INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

God’s Grace in a Secular Society

AS WE GATHER

We gather to thank God for all His gifts to us in this great land. Although it is an imperfect nation, in God’s grace He continues to bless us. The Gospel is freely proclaimed in Word and Sacrament, and we have the opportunity to share the Good News with all whom we meet.

There are three parts to the Service of the Word. First, in “The Promised Land,” we will recall how, when our forebears arrived here, they saw the opportunities in this land as similar to those of the Promised Land for the Israelites; they called their towns New Canaan, Bethlehem, and so on. Then, in “Freedom,” we will remember the struggles we have had as diverse groups seeking to live together. Finally, in “Salt and Light,” we will consider how to be faithful brothers and sisters of our Lord in a secular society.
PRELUDES
“Battle Hymn-Hymn of the Republic”  
Fred Bock  
“Hymns of God and Country”  
Nielson/Young  
Diana Gaide, piano and Michael Zehnder, organ

PASTORAL GREETING

TOLLING OF THE BELL

HYMN
“Before You, Lord, We Bow”  
LSB 966  
Verses 1-3

INVOCATION
Pastor:  In the name of the Father and of the * Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
People:  Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES  
Deuteronomy 8:7–8, 10; 1 Peter 2:16; Matthew 5:16

Pastor:  The Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, . . . a land of olive trees and honey.  
People:  And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land He has given you.  
Pastor:  Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil,  
People:  but living as servants of God.  
Pastor:  Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works  
People:  and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

HYMN OF PRAISE
“The Wonderful Cross”  
Tomlin/Reeves  
Derek Zehnder, saxophone

When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of Glory died  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride

O the wonderful cross O the wonderful cross  
Bids me come and die and find That I may truly live

See from His head His hands His feet  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down  
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown

O the wonderful cross O the wonderful cross  
Bids me come and die and find That I may truly live  
O the wonderful cross O the wonderful cross  
All who gather here by grace Draw near and bless Your name  
O the wonderful cross O the wonderful cross  
All who gather here by grace Draw near and bless Your name
ENTRANCE PSALM  Psalm 46; antiphon: v. 10

[The pauses are in the locations of “Selah” and are followed by the antiphon.]

Pastor:  “Be still, and know that I am God.
People:  I will be exalted among the nations,
         I will be exalted in the earth!”
Pastor:  God is our refuge and strength,
People:  a very present help in trouble.
Pastor:  Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
People:  though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,
Pastor:  though its waters roar and foam,
People:  though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

Pause for reflection.

Pastor:  “Be still, and know that I am God.
People:  I will be exalted among the nations,
         I will be exalted in the earth!”
Pastor:  Come, behold the works of the L ORD,
People:  how He has brought desolations on the earth.
Pastor:  He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
People:  He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
         He burns the chariots with fire.
Pastor:  The L ORD of hosts is with us;
People:  the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Pause for reflection.

Pastor:  “Be still, and know that I am God.
People:  I will be exalted among the nations,
         I will be exalted in the earth!”

Part 1: The Promised Land

HYMN  “Sing to the Lord of Harvest”  LSB 893
Verses 1-2

READING  Deuteronomy 8:1–6

Pastor:  When colonists were coming to the New World, they reflected on it in terms of the land God has promised to the patriarchs. It was, and still is, a land of milk and honey. How are we to live in this great land? Among the instructions Moses gave the Israelites just before they would cross the Jordan are the following:

Lector:  A reading from the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy:
Moses told the Israelites: Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the Lord promised on oath to your forefathers. Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years. Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you. Observe the commands of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and revering him.

CONFESSION

Pastor: Although the people remembered the Lord’s disciplining them in the wilderness, they did not walk in His ways or fear Him in the Promised Land.
People: We confess that we also have failed to keep the commandments. We have taken the Lord’s blessings upon our nation for granted.
Pastor: Remember that these United States are not the final promised land.
People: We confess that we have sinned against one another; we have not acted like children of our heavenly Father. O Lord, forgive.

