

**AS WE GATHER**

Thank God for our nation! The celebration of Independence Day is not part of the traditional Church Year calendar. Rather, it is a national celebration that presents an opportunity to give thanks to God for the gift of our land. In observing the day, we are connected with the biblical record of God's people in times past who expressed thanks for the blessings that God had given to them through the nation of which they were part. Today, our nation celebrates its place as the land of the free and the home of the brave. At times, this reality causes us to thump our chest to let the world know how great we are. The psalmist however writes, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12). As we bring our thankful praise to God, we ask that His blessing on our land would continue for generations.

**Gathering Song      America, the Beautiful**

O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved and mercy more than life  
America! America! May God thy gold refine,  
Till all success be nobleness, and ev'ry gain divine.

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties Above the fruited plain  
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!

**Welcome & Invocation**

**Opening Song                      Who You Say I Am**

Who am I that the highest King  
Would welcome me  
I was lost but He brought me in  
Oh His love for me  
Oh His love for me

Who the Son sets free  
Oh is free indeed  
I'm a child of God yes I am  
Free at last He has ransomed me  
His grace runs deep  
While I was a slave to sin  
Jesus died for me  
Yes He died for me

Who the Son sets free  
Oh is free indeed  
I'm a child of God yes I am  
In my Father's house  
there's a place for me  
I'm a child of God yes I am  
I am chosen not forsaken

I am who You say I am  
You are for me not against me  
I am who You say I am  
I am who You say I am

Who the Son sets free  
Oh is free indeed  
I'm a child of god yes I am  
In my Father's house  
there's a place for me  
I'm a child of god yes I am

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### **Confession & Forgiveness**

Pastor: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**People: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

*Silence for self-examination.*

Pastor: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

**People: I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and given to us His only Son to suffer and die for our salvation. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

### **Prayer of the Day**

Pastor: Gracious and ever-loving God, we thank and praise You for the freedom we have in You and also the freedom we celebrate today in our nation. As Your grace has been sufficient for Your people throughout all time, grant that it be sufficient for us as well for Your power is made perfect in our weaknesses;

**People: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

### **Reader**

*David Sarandos*

### **First Reading**

*Nehemiah 4:15–23*

*(Work resumes on the Temple, but with protection)*

<sup>15</sup>When our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had frustrated their plan, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. <sup>16</sup>From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. And the leaders stood behind the whole house of Judah, <sup>17</sup>who were building on the wall. Those who carried burdens were loaded in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and held his weapon with the other. <sup>18</sup>And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me. <sup>19</sup>And I said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread, and we are separated on the

wall, far from one another. <sup>20</sup>In the place where you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

<sup>21</sup>So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from the break of dawn until the stars came out. <sup>22</sup>I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant pass the night within Jerusalem, that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day." <sup>23</sup>So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us took off our clothes; each kept his weapon at his right hand.

Reader: This is the Word of our Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **Second Reading**

*Ezekiel 33:1-9*

*(Israel's Watchmen)*

<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>"Son of man, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from among them, and make him their watchman, <sup>3</sup>and if he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people, <sup>4</sup>then if anyone who hears the sound of the trumpet does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. <sup>5</sup>He heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But if he had taken warning, he would have saved his life. <sup>6</sup>But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.

<sup>7</sup>"So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. <sup>8</sup>If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. <sup>9</sup>But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

Reader: This is the Word of our Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **Third Reading**

*Luke 22:35-38*

*(Jesus calls to be ready)*

<sup>35</sup>And he said to them, "When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "Nothing." <sup>36</sup>He said to them, "But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. <sup>37</sup>For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.' For what is written about me has its fulfillment." <sup>38</sup>And they said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords." And he said to them, "It is enough."

Pastor: This is the Word of our Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **Children's Message / Kid's Church**

#### **Song of the Day**

#### **God Bless Our Native Land / My Country Tis of Thee**

God bless our native land; Firm may she ever stand Through storm and night.  
When the wild tempests rave, Ruler of wind and wave,  
Do thou our country save, By thy great might!

Our fathers' God to Thee,  
Author of liberty,

To Thee we sing,  
Long may our land be bright,  
With freedom's holy light,  
Protect us by Thy might,  
Great God our King!

Lord of all truth and right,  
In whom alone is might,  
On thee we call!  
And may the nations see  
That men should brothers be,  
And form one family!  
God save us all!

## Sermon

### ***Tough Topic Tackle Box: Gun Laws***

*Pastor Aaron Boerst*

#### **Creed – Catechism** *The Fourth Commandment; The Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer*

Pastor: Honor your father and your mother. What does this mean?

**People:** **We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.**

Pastor: Give us this day our daily bread. What does this mean?

**People:** **God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.**

Pastor: What is meant by daily bread?

