in the car, food on the table, or pay the rent?

While we ourselves may not be at that point ourselves, I would almost guarantee we know someone who is. As members of a community of faith, we too have unique worries of our own. What will be going wrong next with our aging facility? How will we make ends meet with shrinking attendance or the loss of a tenant? What is our purpose now? Are we still being the church? The list of potential worries in every facet of our lives goes on and on. It can be exhausting, and has been exhausting these last several pandemic years. I feel it and I'm sure you do too. There are more days than I'd like to admit that I just don't seem to have the energy to get done what should get done. Worry isn't just a mental exercise, it takes its toll physically as well.

According to an article in Healthline, constant worry can cause rapid heart rate, palpitations, chest pain, and increased risk of high blood pressure and heart disease. It can also affect digestion leading to nausea and other digestive issues, and may even be linked to increased risk of irritable bowel syndrome and also affects the immune system, making you more susceptible to infections. Clearly, worry is not a healthy way to be. But what can we do? With so many potential risks in our lives, how can we not be concerned? We can often feel overwhelmed and isolated and it can be difficult not to worry when there is so much uncertainty in our lives.

The disciples in our text from John this morning found themselves in similar circumstances. They too were struggling with worry: worry about what the future held for them, concern about the path they chose, and how they and the movement they were part of would survive after their leader was gone. By this point in John, Jesus had already revealed his impending death and had also foretold the fate that awaited Peter. He has begun his final discourse to them, the last time he would address them as the Jesus they had followed and gotten to know, that insightful rabbi from Nazareth. They are so desperate and grasping for straws that Phillip asks Jesus for validation of all that he has revealed to them. He wants some assurance that Jesus is who he says he is, that he has that divine connection they've heard so much about. Perhaps he needs something concrete to relieve the growing worry that he might have made a terrible mistake, that the path he is on is valid and real and has meaning. They have all taken a great risk and are now facing the potential consequences of their choice to follow Jesus, and join this new movement. They are being noticed and not in a good way. They are feeling the beginnings of the isolation and fear that is coming following the crucifixion. Worry is certainly nothing new. Their world was full of fears and concerns too. But Jesus doesn't offer Phillip the once and done solution to the worry of the

moment that he seeks. Instead he offers something much more comprehensive, something of universal use. A resource that can be used with all the worries in their lives then, and with the worries to come. Because there will always be things to worry about. Things that cause concern, potential threats of life in an imperfect world. Jesus reassures them that they will not have to face their fears alone. They will have help, they will still have guidance when he is no longer among them. God will provide an Advocate, one sent to guide and direct them in the difficulties that lie ahead. One that will provide comfort and assurance that God is with them, that they are not abandoned and alone.

Paul shares in Romans that those who are led by the Advocate, the Spirit, are children of God. They are adopted into the holy family and share in the glory of Christ. In Acts, the chronicles of the disciples after the resurrection make clear that that Spirit is working with and through them. But that helper was not reserved just for the original disciples. This Advocate is perhaps even more important for those who followed, who didn't have first hand knowledge of the works and teachings of Christ. Those who believed in faith alone. Those who needed help to keep that fire alive through the centuries and millennia. People like us.

So where do we turn when the worries of the world threaten to overwhelm us? Do we try to bear it all on our own shoulders or sit in paralyzed dread? Do we keep a stiff upper lip and just push the worry down, only to rear its ugly head in other, often unhealthy ways? Sound familiar? Maybe we should try to take some time to listen for that still, small voice, that leading that may not be what we would have chosen on our own. And not just as individuals, but as a faith community as well.

Maybe we spend too much time trying to solve our problems from a human point of view that we fail to take notice of what the Spirit is leading us to. After all, it's all too easy to fall back on the logic and norms of how the world around us works. That may make sense but does it solve our problems, does it lessen our worry? Or is it just the easy way, the way we know. And maybe that's the root of the problem. We need to learn to know a different way. One that is based on faith and seeking instead of surety and comfort. As we chart our path forward as a faith community and as individuals, I hope and pray we take intentional time to just take a break and give the Spirit space to speak, to lead, and to call us to where and what we are supposed to be and do. And we may find ourselves with less worry and more of the peace of Christ that is just waiting for us to take. Amen.

A Call to Serve

Because of our love for the Divine Giver, we seek ways to share our love through our treasures, talents, and time. Whether we give in this hour or throughout this week, may we remember that God's Spirit encircles these gifts with hope.

A Time for Reflection - *Musical Interlude*

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy Winds of Excitement,
May the gifts we share today and throughout this week nudge us to dream your dreams. May our giving inspire us to embrace your visions for our world. Holy Spirit, enliven our souls to create your realm of justice and peace on earth. Amen.
(Worship Ways, ucc.org)

Hymn

Move in Our Midst 418

Blessing/Assurance (from Phillipians 4:4-7)

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." May it be so. Amen.

Postlude