



All Saints Sunday

October 31, 2021

* *Please stand if you are able*

Prelude: "For All the Saints"

arr. Matt Limbaugh

Gathering

WELCOME & LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

Acolyte: Jesus Christ is the light of the world. We light this candle as a sign that Christ has come and Christ will come again. As the light pushes back darkness let us walk with, learn from, and worship Jesus Christ.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: In our worship, we gather with the saints and angels of all times and all places to declare God's holy name and bring him the glory and honor he deserves.

All: Our participation in worship unites us with all God's people here on earth and in heaven above.

Liturgist: We are people on a journey from death to life, taking up the cross of Christ.

All: We are walking toward a homeland: the coming kingdom and the throne of God.

* **Choir / All Singing: "Marching to Zion"**

Ferguson

* GOD'S GREETING

* GOD'S PEOPLE GREETING ONE ANOTHER

* **All Singing: "254 "For All the Saints"**
Singing verses 1 – 3, 5

Children ages 2–7 may come forward for a brief word and blessing before they leave for “God Loves Me” and “Children in Worship.”

CHILDREN’S BLESSING

Children: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also, with you.

Reconciliation

Liturgist: In this great cloud of witnesses, we celebrate and remember: our ancestors in the faith whose courage enables us to be here today.

All: We remember, we give thanks.

Liturgist: Teachers and storytellers who made God’s stories come alive for us.

All: We remember, we give thanks.

Liturgist: Pastors, church leaders and those who led our worship through the years.

All: We remember, we give thanks.

Liturgist: Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters, and brothers who prayed with us and helped us to grow in our faith.

All: We remember, we give thanks.

Liturgist: Our church families-this one and others we have loved. We remember all those who have been a part of this faith family.

All: We remember, we give thanks.

Liturgist: For your saints on earth who exemplify your love, for saints above who have encouraged us through their life and testimony.

All: We remember, we give thanks.

All Singing: 19 “For the Beauty of the Earth”
Singing verses 1, 4, 5

Liturgist: Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

All: And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

Silent Confession and Reflection

Liturgist: For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:1-3

Choir: “When I Can Read My Title Clear” Joseph C. Lowry
arr. Alice Parker

When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear, and wipe my weeping eyes;
and wipe my weeping eyes, and wipe my weeping eyes,
I'll bid farewell to every fear, and wipe my weeping eyes.

Should earth against my soul engage, and fiery darts be hurled,
then I can smile at Satan's rage, and face a frowning world;

and face a frowning world, and face a frowning world,
then I can smile at Satan's rage, and face a frowning world.

Let cares, like a wild deluge come, and storms of sorrow fall!
May I but safely reach my home, my God, my heaven, my all;
my God, my heaven, my all, my God, my heaven, my all,
may I but safely reach my home, my God, my heaven, my all.

There I shall bathe my weary soul in seas of heavenly rest,
and not a wave of trouble roll across my peaceful breast;
across my peaceful breast, across my peaceful breast,
and not a wave of trouble roll across my peaceful breast

Liturgist: As we fix our eyes on Jesus, we find ourselves among the saints, among that great cloud of witnesses who testify to the life of faith, the work of God, and the hope of the resurrection. Great is the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Liturgist: What do you understand by “the communion of saints”?

All: First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts. Second, that each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and joyfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.
Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 55

Liturgist: Let us stand together and speak these words of faith that have echoed through the ages.

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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

Proclamation

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

All Singing: 755 “Speak, O Lord”
Singing verses 1 and 3

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-3

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon: By Faith – A Liturgical Reading

Choir: “Hark I Hear the Harps Eternal” arr. Parker

Hark, I hear the harps eternal ringing on the farther shore,

As I near those swollen waters with their deep and solemn roar.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, praise the Lamb!
Hallelujah, hallelujah, glory to the great I AM!

And my soul, tho' stain'd with sorrow, fading as the light of day,
Passes swiftly o'er those waters, to the city far away.

Souls have crossed before me saintly, to that land of perfect rest;
And I hear them singing faintly in the mansions of the blest.

Scripture: Revelation 21:1-5

* **All Singing: 251 "The Church's One Foundation"**
Singing verses 1, 2, 4 and 5

Dedication

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Liturgist: With joy, let us now offer our gifts, in music, heart, and resource, as a sign of our deep devotion and covenant faithfulness.

OFFERING

1. General Fund
2. Association for a More Just Society

Choir: "Shall We Gather at the River" by John Carter

Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel's feet have trod;
With its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God?
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river, that flows by the throne of God.
Ere we reach the shining river, lay we every burden down;
Grace our spirits to deliver, and provide a robe and crown.
Deep river, my home is over Jordan.
Deep river, I want to cross over into campground.
Soon we'll reach the shining river, soon our pilgrimage will cease;
Soon our happy hearts will quiver with the melody of peace.

