Hero Hospital VBS Part 1 – A Place for All

Welcome and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Today, we gather for worship, giving thanks that God is with us. We celebrate and love God, who is our Creator, + our Teacher, and our Guide. **Amen.**

We come to God to confess our sins; to share with God the ways that we hurt one another, creation, ourselves, and God.

God, our healer,

**Sometimes we hurt each other by only seeing one part of who someone is; like their disability, sickness, race, gender, or language and we forget that they are first and foremost a person, your child.**

**Sometimes we hurt each other by giving in to fear, by failing to have the heroic courage to be there for each other when things are tough.**

**Sometimes we hurt each other and ourselves by losing hope and closing ourselves off from others instead of reaching out to rely on each other.**

**Sometimes we hurt each other by judging one another instead of helping one another.**

**Sometimes we hurt each other by turning our backs on science, creativity, and discovery; the things you give us to help us learn how to take care of each other.**

**Sometimes we hurt each other simply by forgetting to say thank you with our words and actions.**

**The ways that we hurt each other, ourselves, and creation are the ways that we hurt you God because you have created and you love everyone and everything. We are truly sorry and we ask that you accept our apology and forgive us.**

God’s love is unconditional and it lasts forever; the kingdom of God is full of God’s outrageous love. God accepts our apology and + forgives us of our sins. Now God asks us to do better by caring for and loving one another like God does. **Amen.**

Gathering Song All Are Welcome ELW 641

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Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

God, your kingdom is a place for all and you ask us to live out our faith in you by building your kingdom here on earth. Open up our hearts and minds so that we see one another as people first; recognizing that the parts of who we are, like our disabilities, age, race, gender, language, illnesses, are not the only thing we are, but one part of our identity.

**Amen.**

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

Please share a sign of God’s peace with one another.

Historical Guide Ella P. Stewart

Ella P. Stewart isn’t known for one accomplishment, she’s known for dozens. One of the very first African American female pharmacists in the United States, Ella also served as President of the National Association of Colored Women, Commissioner of UNESCO, won many awards including honorary degrees and induction into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame, but Ella considered the greatest honor of her life to be the naming of the Ella P. Stewart Elementary School in Toledo, Ohio. A world traveler, and leader, Ella often returned to Toledo to visit the school. In 1922 Ella had started the first black-owned drugstore in Toledo, Stewart's Pharmacy. She broke through many racist and sexist barriers in her life. In 1957 Ella was invited to a special dinner honoring distinguished Virginian’s and celebrating the state’s beginning 350 years earlier. After the organizers realized Ella and other people invited were black, their invitations were cancelled. The Toledo Blade newspaper reported that Ella contacted Virginia’s governor to let him know that she had decided for herself not to attend but that, “I still have officially accepted your honor and that honor is still mine.” Ella was active in her church and spent her life spreading the Good News of Jesus as a pharmacist, activist, and leader.

Ella used her gifts to help build God’s kingdom!

**Thanks be to God!**

Bible Reading Exodus 3:7-12, 4:10-17

Then the LORD said [to Moses], "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."

But Moses said to the LORD, "O my LORD, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." Then the LORD said to him, "Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak." But [Moses] said, "O my LORD, please send someone else." Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, "What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs."

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

The gospel according to St. Mark the 2nd chapter (Mark 2:1-12)

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

When [Jesus] returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone? At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — he said to the paralytic — I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home. And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

The gospel of our Lord**.**

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon (preaching notes)

* Big Question: Does experiencing an illness or disability define all of who you are?
* In Jesus’ world people were defined by their illness or disability.
  + Sometimes their illness or disability was the only thing people in their community knew about them. When Jesus heals someone sometimes the people in their community don’t even know who they are, they can’t identify the person without their illness or disability.
  + An illness or disability was viewed as the most significant part of who someone was and it limited what they could do or be. They were often labeled “unclean” which meant that they weren’t allowed to go to temple or even talk to certain people, they certainly weren’t supposed to touch someone like Jesus.
* But Jesus always saw the person first! Jesus knew that their illness or disability was a part of who they were but it was not all of who they were. Jesus knew that an illness or disability did not limit who someone was or what they could do and it certainly did not exclude them from God’s love or God’s call to build the kingdom.
* In our Exodus reading we see Moses try to limit himself because of his disability, his speech impediment. He tells God that he could not possibly talk to Pharaoh because of his disability. But God knows that Moses is exactly the person that God wants to send to Pharaoh and that this disability does not limit who Moses is or what Moses can do.
* When Moses still limits himself, God meets Moses where he is and supports him by sending Aaron to help Moses.
* Moses’s disability is just one part of who he is and that it does not limit God’s love for him or Moses’s calling to be one of our most important faith leaders!

Hymn of the Day Will You Come and Follow Me ELW 798

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Affirmation of Faith

Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,** **creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,** **who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,** **born of the virgin Mary,** **suffered under Pontius Pilate,** **was crucified, died, and was buried;** **he descended to the dead.** **On the third day he rose again;** **he ascended into heaven,** **he is seated at the right hand of the Father,** **and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,** **the holy catholic church,** **the communion of saints,** **the forgiveness of sins,** **the resurrection of the body,** **and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People (Congregational Response: **“hear our prayer”**)

*(these prayers were taken from Sundays and Seasons)*

Let us come before God in prayer.

God of wholeness, we pray for believers all over the globe. Unify us in service of the gospel, that we may work together as beloved siblings to share your love with all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the cosmos, we pray for creation; the gardens, waterways and creatures near to us and diverse forms of life that remain unseen. Teach us to treat the natural world with reverence, seeking restoration when human divisions have caused harm to your beloved creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all people, we pray for harmony among the nations. Cast out from us unclean spirits of greed and fear, that we may work in solidarity with one another for the common good. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of abundance, we pray for those who are oppressed or in any need. Encourage those who have begun to lose heart. Strengthen and renew us with your Spirit. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of righteousness, we pray for this holy house of worship. Set our gaze upon things eternal, that in thanksgiving for your mercy, we may extend grace to more and more people. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of the ages, in your goodness you have sent us faithful witnesses for every time and place. We give you thanks for those saints, especially Ella Fitzgerald, who now rest in your eternal mercy. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.

**Amen.**

Offering

God, thank you for the gifts and talents that you give each of us. Thank you for the financial gifts that we receive in this congregation. Bless us with generous and grateful hearts and hands. Help us to use all of these gifts in service as we build, here on earth, Jesus’ vision of the kingdom of God. **Amen.**

The Meal

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,

who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,

who preached good news to the poor,

and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,

we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,

and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,

the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;

to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,

be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

God’s kingdom is a place for all. Join in the meal where all are welcome.

You are invited to prepare your bread. *We all eat our bread from our seats after the Pastor says,* “The body of Christ given for you. **Amen.**”

You are invited to prepare your wine/juice. *We all drink our wine/juice from our seats after the Pastor says,* “The blood of Christ shed for you. **Amen.**”

Please put your masks back on.

Blessing

Now may the body and blood of Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

In this meal of communion, we have been reminded once again of God’s outrageous love. God, strengthen us in body and in spirit that we might go out into the world and share your outrageous love in everything we say and do. In the name of Jesus, who shows us what true love looks like, **Amen.**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon with favor and + give you peace. **Amen.**

Sending Song Shine, Jesus, Shine ELW 671

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Sending

Go in peace, building the kingdom of God.

**Thanks be to God.**