**People:** **Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.**

#### **Prayers of the Church**

Pastor: Almighty and most holy God, we thank and praise You for all You provide us freely by Your grace. We are especially thankful for the freedoms we enjoy and celebrate today as we gather to worship You. We live in a nation and in communities where we are thankful to have brothers and sisters in Christ, yet there are also many who have either disconnected from You and Your Church, and often cause terror and violence. Lead us to share Your grace with others. Guide our conversations and grow our relationships with those who do not share the hope we have. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, hear the cries of those who awaken to face another day of injustice, prejudice, and oppression. Comfort those considering or are faced with the possibility of aborting the life of a child. Help all of us realize that all life is precious, even what the world says is a clump of cells. Give us all hope in Your promises. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Give to all families grace to love one another, that husbands and wives live in fidelity toward each other and show compassionate care to their children. Bless all women in childbirth and sustain the aged in strength of body and mind. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Bless the married that they be faithful, bless the single that they be chaste and enjoy the company and support of Christian friends, and bless the aged and infirm that they know the loving care of family in their time of need. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Help us to be good stewards of Your creation, to share what You have supplied with those in need, and to support the work of Your Church in her mission here and throughout the world. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: O Lord, Hear us now on behalf of those in our congregation and all who stand in need:

***Local concerns may be added by congregational elder here.***

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

### **Sharing the Peace**

### **Offering**

#### **Thank You Lord** *(Sung through Twice)*

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Jesus Christ for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

I come before You today      and there’s just one thing that I need to say

Thank You, Lord                      Thank You, Lord

For all You’ve given to me      For all the blessings that I cannot see

Thank You, Lord                      Thank You, Lord

With a grateful heart              With a song of praise

With an outstretched arm      I will bless your name

Thank You, Lord                      I just want to thank You Lord

Thank You, Lord                      I just want to thank You Lord

Thank you, Lord

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### **Presentation of Gifts**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, You are the giver of all good things, and Your Word makes clear that every good and perfect gift comes from You. We ask that You accept these gifts back unto Yourself and use them to Your glory. *[Psalm 145:15, James 1:17]*

**People: Amen.**

### **Holy Communion**

#### **Preface**

Pastor: The Lord be with you. *[2 Timothy 4:22]*

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts. *[Colossians 3:1]*

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. *[Psalm 136]*

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**The Words of Our Lord** *[Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25]*

### **Proclamation of Christ**

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.  
[1 Cor.11:26]

**People:** **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.** [Revelation 22:20]

**Lord's Prayer** [Matthew 6:9-13]

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**People:** **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## **Distribution**

### ***We Fall Down***

We fall down, We lay our crowns At the feet of Jesus  
The greatness of His mercy and love At the feet of Jesus  
We cry holy, holy, holy We cry holy, holy, holy We cry holy, holy, holy  
Is the Lamb

We fall down, We lay our crowns At the feet of Jesus  
The greatness of His mercy and love At the feet of Jesus  
We cry holy, holy, holy We cry holy, holy, holy We cry holy, holy, holy  
Is the Lamb

### ***(Instrumental)***

We cry holy, holy, holy  
We cry holy, holy, holy  
We cry holy, holy, holy  
Is the Lamb

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## **Here I Am, Lord**

I the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard My people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send ?

**Chorus:** Here I am Lord. Is it I Lord?

I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my Heart.

I the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide, till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give My Life to them. Whom shall I send? *Chorus*

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## Heal Our Land

Forgive oh Lord and heal our land  
And give us eyes to seek Your face  
And hearts to understand  
That You alone make all things new  
And the blessings of the land we love  
Are really gifts from You

*Chorus:*

If My people will humbly pray  
And seek My face and turn away  
From all their wicked ways  
Then I will hear them  
And move My hand  
And freely then will I forgive  
And I will heal their land

Unite our hearts in one accord  
And make us hungry for Your peace  
And burdened for the poor  
And grant us hope that we might see  
The future for the land we love  
Our life our liberty *Chorus*

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## Benediction [Numbers 6:24-26]

Pastor:           The LORD bless you and keep you.  
                      The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
                      The LORD look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**People:           Amen.**

## Announcements

### Sending Song

### I Am Free

Through You the blind will see  
Through You the dead will rise  
Through You the darkness flees  
I Am Free (I am free)

through You the mute will sing  
through You all hearts will praise  
through You my heart screams  
Yes I am free (yes I am free)

I am free to run (I am free to run)  
I am free to live for You (I am free to live for You)  
I am free (I am free)

I am free to dance (I am free to dance)  
I am free to dance (I am free to dance)  
Yes I am free (yes I am free)

I am free to run (I am free to run)  
I am free to live for You (I am free to live for You)  
I am free (I am free)

I am free to dance (I am free to dance)  
I am free to dance (I am free to dance)  
Yes I am free (yes I am free)

Through You the blind will see  
Through You the dead will rise

through You the mute will sing  
through You all hearts will praise

Through You the darkness flees                      through You my heart screams  
I Am Free (I am free)                                      Yes I am free (yes I am free)  
I am free to run (I am free to run)                      I am free to dance (I am free to dance)  
I am free to live for You (I am free to live for You)  
O I am free (I am free)                                      I am free (yes I am free)

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