

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of Saint David
Early Morning Service February 26, 2012

We will all be changed by the Victory of our Lord Jesus Christ 1 Cor. 15:51-58



Theme: Changed by the Servant Christ

Text: The Son of Man came to serve (Mk 10:45)

Gathering: *Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Hymn: Hallelujah! Sing to Jesus

370

Opening prayer: *Almighty God, Through Jesus you say to us that whoever wishes to be first must become the least and the servant of all. We enter into your presence, knowing that your victory is won through the powerlessness of the cross. We come to pray that your church may be one.*

Teach us to accept humbly that this unity is a gift of your Spirit; through this gift, change and transform us and make

us more like your Son Jesus Christ. Help us to reject the power of sin and evil in our lives, to cast off the works of darkness and embrace the light of your love as embodied in Jesus Christ our Lord who gives us the victory over all that seeks to separate us from you.

Absolution: Christ hears our confession and forgives our sins. Christ, have mercy on us and show us a new way.

Sung response: Lord, have mercy

336

Passing the Peace Let us share the peace of the Lord with one another. **The peace of the Lord be with you.**

Words for reflection: Zechariah 9:9-10 A king righteous and victorious – and humble

Psalm 131 My heart is not proud

Romans 12:3-8 We have different gifts with which to serve

Mark 10:42-45 The Son came to serve

Hymn: Brother, sister let me serve you

635

Reflection: The coming of the Messiah and His victory were accomplished through service. Jesus wants a spirit of service to fill the hearts of His followers as well. He teaches us that true greatness consists in serving God and one's neighbour. Christ gives us the courage to discover that He is the one for whom *to serve is to reign* – as an early Christian saying has it. Zechariah's prophecy concerning a victorious and humble King was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He, the King of Peace, comes to his own, to Jerusalem – the City of Peace. He does not conquer it by deceit or violence, but by gentleness and humility. Psalm 131 briefly but eloquently describes the state of spiritual peace which is the fruit of humility. The picture of a mother and child is a sign of God's tender love and of trust in God, to which the entire community of believers is called. Paul the apostle challenges us to make a sober and humble assessment of ourselves and to discover our own abilities. While we have a diversity of gifts we are one body in Christ. In our divisions each of our traditions has been endowed by the Lord with gifts that we are called to place at the service of

others. *For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many*

(Mk 10.45). By His service, Christ redeemed our refusal to serve God. He became an example for repairing all relations between people: *Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant* – those are the new standards of greatness and priority. In the Letter to the Romans, Paul reminds us that the diverse gifts given to us are for service: prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leadership and compassion. In our diversity we are always one body in Christ, and members of one another. The use of our diverse gifts in common service to humanity makes visible our unity in Christ. The joint action of Christians for the benefit of humanity, to combat poverty and ignorance, defend the oppressed, to be concerned about peace and to preserve life, develop science, culture and art are an expression of the practical ecumenism which the Church and the world badly need. The imitation of Christ the Servant provides eloquent testimony to the Gospel, moving not only minds, but also hearts. Such common service is a sign of the coming Kingdom of God – the kingdom of the Servant Christ.

A prayer to guide us: **Almighty and eternal God, by travelling the royal road of service your Son leads us from the arrogance of our disobedience to humility of heart. Unite us to one another by your Holy Spirit, so that through service to our sisters and brothers, your true countenance may be revealed; You, who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.**

Questions for reflection:

1. What opportunities for service are most threatened by pride and arrogance?
2. What should be done to ensure that all Christian ministries are better experienced as service?
3. In our community, what can Christians of different traditions do better together than in isolation to reveal the Servant Christ?

Invitation Come, for all things are now ready. Come to the table and share with all in need: the gift of healing for those in pain, the gift of forgiveness for those in sin, the gift of assurance for those in doubt, and the gift of hope for those in tears.

May we who share these gifts share Christ with one another and all humanity.

Hymn: This is the feast of victory 246

Prayer of Thanksgiving, concluding with...

Pour out your Holy Spirit on all gathered here, that we might be your light in the world. Pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine, that we might be infused with the gift of your nourishing guidance.

Hymn: Behold the lamb of God 525

Communion

Hymn: For the bread 549

Dismissal Blessing

Changed by the Servant Christ –

Send us and together we will go!

Changed through patient waiting for the Lord -

Send us and together we will go!

Changed by the Suffering Servant -

Send us and together we will go!

Changed by the Lord's victory over evil -

Send us and together we will go!

Changed by the peace of Christ -

Send us and together we will go!

Changed by God's steadfast love -

Send us and together we will go!

Hymn: Sent forth by your blessing 775