

# Worship Service

BY ANN BELL WORLEY

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## *Prelude*

### *Call to Worship: Psalm 8:3-5*

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars that you have established;  
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,  
mortals that you care for them?  
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,  
and crowned them with glory and honor.

## *Processional Hymn*

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” (vv. 1-3)

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;  
hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away;  
giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

All thy works with joy surround thee, Earth and heaven reflect thy rays,  
stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
singing bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,  
well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother – all who live in love are thine;  
teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

*Henry van Dyke* (1852-1933)

*Tune: HYMN TO JOY*

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## *Pastoral Welcome*

We welcome you to this time of worship in the name of Jesus, the Christ, who is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow, and who called his disciples “friends.”

His earthly ministry was in a different day – before friendship across continents was possible and “friending” became a casual verb. In our techno-savvy world we face new ways of living, yet life is still about relationships with God, ourselves, and our neighbors.

So we gather as Christians to examine our virtual lives in light of God’s call to virtuous living. May God open our eyes to see, our ears to hear, and our hearts to understand as we sing, reflect, and pray together as his friends.

## *Invocation*

Creator God,  
the universe and all that it contains are yours.

You formed us in your image,  
giving us the ability and responsibility to continue  
your work of creating.

We celebrate the ingenuity behind the ever-evolving technologies  
which have given birth to the virtual worlds  
that are part of our common life.

Acknowledging their amazing potential  
for good and for ill,  
we seek your guidance in their use.

Give us clarity to examine  
the virtual lives that they make possible,  
and holy desire to live virtuously in and through them.

Give us the searching questions  
we must continually ask  
if we are to follow faithfully  
in the way of life and of your son.

In Christ’s name and through the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

*The Witness of the Old Testament: Exodus 20:2-11*

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

*The Witness of the New Testament: Romans 12:1-2, 9-18*

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

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## *Choral Anthem*

“The Majesty and Glory of Your Name”<sup>1</sup>

*Tom Fettke (1979)*

## *The Witness of the Gospels: Matthew 7:1-5*

“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye.”

## *Hymn of Invitation*

“The Summons”<sup>2</sup>

[Choir]

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?  
Will you go where you don’t know and never be the same?  
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,  
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

[Women]

Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?  
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?  
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?  
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

[Men]

Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?  
Will you kiss the leper clean and do such as this unseen,  
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

[Choir]

Will you love the “you” you hide if I but call your name?  
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?  
Will you use the faith you’ve found to reshape the world around,  
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

[All]

Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

*John L. Bell (1987)*

*Tune: KELVINGROVE, Scottish traditional, arranged by John L. Bell*

## *Homily*

“Virtual Lives, Virtuous Lives”<sup>3</sup>

## *Discipline of Silence*

## *Prayers of the People*

Let us pray to God for the Church and the world.

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

For all who find their livelihood and leisure in virtual technologies,  
**that they may have the wisdom and will to use them properly,  
in service of human life and creativity.**

For the poor, the simple, the disabled, and the old, and all who are left  
behind in the digital divide,  
**that they might find in the Church honor and dignity and partners  
in social justice.**

For all who suffer from addiction, who are drawn away from the world  
you created to a world of screens and images,  
**that they may rediscover the joys of life in flesh and blood.**

For all who are weary from life without boundaries, between day and  
night, work and play,  
**that they might know the blessing of sabbath rest.**

For all who are lost in our wired world, who have grown passive,  
reactive, and detached,  
**that they might reconnect to the Source of life and find a renewed  
sense of purpose serving God and neighbor.**

For all who hunger for friendship and community,  
and for all who feel alone,  
**that they may find the love and acceptance they seek  
in the presence of God and the communion of saints.**

For all who seek to follow the way of Christ and dwell meaningfully  
with others in the virtual realm,  
**that they might be gracious and discerning,  
witnessing to the faith through their life and practice.**

Ever-living and ever-loving God, hear the prayers of your people.  
Breathe your life into us that we might live the words we pray and  
that all who profess your name might be signs of your great love and  
presence in the world. **Amen.**

### *Passing of the Peace*

### *Communion*

The singing of songs, passing of the peace, and taking of Communion are ancient traditions of the early church and part of our heritage as Christians. When we come together in worship, we are practicing the faith, that we might carry it with us to all of the communities where we reside. Jesus calls us to the table, saying, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:12-13).

### *Hymn of Commitment*

"Full of Love and Christian Virtue"

Full of love and Christian virtue, may God's people always be  
living out the new creation with faith, hope, and charity,  
prudence to discern the truth, justice to give all their due,  
fortitude to conquer fear, temperance toward earthly goods.

In a world that's ever-changing, you, O God, are constant still.  
Help us in each age and season, your high purpose to fulfill:  
dare us to embrace new boundaries, grounded in your liberty;  
teach us how to be good neighbors, building true community.

Let us be a mindful people, walking in the way of Christ;  
keep us from the base and shallow of a merely virtual life.  
Meet us in our work and worship, at the table, with our friends;  
usher us to life abundant with your love that never ends.

*Ann Bell Worley* (2011)  
*Tune:* RUSTINGTON  
(pp. 49-51 of this volume)

### *Benediction: Philippians 4:4-9*

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

### *Postlude*

#### **NOTES**

1 *The Majesty and Glory of Your Name* (SSAA), words by Linda Lee Johnson and music by Tom Fettke, copyright © 1979 Word Music. The text of this anthem is based on Psalm 8.

2 *The Summons* by John L. Bell. Copyright © 1987 by GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638, [www.giamusic.com](http://www.giamusic.com), phone 800-442-1358. All rights reserved. Used by permission. For permission to reproduce this text please email [reprints@giamusic.com](mailto:reprints@giamusic.com).

3 The homily is a reflection on modern technology and human virtues – the cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) and the theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity).



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