

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth  
Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022  
Rev. Gerry Gallant**

**The Eternal City  
Sixth Sunday of Easter  
Revelation 21:22–27**

**Welcome**

**Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
**let all the peoples praise you!**

Let the earth rejoice and be glad,  
**let the heavens declare your righteousness!**

May all people see your glory, O God;  
**may your ways be known throughout the earth.**

Let us worship the God who loves us;  
**We come to worship with open hearts,  
to raise our voices with thanks and praise.**

**Prayer of Adoration**

God of promise and purpose,  
we greet you this day with thankful hearts.  
As flowers unfurl and buds open,  
the beauty of your world lifts our spirits in praise.  
As children grow and students prepare to graduate,  
their energy and enthusiasm encourage us toward your future.  
Your world is full of such variety and detail,  
we stand in awe of your creation.  
Draw close to us in this hour of worship  
and show us the promise and purpose in our own lives.

May we unfurl with your gift of new life,  
 and move into the future, renewed by the energy of your Holy Spirit.  
 We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,  
 who lives and rules with you and the Holy Spirit  
 as the One True God, now and Forever, amen

**Opening Hymn # 434: “For the Beauty of the Earth” (V 1, 5)**

For the beauty of the earth,  
 for the glory of the skies,  
 for the love which from our birth  
 over and around us lies.

Refrain:  
 Lord of all, to thee we raise  
 this, our sacrifice of praise.

For each perfect gift of thine,  
 to the earth so freely given,  
 graces human and divine,  
 flowers of earth and buds of heaven. [Refrain]

**Call to Confession**

**Prayer of Confession**

Eternal and merciful God,  
 you have loved us with a love beyond our understanding,  
 and you have set us on paths of righteousness for your name’s sake.  
 Yet we have strayed from your way;  
 we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,  
 through what we have done and what we have left undone.  
 As we remember the lavish gift of your grace  
 symbolized in baptism, O God,  
 we praise you and give you thanks that you forgive us yet again.  
 Grant us now, we pray, the grace to die daily to sin,  
 and to rise daily to new life in Christ,  
 who lives and reigns with you,  
 and in whose strong name we pray. Amen

**Assurance of Pardon**

Jesus said, "My peace I give to you.  
Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."  
May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.  
Let his forgiveness set you at peace with God and yourself,  
and make peace with one another. 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the Evil One.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
Forever and ever. Amen.**

### **Responsive Reading**

#### **Question 34. What do we affirm when we say Jesus is God's only Son?**

To call Jesus the Son of God is to say that he is truly God, one with the Father and the Spirit, not created but eternal. To see Jesus is to see God incarnate. To know the Son is to know the Father.

Jn 1:1-3, 14, Jn 14:9, Mt 11:27, 1 Col 1:15, 19, Jn 10:30

#### **Question 35. What do we affirm in saying Jesus was "conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary"?**

The conception of Jesus was a miraculous event in which the Word was made flesh. God became a human being without the agency of a human father. The mystery of the incarnation affirms that Jesus was truly God and truly man. To say, "conceived by the Holy Spirit", is to emphasize the divinity of Christ; to say, "born of the Virgin Mary", is to emphasize the humanity of Christ.

Mt 1:18-20, Lk 1:30-35

#### **Question 36. What is the significance of confessing that Jesus is truly God?**

Jesus, God's only Son, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is worthy of worship. He is the revelation of God and the Saviour of the world. God alone can reveal God to us and save us from sin.

