**COCU60A 12 October 2014**

*The church is fitted with a hearing loop which covers the body of the church.*

*Hearing aid wearers are advised to switch their aid to T-setting.*

**THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

ORGAN PRELUDE

*The people stand for the entrance of the Bible.*

CALL TO WORSHIP *(based on Psalm 106:1-6,19-23)*  
We gather together to praise God,   
and to rejoice in God’s steadfast love.  
**We come to share together to celebrate**   
**God’s faithfulness and God’s enduring love.**  
We gather to remember God’s acts

of liberating love, mercy and grace  
**We come to share together in the joy**  
**of being God’s forgiven and blessed people.**  
We gather to rejoice in our heritage,   
**confident in the mercy of God.**

**Let us worship God!**

HYMN 563 Rejoice! The Lord is King

GREETING AND WELCOME

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(based on Psalm 106, Philippians 4)*  
We trust ourselves to your penetrating glance, O God, we relax our anxieties and discard our excuses. We are what we are, and there is not a word on our tongue or a thought in our mind, but God knows it.   
With a humble and contrite heart, the psalmist acknowledged:

‘*Both we and our ancestors have sinned; we have committed iniquity,*   
*we have done wickedly’*. (Psalm 106: 6)

We may find ourselves in their story. The way they felt at a distance from God, and when they felt unsure and needed certainty, and when they lost confidence in God. At such times, our ancestors in faith filled in the gap with their own golden images.

We come this morning, striving to keep our minds and hearts focused on the things that matter: the things that are honourable and pure and worthy of our relationship with you, O God. Yet the world calls us away, breaks our focus, and points us toward war and conflicts, financial uncertainty, and hurtful deeds by some that seem to be rewarded, not punished.

For the times when we place our trust in our own capabilities, taking sacred matters into our own human hands**, have mercy, O God**.   
For our loss of nerve, our impatience, and our insistence on our own way,   
**have mercy, O God.**   
For the times when we compartmentalize and keep our faith at a distance from the real, everyday things of life**, have mercy, O God**.

*A silence is kept*.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE  
These circumstances are not new but have been known by the generations of faith before us. We join them in their prayer for a change of heart, and a greater allegiance to God. When our actions are in harmony with God’s compassion, our minds and hearts can know forgiveness, freedom and joy.  
Friends, the past is over and gone. Regardless of what we were yesterday, today we are renewed by the Spirit of Christ. Let us move into this new day with confidence.   
Thanks be to God!

**THE SERVICE OF THE WORD**

ANTHEM God be in my head J. Rutter b. 1945

*The children will leave at this time for special activities in the lounge.*

*All are welcome.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

May God bless to us the hearing of the Word, that we may not be hearers only but also doers of the Word.

FIRST READING Exodus 32: 1-14

In this is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**.

PSALM 106: 1-6, 19-23

1give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious

and his mercy endureth for ever.  
2Who can express the noble acts of the Lord  
shew forth all his praise?  
3Blessed are they that always keep judgementdo righteousness.  
4me, O Lord, according to the favour that thou bearest

unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;  
5That I may see the felicity of thy chosenrejoice in the gladness of thy people, and give thanks with thine inheritance.  
6We have sinned with our fathershave done amiss, and dealt wickedly.

19made a calf in Horebworshipped the molten image.  
20Thus they turned their glorythe similitude of a calf that eateth hay.  
21And they forgat God their Saviour

who had done so great things in Egypt;  
22Wondrous works in the land of Hamfearful things by the Red sea.  
23he said, he would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the gap: to turn away his wrathful indignation,

lest he should destroy them.

*Please stand and sing the concluding Gloria*

**Glory be to the Father, and / to the / Son:**

**and / to the / Holy Spirit;**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and / ever /shall be**

**world without / end. / A / men**

SECOND READING Philippians 4: 1-9

In this is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM Rejoice in the Lord alway Anon. (mid 16th Century)

*Please stand for the gospel*

A reading from the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, Lord.**

GOSPEL READING Matthew 22: 1-14

The gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**

HYMN 570 Sing to the Lord a joyful song

Sermon

**THE RESPONSE TO GOD IN WORD AND ACTION**

Hymn 507 Lord of all hopefulness

# *During the singing of this hymn our offering will be received.*

# *Remain standing for the dedication prayer.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We give our material goods in hope that they will become something new, something good beyond our separate gifts. By these offerings:

we commit ourselves to Christ, and to the reconciling,

healing work of Christ, and we commit ourselves to one another as brothers and sisters in faith. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE  
It would be much easier to ignore the hard truths around us, O God:  
the widening gap between rich and poor,  
the consistency with which the powerful get their way,  
the bending of rules and the self-enrichment of the connected and influential,  
the lack of adequate care, protection and resources   
for the most vulnerable among us;   
we would rather not see these signs.  
It would be much easier if we could just pretend everything was alright,  
if we could prophesy goodness and light, and ignore the darkness and evil;  
if we didn’t have to offend the status quo, or challenge the comfortable;   
if we could convince ourselves that the cross, was just a one-time thing.   
Your calling, not ours.  
But, we can’t do this because we know too much;  
your truth has captured us and opened our eyes,  
and we have become slaves to love,  
the love that must speak for the voiceless,  
the love that must challenge injustice,  
the love that draws lines of division between truth and denial,  
between compassion and expediency.  
Every day each one of us is given the opportunity to choose love over indifference, positive action over passivity, speaking out over complicit silence.  
Beyond this space and time, we are aware of the troubles and anxieties of our day. We hear the cries of suffering and struggle, we witness unfairness and unkindness, scenes that are disturbing and unsettling that flash before us and we are led to pray. Hear us now, O God, as we name those situations and people to whom our hearts and minds are turned this day*….*

*(prayers are offered)*

Give us the courage to acknowledge what we see, to name the signs of the times, to disrupt the ‘way things are’ in the name of what should be, to divide in order to heal and restore, and to be crucified for the sake of love. By your Spirit, our minds and hearts are set on that which is true, just and pleasing. Stir us by your Spirit. Grant us the words to say and courage for actions that will lead to greater healing, understanding, justice and peace. **Amen**.

THE LORD’S PRAYER *(printed inside cover of hymn book)*

**THE SENDING FORTH OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

HYMN 628 Ye that know the Lord is gracious

WORDS OF MISSION AND BENEDICTION  
Go forth, strengthened to do the work of Christ,

standing in the gap,

extending the invitation to the eternal banquet,

rejoicing in God,

let your gentleness be known to everyone

and don’t worry about anything.

The God who created you,

the Christ who redeems you

and the Spirit who empowers you

is with you today and evermore. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord**. In the name of Christ, Amen!**

***You are invited to be seated for the playing of the postlude,***

***or to leave at this point without disturbing those who wish to listen.***

POSTLUDE Toccata from ‘Suite Gothique’

L. Boëllmann 1862-1897

*Please stand as the Bible is taken from the church.*

Presiding Minister Rev Sandy Boyce

Scripture Reader Don Bell

Organist & Choir Director Peter Kelsall

Assistant Organist Christopher Bridge

Organ Scholar Alexander Paine

The Choir of Pilgrim Church

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***Please join us for tea or coffee and fellowship in the Lounge***

***after the service.***

Prayers have been adapted from a number of sources, including:   
John van de Laar, Joan Stott, John Maynard.