* **All Singing: 956 "To God Be the Glory"**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Sending

* BENEDICTION

Minister: Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

Hebrews 13:20-21 adapted

* **All Singing: 608 "Salvation Belongs to Our God"**

Postlude: "When the Saints Go Marching In"

Today's worship includes a section of liturgy that was borrowed from the Washington D.C. CRC and a portion of the reading during the sermon was adapted from a piece by Tom Long.

Worship Leaders

Organist / Pianist:	Dora Diephouse	Acolyte:	Grace Batkiewicz
Pianist / Vocalist:	Erin Pacheco	Liturgist:	Josie Boswell
Violinist:	Bethany Keeley-Jonker	Prayer:	Ted Boswell
Percussionist:	Eric Robbert		
Banjo:	Ted Boswell		
Minister:	Roger Nelson		

Hymns are from *Lift Up Your Hearts* (Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2013)
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www.hope-crc.org

Psalm 126

Isaac Wardell 2011

Bm G D

1. Our mouths, they were filled, filled_ with laugh - ter; _____
2. The na - tions will say, "He has done great things!" _____

Bm G D

our tongues, they were loosed, loosed with joy. _____
The na - tions will sing songs of joy. _____

G A G A

Re - store us, O Lord! Re - store us, O Lord!

Refrain

G D A Bm

Al-though we are weep - ing, _____ Lord, help us keep sow - ing _____

G D A Bm

the seeds of your King - dom _____ for the day you will reap _____ them! _____

G D A Bm

Your seeds we will car - ry; _____ Lord, please do not tar - ry! _____

G Bm A D

All those who sow weep-ing will go out with songs of _____ joy!

“By Faith.... A Reading”
Adapted from Tom Long

1: We hope for.
2: We do not see.
1: We hope for.
2: We do not see.

5: What?

3: Sure of.
4: Certain of.
3: Sure of.
4: Certain of.

5: What?

1, 2, 3, 4: Faith!

4: Faith is being
3: Sure of
5: What
1: We hope for
4: Certain of
5: What
2: We do not see.

3: By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what is visible.

1: By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

5: By faith Ruth DeYoung loved and served young children. For years Ruth worked as a pre-school teacher and volunteer for any way in which faith in children was being formed. Together Ron and Ruth served in teaching and chaplaincy and life at Hope. Ruth was an aspiring author. She wrote for the Banner and self-published a couple books. A children’s book about the tearing of the temple curtain at the death of Jesus was an expression of love for both writing and children. I can bear witness that Ruth kept after Hope’s pastor to make sure that every detail was faithful to scripture. By faith Ruth DeYoung loved and served....

2: By faith Enoch was taken from this life so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

ALL: Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

4: Because anyone who comes to God must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek him.

5: By faith Lori Louters was a good and gifted teacher/counselor. There were students who swore by Lori and students who swore at her. She was fiercely loyal to those in whom she saw promise, authenticity, and unique gifts. She didn't suffer fools easily, but she was a champion for those who came up on the rough side of the mountain. Underneath what could be a gruff exterior there was a tender heart. Those students who caught a glimpse of that were richly blessed.

Lori was a tenacious fighter when she thought institutions or people that she loved were being tarnished. If she thought corners were being cut, or fundamental commitments were being corrupted, or the strong were getting over on the weak, she was relentless. I once described her as a Pitbull with a bone and she didn't disagree. Whether for her colleagues, or her school, or her church, or her neighborhood, Lori was not easily dissuaded to let down her fight or try a different tact.

Lori was a colorful character – salty, stubborn, opinionated, a story-teller, deaf, a loved a little fluffy dog, and generous to a fault. If she made a meal there was usually way too much and little expense spared. If she caught fish she filled your freezer. If she canned apple sauce you needed to back up a truck. She wanted to use whatever resources she could muster for the good others. Even when she knew that there were limitations, she didn't know how to turn off that impulse.

The joy of Lori's life was tending after her sister Mary; and her death was spirit breaking. That Mary and Lori are now reunited with the saints in light was all that Lori ever wanted in this life or next. By faith Lori loved and served....

3: By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear, built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

5: By faith Bud Prium laughed, loved, and was quick to share a story or talk about his kids, grandkids, baseball, and his life with Evelyn. Bud and I would meet for lunch at New Horizons and he would chat-up the waitresses but his stories always went back to Evelyn. Without her for over 20 years, he never tired of talking about her and their life together. And each story was punctured with a fond laugh and an unmistakable twinkle in his eye.

When Bud passed-on in his early 90s he was the last living Hope charter member who was still a member. 60 years at Hope. Thanks be to God. It is often said that Henry Vellinga, Hope's first pastor, set the DNA for Hope's life. But pastors can only do so much. Hope's DNA was lived out by Bud and Evelyn. As they laughed and loved and fixed meals and welcomed and told stories they embodied Hope's spirit. By faith Bud Prium laughed, loved, and helped plant and sustain Hope's life.