Jn 1:18, Jn 3:16-17, Heb 1:5-6

**Music Ministry: "Make it a Day of Thanksgiving" by Choir**

### **Prayer for illumination**

O gracious God and most merciful Father,  
 you have given us the rich and precious jewel of your holy Word.  
 Assist us with your Spirit, that it may be written in our hearts  
 to our everlasting comfort,  
 to reform us, to renew us according to your own image,  
 to build us up into the perfect building of Christ,  
 and to increase us in all heavenly virtues.  
 Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the same Jesus Christ's sake. Amen

### **Scripture**

#### **Revelation 21:22-27**

**<sup>22</sup> And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup> By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, <sup>25</sup> and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. <sup>26</sup> They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. <sup>27</sup> But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

#### **Children's Hymn # 625: "Seek Ye First" (V 1, 2)**

Seek ye first the kingdom of God  
 And His righteousness  
 And all these things shall be added unto you  
 Allelu, alleluia

Ask and it shall be given unto you  
 Seek and ye shall find  
 Knock and the door shall be opened unto you  
 Allelu, alleluia

### **Children's Lesson**

### **Sermon**

Last week we started to learn about the city of New Jerusalem and its significance for Christians as our eternal home. We learned that because of the removal of the seas that the city will be a place where there is no sin, no evil, no pain, no suffering, no crying and no, death. It will be a place where God and his people will be together for all of

eternity. Where his Fatherly love and care will surround us and provide for all of our physical, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs.

We also spoke of who gets to go; all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. As well as who does not get to go. 'the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars'. The proclamation of who become citizens of Heaven and those who will undergo the second death spoken by the mouth of God Himself.

This week we continue to learn about the city of New Jerusalem and some of its other features that we should all be anticipating in our eternal home. The whole of the Bible points to this end, where all who have faith in Christ are returned to their eternal home in the New Jerusalem and that is why this book should give us just as much peace in our hearts today as it did to those who suffered under Roman persecution when John originally penned this letter from God to the seven churches.

In the scripture that is between last week and this week, John is given a vision of the city's physical aspects. Its shape is compared to that of the Tabernacles and temples, holy of holies, a perfect cube. Throughout all of time God had only been accessible to His people in the holy of holies, that central place where only the priest could enter and commune directly with God, after they performed the proper cleansing rituals. Yet, here in the New Jerusalem, the entire city is built as a holy of holies, a place where everyone who dwells within can commune directly with God, without needing to perform any rituals. The whole city is also covered in precious gems and constructed from the purest gold, showing the immense value that God places on his people and his radiance and his glory.

The John begins to describe the city as a place with no temple. Remember that the temple is where people have always gone to meet God, whether that temple was a tent, an altar of stones or a huge cathedral, the temple is where people have always come to worship and praise God. Yet here in this eternal city there exists no temple, no place for people to go to praise and worship.

The temple, the altar, and the tent, they have all been part of Gods way of communing with his people. In the days of Moses, it began with the tabernacle, the tent, and the first of the holy of holies, a place where Gods glory could shine forth in the midst of the people of Israel. Later when Solomon was king, he wanted to build a permanent structure to house God's glory and the first of the temples was built as a place where God and his people could come together.

Later still we have Jesus appear and walk the earth, God communing with his people directly as he walks the world as the word become flesh. This was the beginning of people no longer needing to go to the temple to communicate directly with God. If we were alive at that time we could have walked right up to God and praise and worshiped him. Jesus confirmed this when He spoke of his death saying:

**John 2:19**

**<sup>19</sup> Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."**

Our God has indeed lived and walked among us, and it was his death and resurrection upon the cross that provided for us the next evolution of God's place of commune with His people. When Jesus ascended into heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit to live in and among his people. Just take a moment and think about that for a moment, all true believers have a part of God living and communing with them directly.

Paul taught us this when he wrote:

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

**<sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.**

Peter wrote the following:

**1 Peter 2:4-5**

**<sup>4</sup> As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, <sup>5</sup> you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

He taught is that when we gather together, we become the church, the dwelling place of our God here on earth where he communes with us directly as we gather in fellowship. Where we guide one another, praise with one another, worship with one another. A place where we are called to help one another and all who come to Christ to grow in their knowledge of God as their saviour and to be the salt and light of the communities in which we live.

Then when Jesus returns, he will bring in the final evolution of the holy of holies, the church perfected in all of its glory, a place in which we can infinitely enjoy the presence of God everywhere we go and in everything we do. A place in which God will be communing with us in a regenerated world which he has designed specifically for that purpose.

