

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of Saint David
Early Morning Service March 04, 2012

We will all be changed by the Victory of our Lord Jesus Christ

1 Cor. 15:51-58



Changed through patient waiting for the Lord

Let it be so now, for it is proper to fulfill all righteousness

Gathering: *Lord, we pray to You. For the gift of looking at our life in the light of Your wisdom, we ask You! Hear us, O Lord!*

For the divine gift of patience in situations when human justice fails, we ask You! Hear us, O Lord! For the ability to pray and wait in those situations where only Your gift can meet our need, we ask You! Hear us, O Lord! Hear us as we call, O God, and grant that we may discern the fullness of Your justice, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: I waited, I waited on you, Lord **24**

Opening prayer: *Lord, teach me to be patient – with life, with people, and with myself. I sometimes try to hurry things along too much, and I push for answers before the time is right. Teach me to trust Your sense of timing rather than my own and to*

surrender my will to Your greater and wiser plan. Help me let life unfold slowly, like the small rosebud whose petals unravel bit by bit, and remind me that in hurrying the bloom along, I destroy the bud and much of the beauty therein. Instead, let me wait for all to unfold in its own time. Each moment and state of growth contains a loveliness. Teach me to slow down enough to appreciate life and all it holds. May I learn to wait upon you and seek your will in my life. Amen.

Hymn: I waited, I waited on you, Lord **24**

Absolution: *Christ hears our prayer and answers the deepest longings of our heart. 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: 1 Sam 1:1-20 Hannah's trust and patient waiting Ps 40 Patient waiting for the Lord Heb 11:32-34 Through faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice Mt 3:13-17 Let it be so now, for it is proper to fulfill all righteousness

Hymn: Those who wait on the Lord **662**

Reflection: Victory is often associated with immediate triumph. At such a joyful moment, hardly anyone realizes that from a Christian perspective victory is a long-term process of transformation. Such an understanding of transformative victory teaches us that it occurs in God's time, not ours, calling for our patient trust and deep hope in God. Hannah witnessed to such patient trust and hope. After many years of waiting to be pregnant, she prayed to God for a child. When Eli assured her that God would grant her prayer, she simply trusted, waited, and was sad no longer. Hannah conceived and bore a son, whom she named Samuel. The great victory here is not that of nations or armies, but a glimpse into the realm of a private and personal struggle. In the end, Hannah's trust and hope results not only in her own transformation, but that of her people through her son Samuel. The psalmist echoes Hannah's patient waiting for the Lord in the midst of another kind of struggle. He gives thanks that God has

transformed his shame and confusion, and continues to trust in God's steadfast love. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews recalls the patience of people like Abraham (6.15) and others who were able to be victorious through their faith and trust in God. The realisation that God intervenes and enters into the narrative of human history eliminates the temptation to be triumphant in human terms. In the gospel, the voice from heaven at the baptism of Jesus announcing *This is my Son, the Beloved*, seems to be a guarantor of the immediate success of his messianic mission. In resisting the evil one, however, Jesus, does not succumb to the temptation to usher in the Kingdom of God without delay, but patiently reveals what life in the kingdom means through his own life and ministry which leads to his death on the Cross. While the Kingdom of God breaks through in a decisive way in the resurrection, it is not yet fully realised. The ultimate victory will only come about with the second coming of our Lord. And so we wait in patient hope and trust with the cry "Come, Lord Jesus." Our prayer for Christian unity is like the prayer of Hannah and the psalmist. Our work for Christian unity is like the deeds recorded in the Letter to the Hebrews. Our attitude of patient waiting is not one of helplessness or passivity, but a deep trust that the unity of the Church is God's gift, not our achievement. Such patient waiting, praying and trust transforms us and prepares us for the visible unity of the Church not as we plan it, but as God gives it.

A prayer to guide us: Faithful God, you are true to your word in every age. May we, like Jesus, have patience and trust in your steadfast love. Enlighten us by your Holy Spirit that we may not obstruct the fullness of your justice by our own hasty judgments, but rather discern your wisdom and love in all things. ; You who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Questions for reflection:

1. In what situations in our life should we have a greater trust in God's promises?
2. What areas of church life are particularly at risk from the temptation to act hastily?
3. In what situations should Christians wait, and when should they act together?

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: Bread of the world 551

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

Prayer following communion: *We thank you, gracious God, for your gracious gifts. We pray that through these same gifts you will preserve us in faith in you, unite us in your love, and confirm us in the hope of everlasting life, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Hymn: Now to Christ who loved us 554

Dismissal Blessing

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: O Master let me walk with you 642