READING Deuteronomy 8:7–10

Lector: For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In spite of our many mistakes as individuals and as a nation, God has not forgotten us but has continued to bless us. We—who know that we do not live by bread alone, but by the Word made flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ—are assured of His grace and mercy. As a called and ordained servant of Christ I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.
PRAYER
Pastor: Gracious heavenly Father, we ask Your blessings upon all who tend the soil, transport the food we need, and market it throughout the land. Give them strength, good weather, and bountiful harvests so that we may all be fed. We return thanks to You for all that is included in the daily bread You provide. O Lord, who has blessed this great land,

People: hear our prayer.
Pastor: Lord God, in whose hand are this planet and all the resources it holds, we ask Your blessings upon all who use their hands, hearts, and minds to maintain the fragile nature around us. Give them understanding so that the air, land, and sea continue to support the diversity of life around the globe. Your Son stilled the storm with a word; in Your grace protect us all from the perils of fire and flood, storm and drought. O Lord, who has blessed this great land,

People: hear our prayer.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE (10 a.m. only) Kathy Johnson

HYMN “For the Fruits of His Creation” LSB 894
Verses 1 & 3

SERMONETTE-PART ONE
“Of A Country But Not Of The World” Pastor John Larson
TEXT: Matthew 22:21

Part 2: Freedom

HYMN “Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness” LSB 849
Verses 1 & 3

READING 1 Peter 2:13–21

Pastor: When the Church was ignored or persecuted in the days after our Lord’s ascension, many Christians thought that freedom was impossible. Some, though, believed they were forgiven, even when living without regard for God’s Law. Here is a portion of Peter’s exhortation under those circumstances.

Lector: A reading from the second chapter of First Peter:

Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of
God. Show proper respect to everyone, love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

CONFESSION

Pastor: Christ purchased our freedom from God’s Law by His suffering and death.
People: We confess that we take His sacrifice for granted; we sin knowingly, assuming God’s forgiveness, instead of thanking Him with faith active in love. O Lord, forgive.

READING 1 Peter 2:22–25

Lector: “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

ABSOLUTION

Pastor: God has graciously continued to call us to repentance and newness of life. For the sake of our Savior, who took our sins to the cross, He forgives us and bestows eternal life. As a called and ordained servant of Christ I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

PRAYER

Pastor: Lord of the nations, we ask Your blessings upon all who make, administer, and adjudicate our laws; give them courage and wisdom. Grant that freedom continue to ring in this great land. Give our leaders hearts of compassion and minds of justice. Protect and defend all who maintain the peace at home and defend freedom abroad. Assure of Your presence all
who support the poor, powerless, and forgotten in our society. O Lord, who has given us the freedom we enjoy in this nation,

People: hear our prayer.
Pastor: We ask Your blessings, Lord Jesus, on all clergy and lay leaders as they speak Your Word of Law and Gospel. Open doors of opportunity so that many come to faith and rejoice in Your forgiveness. Strengthen caregivers at home and health professionals throughout society as they minister to people in crises and those struggling with long-term disabilities. Provide avenues of healing and freedom for all who are oppressed by illnesses of body and mind and addictions of all sorts. O Lord, who has given us the freedom we enjoy in this nation,

People: hear our prayer.

Part 3: Salt and Light

HYMN “Jesus Sat with His Disciples” LSB 932

READING Matthew 5:11–15

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew:

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

CONFESSION

Pastor: The world in which we live does not always share our values and often rejects the efforts of the Church to serve the needs of people on the fringes of society. We are not only citizens of this nation but also members of the kingdom of God, the Body of Christ, called to reveal God’s love in daily living.

People: We confess that we fail to use our abilities to spread the Gospel. We have lost our saltiness and dimmed the Gospel light. O Lord, forgive.

