

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of Saint David
Early Morning Service October 29, 2017

JOURNEY OF Faith

FROM GENESIS 12 TO HEBREWS 11

Silent Preparation for Worship: Reflect on the Reformation doctrine: *Sola Fides* – The Reformers never tired of saying that ‘justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone.’ Does this still hold meaning in the 21st century?
Let us worship God.

We are met in the presence of God **And we do not meet alone.** *With Abraham and Sarah* **we gather to worship the Lord.** *With the saints of every age* **we gather to worship the Lord.** *We embark on our own journey of faith.* **God’s Holy name be praised.** *God makes of us a great people.* **God’s Holy name be praised.** *In the desert and in the den, in barrio and basilica.* **God’s Holy name be praised.** *We journey in the presence of God.* **And we do not journey alone.**

Hymn: Lord Jesus, you shall be my song (1-2)

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Prayer of Confession: *We confess to you, Lord, what we are: we are not the people we like others to think we are; we are afraid to admit even to ourselves what lies in the depths of our souls.*

God of our journey, we watch and walk with Jesus.

We repent O God. We cannot name our own cross even though we try. You must show us the cross you give us. Help us see. Give us the faith to respond and follow Jesus. We have heard that it is in losing our life for the sake of Gospel of Jesus that we find our life.

God of our journey, we watch and walk with Jesus.

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

Sung response: Lord, have mercy

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

Scripture Readings: Hebrews 11

(together) **Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**

Silence for reflection

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Hymn: Lord Jesus, you shall be my song (3-4)

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To start the Conversation (by Marcus Borg) I turn to a journey image of the Christian life and what that might mean for us. Let me begin by noting that it’s very different from the image of the Christian life with which I grew up. I grew up in the Lutheran Church, and I’m deeply grateful for my Lutheran heritage. But one of the consequences of that Lutheran upbringing is that I thought that being a Christian was primarily about believing. About believing in the Bible, believing in Jesus, believing in God, believing in the truth of the Christian tradition. Among the reasons that I thought it was about believing was because of the primacy given to faith in the Lutheran tradition, which I understood to

mean belief. And it's also because I grew up in the modern world, as all of us did, where many traditional Christian beliefs have been called into question by modern knowledge. Thus, I thought that the Christian life was about believing in a variety of things that didn't make a lot of sense, but that's what faith was all about...

I now see the Christian life very differently. I now see it as a journey, with journey being understood as a comprehensive metaphor or image for what the Christian life is like and most centrally about. This journey image is a very rich metaphor, and I invite you for a few minutes to think with me about some of the resonances of speaking of it as a journey. To be on a journey is to be in movement. Moving from place to place, there is change in such a life. A journey is a process that involves our whole being. It involves our feet as well as our minds and our heads. A journey involves following a path or a way. To be on a journey is not to be involved in aimless wandering, though there may be times when it feels like that; people have gone on this journey before that we are called to, and there is a trail, a path, a way. The journey image suggests that the Christian life is more like following a path than it is about believing things with our minds... The story of Abraham leads us to that marvelous question asked by the contemporary poet Mary Oliver. The question is, what are you going to do with your one wild and precious life? Are we going to remain in the world of the dull, the repetitive, the same old, same old, or are we, like Abraham, going to respond to that voice that invites us to leave our old way of being and enter a life beyond convention and beyond our domestications of reality? The voice speaks of promise to us. "I will show you a better way, a better country."

Share your journey, your story

What are you going to do with your one wild and precious life?

Another STORY

Hymn: I come with joy (vs. 1-3)

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You are invited to come. Ask God to our eyes to the mystery of Christ's presence in these ordinary things in these our ordinary lives. May they be for us the very essence of the living Christ in our midst. Through the broken bread . .

. **we participate in the Body of Christ.** *Through the cup of blessing . .*
. . **we participate in the new life Christ gives.** *These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God! Come, for all things are ready!*

Great Thanksgiving: *The Lord be with you. And also with you Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to God. Let us give thanks to God. It is right to give both thanks and praise* (continue in prayer).

Communion

Prayer after communion: *Eternal God, as we walk this pilgrim way, make our faith firm, our hope clear, and our love pure, that we might join the saints of all the ages in praise eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Hymn I come with joy (vs. 4-5)

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BLESSING

May the everlasting God shield you

East and west, wherever you go

And the blessing of God be upon you

The blessing of the God of all life

The blessing of Christ be upon you

The blessing of the Christ of all love

The blessing of the Spirit be upon you

The blessing of the Spirit of all grace. *Let us go into the world rejoicing*

It is Christ who goes before us.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

Hymn: God be in my head **580**

