



Greeting and announcements

Sharing our Joys and Concerns

## Prelude

Welcome in the Name our Lord Jesus Christ; Who was, Who is, and Who will come

June 20, 2021 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost: Not by might; Not by power; but By the Spirit of God

Pastoral Prayer

God of our hope and Salvation, You are ever mindful of our journey of faith with all its celebrations and struggles. Show us Your powerful love that calms the storms of our lives. Heal our souls so we can proclaim Your faithfulness to a hurting world so others come to know Your grace and peace within their lives.

During this time of worship, center our hearts, our souls, and our minds on Your Presence with us as we lift to you the prayers of our hearts. We know You promise to hear our prayers always, and so with confidence we pray for:

Our Church, for its leaders and congregation

Our world and our country

Our loved ones - keep them: keep them in health, in safety, in comfort, in Your care. Keep us, also and send forth Your Holy Spirit of truth, of comfort, and of power.

We pray for any among us who feel constrained, or emotionally distressed by our time and era and for any who need to know Your love for them in this hurting world.

We also lift to You those who need comfort as they mourn their loved ones. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, The comforter, who would remind us of Your promises that Nothing in life, or in Death, things present, nor things to come, nor angels or demons within our lives, nor anything in all of creation will ever be able to separate us from Your love in Jesus the Christ, our Lord.

### **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 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 power and the glory forever. Amen**

### **Opening Hymn: A Mighty Fortress is Our God No. 110**

1. A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing; our helper, he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing. For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal.
2. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing, were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he; Lord Sabaoth, his name, from age to age the same, and he must win the battle.
3. And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us, we will not fear, for God hath willed his truth to triumph through us. The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him; his rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure; one little word shall fell him.
4. That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth; the Spirit and the gifts are ours, thru him who with us sideth. Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also; the body they may kill; God's truth abideth still; his kingdom is forever.

## **Call to Worship adapted from Psalm 9**

Pastor: The Lord is a safe place for the oppressed;

**People: The Lord is a safe place in difficult times.**

Pastor: Those who know Your name, O God, trust You;

**People: Sing Praises to The Lord of Hosts!**

Pastor: Proclaim God's mighty acts to the peoples;

**People: We will declare all Your praises; We will rejoice in Your Salvation.**

Pastor: Sing Praises to the Lord of Hosts!

**People: Blessed be the Name of our God, The Lord!**

**Unison Prayer: God of our Salvation, You follow us wherever we find ourselves. Through the actions and ministry of Your Messiah, Jesus, You show us Your power over all the storms of life that engulf us. We confess we don't always see Your salvation. Send Your Holy Spirit to strengthen our faith that we can face the future unafraid and be certain in our trust that You will be faithful to us and our loved ones, always. Teach us to stand confidently because Your care for us will never cease. Bring us to the knowledge that even in the fiercest battles, or struggles, You are there beside us, even to the end.**

## **Hymn: Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus No. 514**

1. Stand Up, stand Up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross; lift high his royal banner, it must not suffer loss. From victory unto victory his army shall he lead, till every foe is vanquished, and Christ is Lord indeed.
2. Stand up, stand up for Jesus, the trumpet call obey; forth to the mighty conflict, in this his glorious day. Ye that are brave now serve him against unnumbered foes; let courage rise with danger, and strength to strength oppose.
3. Stand up, stand up for Jesus, stand in his strength alone; the arm of flesh will fail you, ye dare not trust your own. Put on the gospel armor, each piece put on with prayer; where duty calls or danger, be never wanting there.
4. Stand up, stand up for Jesus, the strife will not be long; this day the noise of battle, the next the victor's song. To those who vanquish evil a crown of life shall be; they with the King of Glory shall reign eternally.

Old Testament Reading: 1 Samuel 17: 1a, 4-11, 19-23, 32-49

17 Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Sokoh and Azekah.

