

WORSHIP SERVICE

Northampton Presbyterian Church

Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

October 24, 2021

10:00 AM

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Esther Circle, Tuesday (10/26) at 10 AM.**
- **Women's Breakfast, Wednesday (10/27) at 9 AM, at Manny's.**

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Take heart! For we are gathered in God's presence

MANY: To proclaim the wonders of the Lord.

ONE: Get up! For we are beckoned by the Risen Son

MANY: To respond to grace undeserved.

ONE: God is calling us! For we are united by the Spirit

MANY: To follow Jesus on the way.

ONE: Come, let us worship God!

UNISON OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin this day by rejoicing! The Lord has done such wonderful things for us. Let us be glad! The day before us is uncertain. We know not what we will encounter on our way. Wherever we go, we go forth as people of the living God, and we go forth to touch the lives of all with His healing touch. Let us begin this day with rejoicing! And return to our homes with gladness!

OPENING MUSIC

Our God

Praise Band

**Water You turned into wine, You opened the eyes of the blind
There's no one like You, none like You
Into the darkness You shine, out of the ashes we rise
There`s no one like You, none like You
Our God is greater, our God is stronger
God, You are higher than any other
Our God is Healer, awesome in power
Our God, our God**

**Into the darkness You shine, out of the ashes we rise
There's no one like You, none like You**

**Our God is greater, our God is stronger
God, You are higher than any other
Our God is Healer, awesome in power
Our God, our God**

**Our God is greater, our God is stronger
God, You are higher than any other
Our God is Healer, awesome in power
Our God, our God**

**And if our God is for us, then who could ever stop us?
And if our God is with us, then what can stand against?
And if our God is for us, then who could ever stop us?
And if our God is with us, then what can stand against?
Then what can stand against? Then what can stand against?**

**Our God is greater, our God is stronger
God, You are higher than any other
Our God is Healer, awesome in power
Our God, our God**

**Our God is greater, our God is stronger
God, You are higher than any other
Our God is Healer, awesome in power
Our God, our God**

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(based on Mark 10:46-52)

*ONE: When we want to be a church ever-reforming,
yet cling to comfortable ways:*

MANY: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!

*ONE: When we want to honor your “still speaking voice”,
but are fearful of insights which challenge old assumptions:*

MANY: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!

*ONE: When we want to live into Jesus’ dream of oneness,
but fail to listen to voices of difference:*

MANY: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us!

(We pause for a moment of silent personal confession).

RESPONSIVE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: Take heart, get up; Jesus is calling to us!

MANY: We trust in the One who has guided the church for two thousand years.

ONE: Through Christ, God forgives us our failings, and continues to call us into a community of mutual love and forgiveness.

MANY: Let us celebrate this mercy of God!

SPECIAL MUSIC

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

MUSICAL RESPONSE:

Meet Us Here

Praise Band

Meet us here, in this place

Come and fill us with Your power and Your grace

We long to see, the nations one

Let Your glory fall, Lord, Let Your Kingdom come

Holy is the Lord

Seated on the throne

Sovereign King of all the Earth

We crown You Lord of all

Meet us here, in this place

Come and fill us with Your power and Your grace

We long to see, the nations one

Let Your glory fall, Lord, Let Your Kingdom come

Holy is the Lord

Seated on the throne

Sovereign King of all the Earth

We crown You Lord of all

**Meet us here, oh gracious King
Let us see You in Your beauty and Your majesty
We long to see that glorious day
When the ransomed and redeemed, will join to sing Your praise**

**Holy is the Lord
Seated on the throne
Sovereign King of all the Earth
We crown You Lord of all**

**Holy is the Lord
Seated on the throne
Sovereign King of all the Earth
We crown You Lord of all**

**Sovereign King of all the Earth
We crown You Lord of all**

SCRIPTURE READINGS—GOSPEL PARALLELS:

*Reader's Theater – **John 9:1-41***

*Parallel Reading – **Mark 10:46-52***

SERMON

By Means of Dots

Rev. Judith A. Dwyer

CLOSING HYMN

Be Thou My Vision

SLANE

**Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art;
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.**

**Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son,
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.**

**Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.**

**High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.**

CHARGE & BENEDICTION

WORSHIP NOTES:

The sharing of joys and concerns is very much a part of the fabric and prayer life of many congregations. It is a way we lift to God those for whom we have deep concern or with whom we celebrate life's joys. Pre-COVID, we were accustomed to an intimate level of sharing details of one another's blessings and woes. Post-COVID, we find ourselves in a new worship context that includes livestreaming, recording and archiving every service. In order to care for those whom we are praying, best practice invites us to divulge as few details as possible. It is perfectly acceptable to ask for prayer just by mentioning a person's first name. God knows every hair on our heads and each person we bring to him, and that is sufficient. Let's be good stewards of one another's lives by bringing to public prayer (and to our recordings!) the least amount of detail necessary to bring those for whom we pray to God's loving attention.