READING Matthew 5:16

In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.
Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Our heavenly Father has not left us alone in our sin. Our baptismal adoption into His family is sure. For the sake of Jesus, He forgives us and deigns to use us as His light in this dark world. As a called and ordained servant of Christ I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN “God of Our Fathers”

1. God of our fathers, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies:
Our grateful songs before your throne arise.

2. Your love divine has led us in the past;
in this free land by you our lot is cast;
Oh, be our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay;
Your Word our law, your paths our chosen way.

3. From war’s alarms, from deadly pestilence
Make your strong arm our ever sure defense.
In our hearts increase;
Your bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

SERMONETTE-PART TWO

“Of A Country But Not Of The World” Pastor John Larson

TEXT: Philippians 3:20-21

APOSTLES’ CREED Text found in the back of the Hymnal.

PRAYER

Pastor: We ask Your blessings, heavenly Father, on those forgotten by the rest of society, on those denied human dignity and justice, on those described in Jesus’ Beatitudes. We pray especially for those near and dear to us in their various circumstances, [including . . .]. O Lord, who graciously calls us Your children,

People: hear our prayer.
Pastor: Father, we ask Your blessings on all Your sons and daughters who call out to You in faith. Send Your Holy Spirit, the giver of all good things, that we use every ability and opportunity to live as brothers and sisters. Restore us
as salt for society and light for the nations. O Lord, who graciously calls us
Your children,

People: hear our prayer.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

OFFERING “Be Thou My Vision/My Shepherd Will Supply My Need”

arr. Brant Adams
Derek Zehnder, saxophone

HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with “Amen!”, a word of affirmation and belief.

COMMUNING TOGETHER

SACRAMENT

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

2 Timothy 4:22

[Colossians 3:1]

[Psalm 136]
PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who ascended above the heavens and, sitting at Your right hand, poured out on this day the promised Holy Spirit on His chosen disciples. For all this the whole earth rejoices with exceeding joy. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS


Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

LORD’S PRAYER Matthew 6:9–13 Text found in the back of the Hymnal.
AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

“America”                        arr. Bill Wolaver
                                    Diana Gaide, pianist

“This Is My Father’s World/He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”  arr. Brant Adams
                                    Derek Zehnder, saxophone

“We Gather Together”

We gather together To ask the Lord's blessing
He chastens and hastens His will to make known
The wicked oppressing Now cease from distressing
Sing praises to His name He forgets not His own
Beside us to guide us Our God with us joining
Ordaining maintaining His kingdom divine
So from the beginning The fight we were winning
Thou Lord were at our side All glory be Thine

We all do extol Thee Thou Leader triumphant
And pray that Thou still Our Defender will be
Let Thy congregation Escape tribulation
Thy name be ever praised O Lord make us free
GENERAL COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The blessing of God almighty—the Father, who establishes all earthly powers, the Son, by whose grace we are citizens of heaven, and the Holy Spirit, who guides us to use His gifts even in our secular society—bless you and keep you, now and forever.

People: Amen.

HYMN “God Bless Our Native Land” LSB 965

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve the Lord in the nation He has given us.

People: Thanks be to God!

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS

POSTLUDE “Songs of Patriotism” Nielson/Young
Diana Gaide, piano and Michael Zehnder, organ

Serving in Worship

OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT Pastor John Larson
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES Michael Zehnder
ORGAN ASSISTANT Diana Gaide

ELDER 8:00 Don Loptien
       10:30 Michael Lawrenz
LECTOR 8:00 Mavis Slifka
        10:30 Jude Donovan
ACOLYTE 8:00 Ian Avedissian
        10:30 Nolan Pierce
USHERS 8:00 Larry Nisbet, Members of the Congregation
       10:30 Jason Dierking, Members of the Congregation
SERVER 10:30 Collin Brinkman
ALTAR GUILD Sally Atchison, Gloria Gaudreault, Judy Peterson, Deb Shilet

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