4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span.[a] 5 He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels[b]; 6 on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. 7 His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels.[c] His shield bearer went ahead of him. 8 Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." 10 Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." 11 On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

Now Jesse said to his son David..... See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them.

19 They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines." 20 Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. 21 Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. 22 David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. 23 As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it.

32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." 33 Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth." 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, 35 I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. 37 The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine."

Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you." 38 Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. 39 David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. 40 Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. 41 Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. 42 He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. 43 He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44 "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!" 45 David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands." 48 As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. 49 Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. NIV

Gospel Reading: Mark 4: 35-41

### Jesus Stills a Storm

35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." 36 And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. 37 A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" 39 He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. 40 He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" 41 And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" NRSV

Pastor: This is the word of God for the people of God.

**People: Thanks be to God!**

Message: Not by Might; Not by power; but By the Spirit of God

I used to be a Youth Coordinator, of my local church, the “Back Mountain Youth,” and the “Wilkes-Barre District Youth” —which lead to me being on the Conference Youth Council and the North Eastern Jurisdictional Youth—oh and lets not forget Chrysalis—the youth Emmaus Walk. I had so many Youth programs going on all over the place. The ones that stand out were the “March Mystery Get-a-ways that I, and another pastor developed each year for our district youth. Mike Willis and I would choose a Bible Story, and plot out rooms to give hints to the Youth to solve what story we had chosen. David and Goliath was the second one we worked on.

Friday night was “Mystery solving,” then on Saturday morning we had a “jury trial” for David. We divided the youth up into groups - prosecution lawyers (led by our resident lawyer Ben), defense lawyers (led by our resident Bible Scholar Mike Willis), and a jury of peers (led by myself). You see, David was not part of the “official National Army” He was only there to take lunch to his brothers. Lots of stuff came out in the trial that reiterated the story, and the premise that “with God all things are possible” and we can be empowered by God to tackle all sorts of things without “arming ourselves to the hilt” against the enemy.

I like David’s words . . . “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.” In other parts of the Bible we get the same message:

Zechariah 4:6 [The Lord] said to me, This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts.

I try to live in that faith. Paul’s Letter to the Romans puts it another way in chapter 8: . . .If God is for us, who can stand against us..” Paul writes:

31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33 Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.[w] 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or

famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You have heard that throughout my ministry here. God is for us, and will never forsake us, even if we, like the Disciples from our Gospel lesson, feel like they are on a sinking ship. God will always be our helper. But sometimes we need to hear the words from God and Jesus “Peace, be still!” Sometimes we want to see, feel, and experience the complete assurance that “all will remain calm and peaceful.” Unfortunately, from both our Lessons, God doesn’t hide from us the realities of our fallen world, of war, disease, storms, distress, or even what we call death.

What God promises us within our journey through this fallen world is God’s promises that God will never forsake us, and is present within love and strength, from everlasting to everlasting.

You have been reminded that Jesus Christ is your Lord and that you are God's servants - you are loved - you are forgiven - and you are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live as God's faithful ones in this world.

### **Closing Hymn: Be Still My Soul No. 534**

1. Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side. Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain; leave to your God to order and provide; in every change God faithful will remain. Be still, my soul: your best, your heavenly friend through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.
2. Be still, my soul: your God will undertake to guide the future, as in ages past. Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be bright at last. Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know the Christ who ruled them while he dwelt below.
3. Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on when we shall be forever with the Lord, when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone, sorrow forgot, love’s purest joys restored. Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

## **Benediction:**

Pastor: Remember the Promises of God;

**People: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord!**

Pastor: Let your hearts sing praises to God for God's incredible love for us;

**People: Praise to the God of our Salvation.**

Pastor: The Lord is always a Safe haven for our walk of faith;

**People: Our lives are in God's care forever and ever.**

Pastor: Believe in God, Believe, also in Jesus the Christ;

**People: We will live by faith in God who is our fortress.**

Pastor: Journey forth in peace;

**People: God is our peace forever more.**

## **Postlude**