

WELCOME TO...



The Presbyterian Church of

Saint David

November 20, 2016



Invitation to Confession *And so we live our lives imperfectly, for we are flawed. But we are also loved by the God in whose image we were created. Let us remake ourselves toward that image as we make our confession before God and each other, first in silent prayer. (silence)*

Hymn: God be merciful to me (1) 34

Prayer of Confession: **Gracious and loving God, hear our prayer. We know we do not always live as we ought: we turn away from You, from our neighbour, and from our true selves. We know we dim your light within us, with our pride, our self-righteousness, and our need for control. We know**

that you love us, that you do not abandon us, offering second and third chances to us and then again and again call us back to you, back to love, back to grace, back to your light. Forgive us through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: God be merciful to me (2) 34

Assurance of forgiveness: *Friends, hear the Good News: the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting. Let us proclaim the Good News: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen.*

Hymn: God be merciful to me (3) 34

Prayer: (led by John) *We realise, Lord, that we deserve judgement: judgement of the things we've done and the things we have not done, the things we've said and the things we have not said. But it turns out you are a God of second chances, and third and fourth chances. We confess that we have allowed laziness, selfishness, pride and anger to damage our lives and the lives of those around us so we ask that today you will give second chances. Give us a second chance, Lord, to do those things today that we should have done yesterday; to say those things we should have said yesterday. Give us a second chance in our relationships: to look on what is good and not what is bad, to be honest, to be accepting and to say sorry. Give a second chance to all those we know who are in need. [silent reflection for those in need] Give a second chance to those around us who feel trapped in lives they never intended to have. Give a second chance to those who have caused pain to others, allowing them be the ones to bring healing. Give a second chance to our nation, allowing it to rise from selfish indifference to become the beacon it has the potential to be. Give a second chance to our national leaders and all the leaders of the world, to take today the risks and difficult decisions that they put off yesterday. Give a second chance to the hungry of this world, bringing rain where there has been none and political will where it has been lacking. Give a second chance to the homeless, so that the nights in the rain with the cold eating through their bones will finally end. Give a second chance to children who have not had the care or attention that they deserve, so that they will be able to grow and thrive and enjoy the fullness of life. Give a second chance to those who hate, opening their eyes to forgiveness. Lord, give us the grace to recognise your second chances and to have the humility to take them; give us a second chance to change our world, to change your world forever. Amen*

Hezekiah's Illness 2 Kings 20 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, 'Thus says the Lord: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover.'² Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord: ³ 'Remember now, O Lord, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight.' Hezekiah wept bitterly. ⁴ Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the Lord came to him: ⁵ 'Turn back, and say to Hezekiah prince of my people, Thus says the Lord, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; indeed, I will heal you; on the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. ⁶ I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.

And now... for the rest of the story: Tragically, Hezekiah squandered his second chance when he foolishly let his pride in his possessions get the better of him, endangering his kingdom (as well as his relationship with God) by foolishly displaying his wealth to Babylonian envoys. Isaiah had to warn him that for his foolishness, his family and kingdom would be taken into captivity: Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord: 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and what your fathers have accumulated until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left,' says the Lord. 'And they shall take away some of your sons who will descend from you, whom you will beget; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" (II Kings 20:16-18). Hezekiah marred his second chance through foolish behaviour. God is willing and able to give us a second, a third, a fourth, and a fifth chance. We, then, have to consider whether we are going to bring forth the fruits of repentance. Before we rashly cry, "If only I had a second chance, I would . . .," we need to soberly reflect on the caveats that accompany these plaintive requests.

Invitation: *On their own, the bread and wine are nothing. To become a foretaste and a promise of love made real and a world made whole, they need a story and a blessing and a people who believe...* **Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.**

Hymn: Let us break bread together (1-2) 548

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise. Glorify the Lord with me. Let us together praise His name.* (we continue in prayer) *And so, as we gather at the Lord's table, we recognise the Spirit's presence among us, and we open our hearts to the Spirit's influence. (Silence) Gracious God, we come knowing that we depend on you for life and truth and love. We come knowing that you welcome us with open and accepting arms. We come ready to meet with you, and proclaim the mystery of our faith (sung response – 523). By your word and Spirit, O God, sanctify these your own gifts of bread and wine, that the bread which we break may be to us communion in the body of Christ, and the cup of blessing which we bless may be communion in the blood of Christ Come, holy Spirit, come.*

Communion

Following communion *Eternal, loving God, we thank you for this simple common meal that brings the spirit and reality of Christ into our hearts, and brings us closer to you. May your love touch others through us as we offer second and third chances to all we meet.*

Hymn: Let us break bread together (3) 548

I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; indeed, I will heal you

Hymn: Rock of Ages (3-4) 240

Postlude