

ALLEGIANCE: Citizens of Heaven

April 21, 2024

As We Gather

How do we live as citizens of heaven while also citizens of our earthly nation? How do we keep Christ at the center when our country is going through a contentious election season? How do we treat others, especially those with whom we disagree? How do we keep our ultimate allegiance to Christ when our nation is divided on so many issues? How do I respond to news that worries me, disgusts me, or alarms me? Where do I find hope in difficult times?

This is what we will be looking at in this three-week worship series. We are directly addressing the current political season and what it means to be salt and light in our lives at this time. We are focusing on teachings that are always true, but that are especially applicable and relevant during this time.

Today we focus on ALLEGIANCE. Where do I place my highest allegiance? Is it to a political party? Or a political ideology? Or is it to the nation? Christians are called to offer our highest allegiance to Christ, that our values and actions flow from His Word and what He has done. What does that mean in a divided nation, where there is intense disagreement on many issues? How do I live each day in a way that reflects that my allegiance above all is to Christ?

Welcome

+ Gathering +

“Come Thou Font of Every Blessing” LSB 686

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|---|--|
| 1 Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory
Fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore Thee;
May I still Thy goodness prove. | 3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now like a fetter
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above. |
| 2 Here I raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by Thy help I've come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood. | 4 Oh, that day when freed from sinning,
I shall see Thy lovely face;
Clothed then in the blood-washed linen,
How I'll sing Thy wondrous grace!
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry;
Take my ransom'd soul away;
Send Thine angels soon to carry
Me to realms of endless day. |

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

Musical Offering

Second & Third Grade Choir

Prayer

Children's Church

+ Service of the Word +

First Reading: Jeremiah 29:4-14

This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵“Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” ⁸Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. ⁹They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them,” declares the LORD.

¹⁰This is what the LORD says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹²Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Psalm 2 (Read responsively)

Reader: Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?

People: **The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,**

Reader: “Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.”

People: **The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.**

Reader: He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,

People: **“I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.”**

Reader: I will proclaim the LORD's decree: He said to me, “You are my son; today I have become your father.

People: **Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.**

Reader: You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”
People: **Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.**

Reader: Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.
People: **Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.**

All: **Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Second Reading: Philippians 3:17-21

Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. ¹⁸ For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Holy Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You O Christ!

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Sermon

"Citizens of Heaven"

Ministry Moment

Stephen Ministry

Offering

Musical Offering

*"Tell the Story"
(I Love to Tell the Story)
Arr. Lloyd Larson*

Sanctuary Choir

Tell the story of Jesus
How He came to forgive and save us
Tell the wonderful story
Of Jesus and His love.

I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above.
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love.
I love to tell the story
Because I know 'tis true.
It satisfies my longings
As nothing else will do.

I love to tell the story
Twill be my theme in glory,
To tell the old, old story
Of Jesus and His love.

Tell the story of Jesus
How He came to forgive and save us

Tell the wonderful story
Of Jesus and His love.

I love to tell the story
For those you know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting
To hear it like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory,
I hear the new, new song,
Twill be the old, old story
That I have loved so long.

I love to tell the story
Twill be my theme in glory,
To tell the old, old story
Of Jesus and His love.

Tell the story of Jesus
How He came to forgive and save us
Tell the wonderful story
Of Jesus and His love.

Prayers

Please add Your prayer requests to the chat.

Thanksgivings

Pastor: O Lord, we praise You.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Petitions

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

St. John's People and Families

Gary & Connie Brayton
Hope Duden
Hoag & Lois Husted
Sue Kjeldsen Peddy
Lloyd Zuehlke
Casey, Cori, Aubrey, & Quinn Carlson
James, Elizabeth & Ava Connaughton
Tod, Jenny, & Amaya Kawachi
Steve, Michelle, & Bear Perotti-Kline
James, Christy, & Tyler Trumble

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 the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

+ Sending +

Benediction

"The Church's One Foundation" LSB 644

1 The Church's one foundation Is Jesus Christ, her Lord; She is His new creation By water and the Word. From heav'n He came and sought her To be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.	Yet saints their watch are keeping; Their cry goes up, "How long?" And soon the night of weeping Shall be the morn of song.
2 Elect from ev'ry nation, Yet one o'er all the earth; Her charter of salvation: One Lord, one faith, one birth. One holy name she blesses, Partakes one holy food, And to one hope she presses With ev'ry grace endued.	4 Through toil and tribulation And tumult of her war She waits the consummation Of peace forevermore Till with the vision glorious Her longing eyes are blest, And the great church victorious Shall be the church at rest.
3 Though with a scornful wonder The world sees her oppressed, By schisms rent asunder, By heresies distressed,	5 Yet she on earth has union With God, the Three in One, And mystic sweet communion With those whose rest is won. O blessed heav'nly chorus! Lord, save us by Your grace That we, like saints before us, May see You face to face.

Offering

<http://stjohnslutheran.net/give/>

You may also mail your offering to St. John's (3521 Linda Vista, Napa, CA 94558)

Memory Verse for This Week

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.

Philippians 3:20-21

Serving in Worship Today

Preacher	Rev. Michael A. Schmid
Lay Reader	Sarah Bartelt
Organist	Erin Blackwood
Sound Technician	Bill Clark
Streaming Technician	Martin Meissenhalter
Projector Tech	Brian Schoenfeld
Worship Preparation Team	Betsy Gewirz, Bob & Doris Klein
Children's Church Leaders	Kevin Mathison, Nina Montes,
Usher	Missy Loban