One thing to note is that it is the eternal city of '**the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb**', this should make it clear to all of us that Jesus and God are equals, there is not one who sits above the other. Together they form the temple in the New Jerusalem for the children of God.

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the light. He is the one who grants us our ticket home into the eternal kingdom through our faith in him. It was His death that paid the debt of our sins, and it is Him who will sit in the throne and reign for all of eternity and our Divine king and Mediator. From the very first second that you believe and are forgiven from your sins, you have the Holy Spirit enter into you and for all of eternity Christ's atoning mediation will ensure that you are righteous before God and a member of his Covenants.

There is also something else here for us to consider. This vision of the New Jerusalem has something to teach all Christian who live in the world today. Throughout the history of Christianity there have been many great cathedrals built, many grand churches, places of beauty and history like our own church. Places where people were trying to make a place that would help us look forward to the time when we would be completely surrounded by the presence of God. The beauty of these places, the worship that takes place in them, the sounds of the choral music, the liturgical rituals, the prayer, these are all but glimpses of what should be capturing our hearts as Christians, the truth that there will soon come a much better reality for all of us where we will walk in the presence of the Lord. Whatever small piece of peace that pierces your heart while we gather weekly in this building is just a taste of the wonders that will come at the end of the ages.

A second feature of the New Jerusalem is that it is a city without the need for the sun and the moon. Instead, the light that shines within the city of New Jerusalem comes from the Glory of God and the Lamp of the Lamb.

God is the one who spoke light into existence. In Genesis one, God speaks, and light appears, it is not until the fourth day that God creates the sun and the moon to rule over the light during our night and day. Imagine a dark night. On a dark night a single lit candle can provide enough light to see, it can also act as a beacon for people far outside the glow of light that is provided, much in the same way a lighthouse provides a beacon for ships so that they can steer clear of danger. But that same candle or light house on a bright and sunny day provides no help in seeing and cannot even be perceived unless you are much closer. There is no need for a sun or moon in the New Jerusalem because the light that comes from the Lord would make them seem like a candle on a bright sunny day.

Again, it is a light that comes both from the Glory of God and the lamp of the Lamb, equally represented in the light that shines across the whole of the New Jerusalem. A light that is ever present and pushes away all forms of darkness. There will be no night and there for no need for the city to ever close its gates to protect itself from the dangers of the dark.

Think of the light at the end of the tunnel, the matchstick in the darkness, the lighthouse on the shore all those lights which serve to guide us from darkness into a safer place.

We all have had times where we have struggled in the dark for that little bit of light so that we can find comfort. Here on earth when we are in trial and troubles, in spite of all of the woes and moral failures we go through, we can look to this light that exists for all Christians.

The city laid out before John here in his vision is the fulfilment of all of the promises that God has made throughout the ages. It is the place where people of all nations, languages and tribes are gathered together. As the prophet Micah saw:

**Michah 4:1-2**

**4 It shall come to pass in the latter days  
that the mountain of the house of the LORD  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and it shall be lifted up above the hills;  
and peoples shall flow to it,  
2 and many nations shall come, and say:  
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
to the house of the God of Jacob,  
that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths.”  
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.**

The house of the lord was established on the highest of the mountains, A place that all people will flow to and a place where they will call out for others to come to so that they also can walk in the path of the Lord.

It is also a city where the kings of the earth and all nations will bring their glory. This is not material wealth, but instead the things of this world which we use to glorify our God. Our praise, prayers, songs, hymns all the way and forms which we use to raise our voices, hearts, and minds to worship and honor our God. In this perfect city we will have all of the greatest parts of human worship throughout all of time.

The New Jerusalem will be utopia, a perfect place in which all our needs are met, where we live in safety and where there is no night. It can be all of these things because it is a city filled with people who have their names written in the Lamb's book of life. Those who have true faith will have their names inscribed in the Lamb's book and those who live lives that unregenerated people who do not come to place their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, as well as those whose nature stays corrupted by sin, they will receive God's judgement and therefore not be with Christians in the New Jerusalem.

