

January 18-Written Service

Special Music- Katie Kirby

Praise Team- Deb and Vern Van Peurse, Lesley and Neil Bartholomew, Merlin Thompson, Collen Turner

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Leader: Let us worship God, who has done great things.

All: We rejoice in our God, who made a way through the desert of this world.

Leader: Let us worship God, who has caused streams of mercy to flow in the wasteland.

All: We are the people God has formed through Christ; we worship Him, and we rejoice!

Leader: Let us worship God in spirit and in truth.

All: We praise God for the grace that has saved us. Alleluia! We rejoice!

Song: Great is the Lord

Great is the Lord, He is holy and just;

By His power we trust in His love.

Great is the Lord, He is faithful and true;

By His mercy He proves He is love.

Great is the Lord and worthy of glory!

Great is the Lord and worthy of praise!

Great is the Lord! Now lift up your voice,

Now lift up your voice:

Great is the Lord! Great is the Lord!

Great is the Lord, He is holy and just;

By His power we trust in His love.

Great is the Lord, He is faithful and true;

By His mercy He proves He is love.

Great is the Lord and worthy of glory!

Great is the Lord and worthy of praise!

Great is the Lord! Now lift up your voice,

Now lift up your voice:

Great is the Lord! Great is the Lord!

Great are You, Lord, and worthy of glory!

Great are You, Lord, and worthy of praise!
Great are You, Lord! I lift up my voice,
I lift up my voice:
Great are You, Lord! Great are You, Lord!

Prayer

Song: Lord, I Need You

Lord, I come, I confess,
Bowing here I find my rest.
Without You, I fall apart.
You're the one that guides my heart.

Lord, I need You, oh, I need You.
Every hour I need You.
My one defense, my righteousness,
Oh God, how I need You.

Where sin runs deep,
Your grace is more.
Where grace is found,
Is where You are.

Where You are,
Lord, I am free.
Holiness is Christ in me.

Lord, I need You,
Oh, I need You.
Every hour I need You.
My one defense,
My righteousness,
Oh God, how I need You.

So teach my song
To rise to You
When temptations
Come my way.

When I cannot stand,
I'll fall on You.

Jesus, You're my hope and stay.

Lord, I need You, oh I need You.

Every hour I need You.

My one defense,

My righteousness,

Oh God, how I need You.

You're my one defense,

My righteousness,

Oh God, how I need You.

My one defense,

My righteousness,

Oh God, how I need You.

Announcements

Special Music- "Trust in You" sung by Katie Kirby

Congregational Prayer

Song: #705- It is Well With my Soul (vs. 1,3,4)

When peace like a river

Attendeth my way,

When sorrows like

Sea billows roll;

Whatever my lot,

Thou hast taught me to say,

"It is well,

It is well with my soul."

It is well (it is well)

With my soul (with my soul),

It is well,

It is well with my soul.

My sin- O, the bliss

Of this glorious thought-

My sin- not in part,

But the whole,

Is nailed to the cross,
And I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord,
Praise the Lord, O my soul!

It is well (it is well),
With my soul (with my soul),
It is well,
It is well with my soul.

And, Lord, haste the day
When the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back
As a scroll,

The trump shall resound
And the Lord shall descend,
"Even so"-
It is well with my soul.

It is well (it is well)
With my soul (with my soul)
It is well,
It is well with my soul.

Offering/Offertory

Offering Song- Open the Eyes of My Heart

Offering Prayer

Children's Message

Scripture: Isaiah 43

¹⁶ This is what the Lord says— he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters,

¹⁷ who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

¹⁸ "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

¹⁹ See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

²⁰ The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen,

²¹ the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

Message

What is history?

Do you have an example of something historic that happened?

And when was that?

Take examples

US in WW2 ended over 80 yrs ago

This country established 250 yrs ago

Reformation began over 500 yrs ago

What about when God did something amazing?

