



“Then I will  
take away  
**my hand,**  
and you shall see  
**my back,**  
but **my face**  
shall not be seen.”

EXODUS 33:23

**The Service for the Lord's Day**  
**Bethel Presbyterian Church - Online Service**  
**20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**October 18, 2020 - 11:00 AM**

Call to Worship (*L = Leader, P = People*)

L: Lord, you have welcomed us, saying

“I know you by name, and you have found favor with us.”

**P: Lord, you have promised us,**

“**My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.**”

L: Lord, you have blessed us saying,

“I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you.”

**P: Lord, you have humbled us saying,**

“**I will proclaim my holy name in your presence.**”

**All: Lord, show us your glory! We worship you!**

Prayer of Invocation

Faithful God, you are here.

Tuck us into the cleft of the rock;

cover us with your hand when we are anxious,

that we may be courageous to do your will through Christ,

who calls us by name. Amen.

Hymn      “**IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, GOD ONLY WISE**”

ST. DENIO

*Im-mor-tal, in-vis-i-ble, God on-ly wise,  
in light in-ac-ces-si-ble hid from our eyes,  
most bless-ed, most glo-ri-ous, the An-cient of Days,  
al-might-y, vic-to-ri-ous, thy great name we praise.*

*Un-rest-ing, un-hast-ing, and si-lent as light,  
nor want-ing, nor wast-ing, thou rul-est in might:  
thy jus-tice, like moun-tains high soar-ing a-bove;  
thy clouds, which are foun-tains of good-ness and love.*

*To all, life thou giv-est, to both great and small.  
In all life thou liv-est, the true life of all.  
We blos-som and flour-ish like leaves on the tree,  
then with-er and per-ish; but naught chang-eth thee.*

*Thou reign-est in glo-ry; thou dwell-est in light.  
Thine an-gels a-dore thee, all veil-ing their sight.  
All praise we would ren-der; O help us to see  
'tis on-ly the spen-dor of light hid-eth thee!*

### Call to Confession

The Lord says: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,  
and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.  
Let us now confess our sin,  
casting ourselves on the promised mercy and compassion of God.

### Corporate Prayer of Confession (*L = Leader, P = People*)

L: The Lord reigns!

**P: Majestic God, do we tremble in awe before you?**  
(*silent and personal confession*)

L: The Lord reigns!

**P: Worthy God, have we raised your name in praise?**  
(*silent and personal confession*)

L: The Lord reigns!

**P: Sovereign God, have we executed justice?**  
(*silent and personal confession*)

L: The Lord reigns!

**P: We bow before you, holy God.  
Forgive us. Cleanse us. Free us.  
In the strong name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### Sung Response

**“LORD, HAVE MERCY”**

LAND OF REST

*Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy;  
Lord, have mer-cy up-on us.  
Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy;  
Lord, have mer-cy up-on us.*

### Declaration of Forgiveness

The Lord said to Moses:

There is a place near me where you may stand upon a rock.  
When my glory passes by, I'll put you in a cleft in the rock.  
I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by.  
Beloved ones, God has shielded us,  
covered our sin with the hand of protection  
as we hide ourselves in Christ, the rock of our salvation.

## Children's Moment

### Prayer for Illumination

Holy Spirit, illumine for us this Word,  
that the message of the gospel may come to us in power.

### Readings from Holy Scripture

Wisdom Psalm 99 *(Praise to God for His Holiness)*

Torah Exodus 33:12-23 *(Moses' Intercession)*

Gospel Matthew 22:15-22 *(The Question about Paying Taxes)*

Sermon: "The Backside of God"

The Rev. Dr. Wendy Neff

### Affirmation of Faith

*Taken from The Brief Statement of Faith, 1991,  
The Book of Confessions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

**We trust in God,  
whom Jesus called Abba, Father.**

**In sovereign love God created the world good  
and makes everyone equally in God's image  
male and female, of every race and people,  
to live as one community.**

**But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.**

**Ignoring God's commandments,  
we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,  
accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature,  
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.**

**We deserve God's condemnation.**

**Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.**

**In everlasting love,  
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people  
to bless all families of the earth.**

**Hearing their cry,  
God delivered the children of Israel  
from the house of bondage.**

**Loving us still,  
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.**

**Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,  
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,  
God is faithful still.**

## Sharing of Joys and Concerns

### Prayers of the People

Loving God, you are steadfast, forever enfolding  
even when we cannot accept ourselves.

May your Spirit empower us to imitate you:  
by receiving those who feel judged and rejected,  
by walking alongside those who despair,  
by encouraging those who tend to the broken,  
by affirming those who labor in love.

We lift into your tender care  
those whose bodies, minds, or spirits  
have been weakened or crushed.

We lift up to your compassionate grace  
those whose burdens, guilt, or fears seem too massive to bear.

We lift before your expansive mercy  
those whose hatred, rage, or vengeance cannot be contained.

Receive all these cares, loving God,  
and fill us with the light of Christ,  
through the work of your Spirit. Amen.

### The Lord's Prayer

**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 sins,**

**as we forgive those who sin 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.  
Amen.**

*God, whose giv-ing knows no end-ing,  
from your rich and end-less store,  
na-ture's won-der, Je-sus' wis-dom,  
cost-ly cross, grave's shat-tered door:  
gift-ed by you, we turn to you,  
of-fering up our-selves in praise;  
thank-ful song shall rise for-ev-er,  
gra-cious do-nor of our days.*

*Skills and time are ours for press-ing  
toward the goals of Christ, your Son:  
all at peace in health and free-dom,  
rac-es joined, the church made one.  
Now di-rect our dai-ly la-bor,  
lest we strive for self a-lone.  
Born with tal-ents, make us ser-vants  
fit to an-swer at your throne.*

*Trea-sure, too, you have en-trust-ed,  
gain through powers your grace con-ferred:  
ours to use for home and kin-dred,  
and to spread the gos-pel word.  
O-pen wide our hands in shar-ing,  
as we heed Christ's age-less call.  
heal-ing, teach-ing, and re-claim-ing,  
serv-ing you by lov-ing all.*

### Benediction

Brothers and sisters, beloved by God who has chosen you,  
the gospel has come to you not only in word,  
but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit with full conviction!  
Go out now in joy.  
Be an example to all,  
empowered to love the unlovable and forgive the unforgivable  
in the grace-filled name of Jesus Christ.