By faith Jenny Vriese pushed at the edges. A Dutch immigrant and artist, Jenny came to Hope when her husband took a position at Trinity. With a tender heart, inquisitive mind, and sharp tongue she helped push back at the edges of faith that are restrictive, exclusive, and counter to the kingdom. Jenny created a wall hanging that hung in Hope's atrium. It featured hands open and reaching out and reaching up. It captured a life open to loving, wondering, and wrestling with God.

Late in life Jenny fell while at home. She spent the night on the floor before anyone found her. That set-in motion the decisions that got her moved to an assisted living center. Her doctor and the friends who encouraged this move were from Hope. So, when Hope's pastor would visit, he would get an ear-full about how Hope had driven her from her home.... After the first fifteen minutes were spent clearing that air, then the conversation would shift to art and family and faith. And her mind and tongue were sharp as ever.

That wasn't always true during her last years. With her biological family scattered to Canada and the Netherlands, her Hope family, particularly Rena and Arlo and Ineka, saw her through to the end – passing into that great cloud of witnesses. By faith Jenny pushed at the edges.

- 4: By faith Abraham, when called to go the place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith, he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; for he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.
- 5: By faith Ellyn Lubbers helped shape the worship experience at Hope. Most everyone at Hope has an Ellyn story. There was some moment of interaction that we cherish. I loved how after worship she would wander into my office to give me something – a Kleenex, a ¼ cup of coffee, a piece of candy. No words just a gift....

And I love how she was just part of the Hope family. For good or for ill we don't have "a special program" or a "ministry" to those with unique challenges. We simply try to welcome all and include everyone. So, as we knew and loved Ellyn, she was one of us. Part of who made us us.

Therefore, every kid growing up at Hope knew that worship included Ellyn singing – loudly – the last few refrains of a hymn. Worship included Ellyn joining in on the benediction or a rousing amen.

Years ago, her father, Dick Lubbers, described Ellyn as something like “joy embodied.” I don’t mean to minimize the struggles that Ellyn faced, but there was in Ellyn a childlike joy that remained intact. The hard part was seeing that spirit slip-away over the last months of her life. We’re less without her. By faith Ellyn shaped worship at Hope.

- 3: By faith Abraham, even though he was past age – and Sarah herself was barren – was enabled to become a father. And so, from this one person, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.
- 5: By faith Fennetta Stoub buried two children and two husbands. It is hard to remember her delightful spirit without remembering that she was preceded in death by those whom she loved the best. Sometimes life is out of order, but Fennetta held onto the sovereignty God. With every recovery from illness, or with every loss, she would talk about God’s ways and that he must still have more for her to do. I don’t know about crediting God’s ways to each loss, but as Fennetta wove grief into her life she lived into her 90s with an abiding faith that all things were held in God’s faithful hand. That faith, nurtured by devotions and a life lived in the shelter of the church, served her well. By faith Fennetta Stoub loved and weathered loss.

By faith Hetty Soodt left an old country and settled in a new country. She and George made their way from the Netherlands to Oak Forest and they found Hope. They joined when they were young and Hope was younger. They left for a while but they returned and without family they found family. They set up camp on Sunday mornings in the back corner and greeted friends with warmth and good cheer. When they found shelter in a nursing home they always asked after the well-being of folks at Hope. Hetty followed George in death and again by faith they left an old country and settled in new country.

By faith Henry Vellinga... By faith Judy Veenstra.... By faith Shirley Price... By faith countless others have crossed over into the company of the saints in light. You may well be thinking of those you loved and those whose loss you still grieve: spouses, parents, siblings, friends. It would be right for us to remember those who died of Covid in these last years. (*silence*)

Part of what this passage in Hebrews celebrates is that faith is found in the fallen and fallible. Faith is found in men and women who stumbled and struggled. Faith doesn’t sidestep the difficulties of life, but it is a gift – sometimes even just the longing that’s true – that God in Christ loves us and will not us go – no matter the circumstances. Ruth, Bud, Lori, Ellyn, Fennetta, Hetty, and countless others....

ALL: All these people were still living by faith when they died.

- 1: They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance.
- 2: They admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.
- 3: People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.
- 4: If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return.
- 5: Instead, they were longing for a better country – a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

ALL: “Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.”

Choir Singing: “Hark I Hear the Harps Eternal” arr. Parker

*Hark, I hear the harps eternal ringing on the farther shore,
As I near those swollen waters with their deep and solemn roar.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, praise the Lamb!
Hallelujah, hallelujah, glory to the great I AM!*

*And my soul, tho’ stain’d with sorrow, fading as the light of day,
Passes swiftly o’er those waters, to the city far away.*

*Souls have crossed before me saintly, to that land of perfect rest;
And I hear them singing faintly in the mansions of the blest.*

- 5: Revelation 21: 1-5

All Singing: “The Church’s One Foundation”