Again take examples

Scripture-Isaiah 43:16-21

As we continue to focus on new beginnings, listen for that theme in today's passage from Isaiah

Read passage

Looking back

In the text

God introduces Himself in the verses leading into 19

These recall just a handful of things God has done

Especially events from the exodus

Exodus was history for the people in Isaiah's time

Generations before

Estimates are that Isaiah was written 700-800 years after Exodus

Further than WW2, the Declaration of Independence, and the
Reformation

But that's still what everyone was talking about

That's still their reference for God

So focused on the good old days

Best desire was going back in time

Reliving what God had done way back then

V 18-forget-zacar-to remember, to speak

Don't remember these, don't even speak about them

Biyn-to attend, consider, have knowledge of, look well to, perceive

These words give us an indication of how people were approaching the past

They were camped out there, focused only on the past

Only on what God did for their ancestors 700-800 yrs earlier
And it's good to know and remember these stories
Trap is believing that God only did amazing things then
And believing that God doesn't work like that today
God tells them He has something different in store
Can't they even see what He's doing?
Putting that into modern context
Just so we're clear about how far back that was
700 years ago (1326) was about when the Ottoman Empire was founded
800 years ago (1226) Genghis Khan was still in power and Francis of Assisi died
That's their perspective on God
He's ancient history to them

Us looking back

We do the same thing, don't we
When did God do something incredible?
What stories do we use to answer that question?
We tell stories from the Bible or from church history
We reach way back in time
Just like the people in Isaiah's day
We trap God in the past tense
Where God wants us to look
And then Isaiah tells the people to forget about all that
Because God is doing something new
It's springing up right now, in front of you
Do we believe that God is still at work
That God still does amazing things
Do we live like we believe
Do we pray like we believe
Or do we limit our expectations
Do we shrink God down
Do we relegate God to what He's done hundreds or thousands of years ago
What He was doing in Isaiah's day
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.
²⁰ The wild animals honor me,
the jackals and the owls,
because I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland,
to give drink to my people, my chosen
Where everything has been a desert wasteland
Where before no one was thinking about God or praising Him

Now there will be enough water for streams to flow
And even the wild animals who populate the wilderness will be honoring God
Because of the blessing He will shower down on them
All they had to do was stop looking backward long enough to see it
And God would come roaring into the present, into their lives and not just the
days of their ancestors
What He's doing today
God is doing incredible things today as well
Christianity may feel like it's slipping away in the last decades, but it only feels
that way when we're not paying attention to what's happening around the world
Heaven is getting bigger day by day, minute by minute
This is especially true in places that might have looked like Christian deserts a
short while ago
In Africa, in Asia, in South America churches are multiplying faster than ever
Estimates have Christianity reaching 3 billion followers by 2050 at this pace
In our little Reformed denomination, we're seeing churches by the dozens
petitioning to join the RCA especially from South America
Any of our elders who have been to a classis meeting in the last several years
have heard about this
There's a hunger for Reformed theology and government
And it doesn't need to be a one way street
I believe that God will be using these churches and leaders to help revitalize and
reenergize our faith
We can learn from one another
God isn't only Someone who moved in the past
Yes, we worship the same God who brought His people out of Egypt
The God who helped David kill Goliath
The God who brought Jesus from the dead
The God who added 1000s of believers to the early church on Pentecost
The God who turned Saul into Paul
AND He is the same God who you pray to today
He is the same God who continues to heal and rescue His people
He is the same God who forgives sins and changes lives today
All we have to do is look up and see that He is still alive and at work today
Doing something new
If only we could recognize it

Song: #408- How Firm a Foundation (vs. 1,2,4)

How firm a foundation,
Ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith

In His excellent Word!

What more can He say
Than to you He hath said,
To you who for refuge
To Jesus have fled?

"Fear not! I am with thee;
O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God
And will still give thee aid.

I'll strengthen thee, help thee,
And cause thee to stand,
Upheld by My righteous,
Omnipotent hand.

"The soul that on Jesus
Hath leaned for repose;
I will not, I will not
Desert to His foes.

That soul, though all hell
Should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never,
No never forsake!"

Benediction

Postlude