

March 3-Written Service

Praise Team- Merlin Thompson, Brian Maag

Special Music- Sunday School children

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Leader: We humble ourselves before you Lord.

All: We worship and praise your Holy name.

Leader: Today we recall how well you took care of your people in the wilderness.

All: We are reminded that you are always providing for us,

Leader: We are grateful that you love us and take care of us.

Song: We Bow Down

You are Lord of creation and Lord of my life,
Lord of the land and the sea.

You were Lord of the heaven before there was time,
And Lord of all lords You will be!

We bow down and we worship You, Lord.
We bow down and we worship You, Lord.
We bow down and we worship You, Lord.
Lord of all lords You will be!

You are King of creation and King of my life,
King of the land and the sea.
You were King of the heaven before there was time,
And King of all kings You will be!

We bow down and we crown You the King.
We bow down and we crown You the King.
We bow down and we crown You the King.
King of all Kings You will be!

Prayer

Song- Lord, I Lift Your Name on High

Lord, I lift Your name on high; Lord, I love to sing Your praises.
I'm so glad You're in my life; I'm so glad You came to save us.
You came from heaven to earth to show the way;

From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay.
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to sky;
Lord, I lift Your name on high.

Lord, I lift Your name on high; Lord, I love to sing Your praises.
I'm so glad You're in my life; I'm so glad You came to save us.
You came from heaven to earth to show the way;
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay.
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to sky;
Lord, I lift Your name on high.

Announcements

Special Music- Sing with Joy, Children of God sung by the Sunday School students

Congregational Prayer

Song: #309- I Will Sing of My Redeemer (vs. 1,3,4)

I will sing of my Redeemer and His wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross He suffered from the curse to set me free.
Sing, O sing of my Redeemer, with His blood He purchased me.
On the cross He sealed my pardon, paid the debt and made me free.

I will praise my dear Redeemer; His triumphant power I'll tell,
How the victory He giveth over sin and death and hell.
Sing, O sing of my Redeemer, with His blood He purchased me.
On the cross He sealed my pardon, paid the debt and made me free.

I will sing of my Redeemer and His heavenly love for me;
He from death to life hath brought me, Son of God with Him to be.
Sing, O sing of my Redeemer, with His blood He purchased me.
On the cross He sealed my pardon, paid the debt and made me free.

Offering/Offertory

Offering Song- Open My Eyes

Offering Prayer

Children's Message

Scripture- Leviticus 23: 33-44

The Lord said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites: 'On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Lord's Feast of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days. The first day is a sacred assembly; do no regular work. For seven days present offerings made to the Lord by fire, and on the eighth day hold a sacred

assembly and present an offering made to the Lord by fire. It is the closing assembly; do no regular work.

(These are the Lord's appointed feasts, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies for bringing offerings made to the Lord by fire—the burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings required for each day. These offerings are in addition to those for the Lord's Sabbaths and in addition to your gifts and whatever you have vowed and all the freewill offerings you give to the Lord.)

“So beginning with the fifteenth day of the seventh month, after you have gathered the crops of the land, celebrate the festival to the Lord for seven days; the first day is a day of rest, and the eighth day is also a day of rest. On the first day you are to take choice fruit from the trees, and palm fronds, leafy branches and poplars, and rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. Celebrate this as a festival to the Lord for seven days each year. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month. Live in booths for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in booths so that your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.” So Moses announced to the Israelites the appointed feasts of the Lord.

Message

Living History Farms

Have any of you been to LHF in Des Moines?

Used to take our 6th graders there on a field trip every year

I always walked away with the question, “how did some of the earliest people to live here do it?”

Look at pictures and give brief descriptions for each

Native American farm

Sod/log home

Early farm house

Amazed at what life was like back then

How many of you have told or heard stories of life from the generation before?

Walking to school for miles, always in the snow, always up hill

More and harder chores

No internet

One phone per house (stuck where everyone can hear you)

Sometimes even the neighbors could hear you

These stories aren't just intended to demonstrate how much tougher the earlier generations were (although that's probably a piece of it)

It's important to remember the past and where we've come from

Which brings us to today's holy day-Festival of Tabernacles (Sukkot)

Leviticus 23:33-44

Makeshift wilderness booths, from after Israelites left Egypt

3 walls, maybe 2 ½

Between 3 and 30 ft tall

Roof something grown from earth but no longer attached to earth, more shade than sun

Must cover most of ceiling, but leave room to see sky and stars

Should be impermanent and fragile

Maybe helps to have a visual

This is from The Chosen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSNguYrPuSE> (stop at 4:15)

Our main focus today will be on the lessons we take from the shelters themselves

Repeatedly in Scripture, we see people trust in or marvel at what we think are permanent, impressive things

But they turn out to be fleeting

Disciples exclaiming to Jesus in awe of buildings in Jerusalem, "Master look at these structures"

"Not one stone will be left on another"

Man in a parable, "I'm wealthy and secure, going to build bigger store houses"

"Tonight your life will be demanded of you"

Everything Job had was stripped away

Everyone and everything from before the flood were all destroyed

"Where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away"

You don't have to drive too far through the countryside to see old houses, bare wood/no paint, sitting empty

At one point these were new, families living here, ate here, celebrated holidays here, took shelter against storms here

The grade schools in our district have been closed, one demolished

Now an empty lot, behind a chain link fence where generations of kids learned and played

This is a holiday that highlights impermanence

(which is really challenging to find hymns to go along with it)

One tradition for Sukkot involved reading Ecclesiastes

Which seems to fit with the impermanence of life

Belongings and buildings are pointless Ecc 2:4-11

⁴I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. ⁵I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. ⁶I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. ⁷I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me. ⁸I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired male and female singers, and a harem^[a] as well—the delights of a man's heart. ⁹I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me. In all this my wisdom stayed with me.

¹⁰I denied myself nothing my eyes desired;
I refused my heart no pleasure.

My heart took delight in all my labor,
and this was the reward for all my toil.

¹¹Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done
and what I had toiled to achieve,
everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind;
nothing was gained under the sun.

Our regular homes are illusions of shelter

Our bank accounts are illusions of security

Our health gives us the illusion of immortality

But it's all a chasing after the wind

We live these lives in temporary shelters

Rejoice and celebrate! This holiday reminder of our limitations and impermanence

This is meant as a joyous holiday

We're commanded to rejoice

While living in a shelter/hut

Some of the rejoicing may really be a reminder that our mindset and attitude are more important than the situation

But we can also find hope and even joy in the journey, in the fleeting

John 1 describes the incarnation by saying that Jesus *tabernacled* among us

He took on our flesh and blood

Stepped into this life that may feel solid and lasting, but is cosmically
and spiritually flimsy

God Himself, joined us in this temporary shelter

To highlight that these are not our forever homes

That we will not always be subject to death and decay and entropy

Israel lived in these booths/tabernacles/tents on the way to the promised land

We too exist in the wilderness, longing for a home of our own

Ecc says that God has set eternity in our hearts

Jesus came to make that a reality

To join us in our wanderings and

To bring us home again

Song: #104- O Worship the King (vs. 1,2,5)

O worship the King, all glorious above,
And gratefully sing His wonderful love;
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

O tell of His might, and sing of His grace,
Whose robe is the light, whose canopy space.
His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
And dark is His path on the wings of the storm.

All hail to the King! In splendor enthroned;
Glad praises we bring, thy wonders made known.
Returning victorious, great conqueror of sin,
King Jesus, all glorious, our victory will win.

Benediction

Postlude