J.C Ryle said it best;



**“You know well there are such people; they are not uncommon; they may be honourable in the eyes of men, they may be wise and knowing in this generation, admirable men of business, they may be first and foremost in their respective callings, but still there is but one account of them: ... they are counted as defiled in [God’s] sight, and nothing that is defiled shall enter heaven.”**

Those who have their names inscribed into the Lamb’s book of life will all share in some characteristics. They will be people who have felt the condemnation of their sins, who have grieved their guilt before God, and who have sought to turn away from the presence of sin in their lives. They will be the ones who trusted in the saving work of Christ, and the atonement of His blood which was shed upon the cross when He died for their sins. They will understand that their salvation comes from their faith in Christ alone, not through anything that they have done, but through his grace, mercy, and love alone. And finally, they will be the ones who felt the effects of the Holy Spirit in their lives, knowing that even though they remained sinful here on earth they were actively turning away from their sinful nature and seeking out God’s holiness more and more in their lives as they were inwardly regenerated by the Holy Spirit at work in them.

John’s vision here at the end of the book of Revelation is meant to give us an opportunity to reflect upon our lives, much in the same manner that people reflect on their lives each year before New Years and make resolutions to lose weight, stop smoking, or eat healthy.

When we do this for New Year’s we reflect upon our financial, physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing and contemplate the changes we want to make to better our lives. Many Christians will also do the same thing with our spiritual wellbeing, we consider what it is that will make us a better Christian, and in the end, we usually make a commitment to read the entire bible, which usually ends after the book of Leviticus.

However, do you remember when I joked last week about there being a quiz on the first thirty-three questions of the book of Revelation. I have one question I would like to review, the very first question of the catechism ‘What is God’s purpose for our lives?’. This is the one question we should find ourselves coming back to over and over in this life. Does anyone remember the answer?

**Question 1. What is God’s purpose for our lives?**

**We have been made for joy: joy in knowing, loving and serving God, joy in knowing, loving and serving one another, joy in the wonder of all God’s works.**

**Gen 1:27-28, Isaiah 61:18, Ps 40:8**

God should be the priority in our lives, New Jerusalem will be overflowing with his presence, and it should be our desire here in our lives on Earth to be continuously

growing closer to him and his presence. Our devotion to sermons, bible studies, fellowship should be transformed from dull study to times of a personal meeting with our Lord God. Times where we seek to get to know our God better and seek to understand His radiant glory in which we will be spending the eternity of our lives.

It should also remind us that like God's light shines forth in the New Jerusalem day and night unceasing, we should be witnesses to that light while we walk here on Earth. We are to be witnesses to the truth of God and his scriptures, witnesses to the power of the Holy Spirit and Witnesses to all those who are caught up in the darkness of their own sins. We are called to be the salt and light of the world shining out into the dark so all who seek God are able to come to Him and find Him and the mercy, grace and love He provides.

Finally, it tells us that the Holy city is only for followers of Jesus Christ. We do not need to be running out in the world telling others to repent from their evil ways. We should be first concerned with our own sins, with getting ourselves right with God, removing the planks from our eyes before we begin to point out the speck of dust in the eyes of non-Christians. It reminds us of the need for fellowship and accountability that all Christians should share with one another helping each other to grow in the faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. We need to be willing to admit the guilt of our sinful ways, go to Jesus for his forgiveness, and then receive His grace, mercy, love, and salvation.

The day of our judgement has not come yet, the second coming of Christ has not happened today, but it could be tomorrow and for that reason we should always be ready for his return and the chance for us to enter into the eternal Glory of God in the Kingdom of Heaven and the New Jerusalem.