The *Call to Worship* is written by Stephen Fearing and posted on **Wild and Precious Life**.
<https://stephenmfearing.wordpress.com>

The *Opening Prayer* is posted on the Starters for Sunday website of the Church of Scotland.
<http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk>

The *Prayer of Confession* is written by the Rev. Bonnie Tarwater and posted on the United Church of Christ's **Worship Ways** website. <http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways>

The *Pastoral Prayer* is from the Baptist Union of Great Britain website. www.baptist.org.uk

The *Benediction* is from *In the Sanctuary of Women*, copyright © Jan L. Richardson. Posted on the painted prayerbook. <http://paintedprayerbook.com/>

Christian Life Groups

Questions for October 24, 2021

Mark 10:46-52; John 9:1-41

Today's stories comes from the genre of healing miracles so often reported in the New Testament. In John's Gospel, an unnamed blind man receives his sight and all who have known him doubt: doubt that he was ever really blind, doubt that Jesus was the one who healed him.

In Mark's Gospel, Bartimaeus – a blind man everyone knows as the son of Timaeus - is an outsider. Jesus comes across him “outside of the city, outside of the well-traveled path, outside of the light, and outside of the economy. Bartimaeus, like many beneficiaries of Jesus' healing, embodies the effects of social exclusion... men in his situation would not be able to form a family, work to sustain themselves and their dependents, or fulfill some obligations proper to civic and religious life.”¹

These realities should make us sit up and notice what the unnamed blind man and Bartimaeus do in responding to Jesus. One is healed by Jesus' touch, the other calls out to Jesus and receives a word of healing. One is hauled off to the authorities and the other hauls himself off to follow Jesus, leaving behind his only, and most valuable, possession: his cloak.

For discussion:

1. The unnamed blind man has to justify his own healing to his parents and all who know him. Have you ever found yourself in the position of having to justify your faith?
2. How would you answer Jesus' question to Bartimaeus: "What do you want me to do for you?"
3. The crowd presents an obstacle to the exchange between Bartimaeus and Jesus, yet Bartimaeus persists. Who are the crowds that prevent you from persisting in your everyday walk with Jesus?

¹Luis Menéndez-Antuña, Commentary on Mark 10:46-52, www.workingpreacher.org. Accessed October 16, 2021.

MINUTE FOR MISSIONS:

Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission (SBRM)

Some of our NPC Mission envelope/online offerings are designated to support SBRM. When SBRM was founded in 1878, the Mission served hot cups of coffee and rolls to guests before church on Sunday. As they continue to respond to COVID-19, they have had to adjust the way they serve their meals. Through prayer and the generosity of supporters like you, they continue to provide three meals a day, 365 days a year to homeless individuals in Center City Philadelphia who are staying at the Mission. Guest & Resident mealtimes: Breakfast is served at 7 a.m., Lunch is served at noon and Dinner is served at 5:00 p.m.

Seeing the Unseen - Rev. Jeremy Montgomery, CEO

Throughout his second year at SBRM, God gave SBRM the eyes to see the 'unseen.' Jesus's admonition to help the hungry, the thirsty, those needing clothing, the sick, and the imprisoned is a clear call to how they are to serve Him. This year more than at any other time in recent history, their ministry was tested in their fearless resolve to meet the needs of people who often go unnoticed and unseen, especially during a worldwide crisis. Heroically, each staff person ensured that every person who came to the Mission was provided needed resources and experienced the love of God.

Throughout 2020, he had the privilege to lead a team who were willing to lay down their life for their guests as they served the unseen during the pandemic. Without hesitation, the front-line teams wrote the manual for the City of Philadelphia's homeless shelter response to the pandemic, they established the City's first COVID-19 quarantine site for the homeless inside their Mission, and they relentlessly advocated with the health department until every guest and staff member had access to COVID-19 testing. They did all of this while showing God's love and being family to those who had none. The pandemic has also provided opportunities for so many of you, their partners, to show transformational generosity. Thank you for loving God in a way that cares for SBRM's homeless and hungry brothers and sisters whom you may not have met. They cannot do so without your help!

"Ways to Help Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission" – With every gift to the Mission, you are lifting people up who feel rejected by society, and you are the change-makers for every person they serve. As SBRM faced the challenges of COVID-19, they never lost sight of Jesus' call, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." www.sundaybreakfast.org.

"If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?" James 2:15-16.

