
Worship Service

BY HARRIET ILSE ZIEGENHALS

Prelude

*Call to Worship:*¹

Leader:

Do you ever wonder why God made this world?
The flowers in springtime with buds tightly curled?
The trees in the autumn with colors so bright?
The moon with its stars and the sun giving light?

Do you ever wonder why God made a child?
In all shapes and colors, some mighty, some mild?
To share in a family, to run, play and sing?
Yes, God knew the laughter and joy they would bring.

God gave us this world to protect and enjoy,
And God made all children, each girl and each boy,
To nourish and care for this earth all our days.
So let's join in singing our thanks and our praise.

People:

We all join in singing our thanks and our praise!

Hymn:

"Our Father, by Whose Name" ²

Our Father, by whose name all parenthood is known,
in love divine you claim each fam'ly as your own.
Bless mothers, fathers, guarding well, with constant love as sentinel,
the homes in which your people dwell.

O Christ, yourself a child within an earthly home,
with heart still undefiled to full adulthood come:
our children bless in ev'ry place that they may all behold your face
and, knowing you, may grow in grace.

O Holy Spirit, bind our hearts in unity,
and teach us how to find the love from self set free;
in all our hearts such love increase that ev'ry home, by this release,
may be the dwelling-place of peace.

F. Bland Tucker (1895-1984), alt.

Tune: RHOSYMEDRE

Prayer:

God of compassion and understanding,

Help us as parents, pastors, and teachers
to unite in a faithful and nurturing community of love and support
as we care for the needs of children
in our families,
in our congregation, and
in our world.

In the name of your son, Jesus Christ, we pray.
Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Deuteronomy 6:4-7, 12

*Congregational Response:*³

Leader:

O Israel, remember well who brought you to this land;
and Israel, rejoice and tell the wonder of God's hand.

People:

**O Israel, renew yourself, obey the Lord's command;
Sing, dance, clap your hands, obey the Lord's command.**

When Moses lifted up his rod, the waters to divide,
God led you safely through the sea to reach the other side.

**When you were faint with hunger, God sent manna from above,
and water from the rock gushed forth to nourish you with love.**

O Israel, lift up your voice in thanks and endless praise;
Be glad, rejoice, and covenant to serve God all your days.

**O Israel, renew yourself, obey the Lord's command.
Sing, dance, clap your hands, and shout to the Lord your God.**

Choral Response:

"You Shall Have a Song" ⁴

You shall have a song and gladness of heart
for music can joyfully our love to all impart.
Lift ev'ry voice, play the flute and violin,
and you shall have a song to sing. Alleluia!

Make a joyful noise to God all ye lands.
Come serve Him with gladness of heart and mind and hands.
We are His children, He made us ev'ry one;
and we shall have a song to sing, Alleluia!

Enter now His gates with thanksgiving and praise,
for He is our God, let us serve Him all our days.
His steadfast love will endure to the end,
and we shall have a song to sing, Alleluia!

New Testament Reading: Mark 10:13-16*Congregational Response:*⁵

Leader:

We have heard it, we have seen it,
we have touched it with our hands.

People:

**And this love of Christ our Savior
far exceeds His laws demands.**

Thus we know that God is with us
and in Him is no darkness at all,

**that our sins have been forgiven
to complete the joy of us all.**

Only one who loves another
walks from darkness into light,

**loves the least of these my children
though rejected in our sight.**

When we heal the brokenhearted
give unsparing whatever the call,

**we fulfill Christ's new commandment
to complete the joy of us all.**

Choral Response:

"See the World Through Children's Eyes" ⁶

Sermon

Hymn:

"We All Are God's Children" ⁷
(text and tune pp. 40-41 this volume)

Offering

Doxology

Choral Anthem:

"Tapestry" ⁸

Sing of a world that reflects the Creator's design:
planets in orbit, the oceans, the mountains, the earth;
All are part of a master pattern and line.
The world is a tapestry, the colors ev'ry hue;
The world is a tapestry woven for you.

Just as the threads in a tapestry form a design,
God used our lives interwoven with beauty and care
to create a harmonious pattern and line.
Our lives are a tapestry, our colors ev'ry hue;
our lives are a tapestry, the world is a tapestry,
our lives are a tapestry interweaving me and you.

Prayer:

Gracious God,
As we celebrate the gift of our children,
let us make the time
to be with them and
to listen when they try to tell us
what is on their minds and hearts.

Help us to guide them as they grow up
in the midst of this fast-moving and often confusing culture
and give them opportunities
to love the Scriptures,
to pray,
to study, and
to worship.

May we work diligently to develop a loving and caring family
in which each member is recognized
as a special and unique individual.

We pray for the children of this world who live in societies
that do not always understand or recognize the needs
which are so necessary for their welfare.

We pray for the many boys and girls
who are homeless and forgotten,
for those who suffer physical abuse, and
for those who are caught in the horrors of war.

Help us to celebrate the gift of children
wherever they may be in God's world.

Be with us as parents, teachers, pastors, and friends
in the difficult days ahead as we shepherd our children.

Grant us new hope for the living of these days,
that we may hear and share the music of life.

May we always remember:
this is the day which the Lord has made,
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Hymn:

"Go, My Children, With My Blessing"

Jaroslav Vajda (b. 1919)

Tune: AR HYD Y NOS (Welsh)

Benediction:

The world's greatest cellist, Pablo Casals, once said:
 "The child must know that he is a miracle;
 that since the beginning of the world there hasn't been,
 and until the end of the world there will not be
 another child like him."

May the Lord bless and keep all our miracles safely in His care.
 Amen.

*Postlude***NOTES**

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