Let us Pray,

**Grant Us Your Holy Spirit to Protect Us**

Lord God, heavenly Father,  
 through your Son you promised us  
 that whatever we ask in his name you will give us.  
 Keep us in your Word  
 and grant us your Holy Spirit,  
 that he may govern us according to your will,  
 protect us from the power of the devil,  
 from false doctrine and false worship.  
 Defend our lives against all danger  
 and grant us your blessing and peace,  
 that we may in all things  
 know your merciful help  
 and praise and glorify you as our gracious Father

now and forever;  
 through your Son,  
 Jesus Christ our Lord,  
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
 one true God, now and forever.

**Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Easter 5, Rogate**

**Music Ministry: "I Saw the Light" by Rob Noyes**

## **REAFFIRMATION OF THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT FOR THOSE MAKING A PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH**

### **NEW MEMBERS**

*Today we present Carmaine Brown and Paul Thompson as members of the Church.*

*Will you be a faithful member of this congregation,  
 share in its worship and ministry  
 through your prayers and gifts,  
 your study and service,  
 and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?*

**I do.**

*We rejoice that you now desire to declare your faith  
 and to share with us in our common ministry.  
 In baptism you were joined to Christ,  
 and made members of his church.  
 In the community of the people of God,  
 you have learned of God's purpose for you and for all creation.  
 You have been nurtured at the table of our Lord,  
 and called to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

*The peace of Christ be with you*

### **PRESENTATION**

***An elder, representing the session, presents the candidates:***

***Destiny Bowes is presented by the session,  
 for the reaffirming of the baptismal covenant  
 into which they were baptized.  
 They now desire to profess publicly their faith  
 and to assume greater responsibility***

in the life of the church,  
and God's mission in the world.

*The minister says:*

We rejoice that you now desire to declare your faith  
and to share with us in our common ministry.  
In baptism you were joined to Christ,  
and made members of his church.  
In the community of the people of God,  
you have learned of God's purpose for you and for all creation.  
You have been nurtured at the table of our Lord,  
and called to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Hear these words from Holy Scripture:

*The minister continues:*

Eph. 2:19–22

You are citizens with the saints  
and also members of the household of God,  
built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,  
with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.  
In him the whole structure is joined together  
and grows into a holy temple in the Lord;  
in whom you also are built together spiritually  
into a dwelling place for God.

## **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

*The minister, addressing those making a public profession of faith, then says:*

Now, as you publicly declare your faith,  
I ask you to reject sin,  
to profess your faith in Christ Jesus,  
and to confess the faith of the church,  
the faith in which you were baptized.

## **RENUNCIATIONS**

*The minister continues, using one of the following:*

Trusting in the gracious mercy of God,  
do you turn from the ways of sin  
and renounce evil and its power in the world?

I do.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ  
and accept him as your Lord and Savior,  
trusting in his grace and love?

I do.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple,  
obeying his Word and showing his love?

I will, with God's help.

## PROFESSION

*The minister continues, saying:*

With the whole church,  
let us confess our faith.

*The congregation may stand and join the candidates in affirming the faith in  
the words of the Apostles' Creed:*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and 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.**

*The minister asks one of the following questions of those making a profession of their faith:*

You have publicly professed your faith.  
Will you be a faithful member of this congregation,  
share in its worship and ministry  
through your prayers and gifts,  
your study and service,  
and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

I will, with God's help.

*The minister offers the following prayer, or a similar prayer may be said:*

Let us pray.  
Gracious God, by water and the Spirit  
you claimed us as your own,  
cleansing us from sin, and giving us new life.  
You made us members of your body, the church,  
calling us to be your servants in the world.  
Renew in (name) and (name) the covenant you made in their baptism.  
Continue the good work you have begun in them.  
Send them forth in the power of your Spirit  
to love and serve you with joy,  
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## **LAYING ON OF HANDS**

*The candidates kneel.*

*The minister lays both hands on the head of each of the candidates in turn, while offering one of the following prayers. The sign of the cross may be marked on the forehead of the candidate. Oil prepared for this purpose may be used.*

O Lord, uphold Destiny by your Holy Spirit.

Daily increase in him/her your gifts of grace:  
 the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
 the spirit of counsel and might,  
 the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord,  
 the spirit of joy in your presence,  
 both now and forever.

*The candidate answers:*

Amen.

*After each candidate has received the laying on of hands, the minister prays:*

Ever-living God,  
 guard these your servants with your protecting hand,  
 and let your Holy Spirit be with them forever.  
 Lead them to know and obey your Word,  
 that they may serve you in this life  
 and dwell with you forever in the life to come;  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
 Amen.

## WELCOME

*A representative of the session, or the minister, addresses the congregation in these or similar words:*

Destiny, by publicly professing their faith,  
 have expressed their intention  
 to continue in the covenant God made with them in their baptism.  
 Let us welcome them as they join with us  
 in the worship and mission of the church.

*The people respond, saying:*

With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you  
 to share with us in the ministry of Christ,  
 for we are all one in him.

## THE PEACE

*The minister then says to all those assembled at the font:*

The peace of God be with you.

*They respond:*

And also with you.

*The people may exchange signs of God's peace, greeting those who have publicly professed their faith.*

### **Invitation to Offering**

#### **Offering**

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3). We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer:

**E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. [standrewspert offering@gmail.com](mailto:standrewspert offering@gmail.com) If you have an Offering Envelope #, please include it in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (e.g., Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.**

#### **Offertory Prayer**

Generous God, we thank you for your gift of new life in Christ Jesus.  
Receive our gifts this day, and bless each gift and each giver.  
Use each one to witness to your purposes through our congregation  
and throughout the world you love, in Jesus' name. Amen

#### **Closing Hymn # 457: "Now Thank We All Our God" (V 1, 3)**

Now thank we all our God  
with heart and hands and voices,  
who wondrous things has done,  
in whom his world rejoices;  
who from our mothers' arms  
has blessed us on our way



with countless gifts of love,  
and still is ours today.

All praise and thanks to God  
who reigns in highest heaven,  
the Father and the Son  
and Spirit now be given,  
the one eternal God,  
whom heaven and earth adore;  
for thus it was, is now,  
and shall be evermore.

### **Pastoral Prayer**

Almighty God, gracious Father,  
in the presence of your bounty keep us humble,  
in the presence of all people's needs make us compassionate and caring.  
Give us faith in our praying and love in our serving,  
knowing that by your power  
all may find a new balance in living and a new victory in adversity.  
We pray for all unhappy lives,  
those who are bitter and resentful, feeling life has given them a raw deal,  
those who are sensitive to criticism and quick to take offense,  
those who desire their own way, whatever the inconvenience  
or cost to others.  
May your judgment and mercy be for their healing.  
We pray for those who are lonely,  
who are shy and self-conscious,  
who find it hard to make friends;  
those who are nervous and timid,  
who ever feel themselves strangers in a world they can scarcely understand.  
May your presence inspire confidence and ensure companionship.  
We pray for those who live with bitter regrets,  
for loving relationships brought to ruin,  
for opportunities freely given and woefully abused,  
for the bitterness of defeat or betrayal at another's hand,  
or for failure in personal integrity.  
May your grace give new hope to find victory in the very scene of failure.  
We pray for all in illness and pain,  
weary of the day and fearful of the night.  
Grant healing, if it be your will,  
and at all times through faith the gift of your indwelling peace.  
Bless the company of Christ's folk, the church in every land.

Make her eager in worship,  
fearless in proclamation of the gospel, and passionate for caring.  
Bless our country. Bless our leaders.  
Bless our children and grant us peace within our borders.  
Grant us as a nation to be found effective in establishing peace  
throughout the world.  
Bless us, each one, in the communion of the saints,  
and keep us ever mindful of the great cloud of witnesses that,  
following in their steps, as they did in the steps of the Master,  
we may with them at the last receive the fulfillment  
promised to your people.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ,  
who lives and rules with you and the Holy Spirit  
as the One True God, now and Forever, Amen

### **Benediction**

May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us,  
and the love of God, which enables us to love all,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body,  
make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.