



Here is the Order of Worship for our online worship experience.

“From You Comes My Praise: Guide My Steps”

Fifth Sunday of Easter – May 02, 2021

Greeting and Welcome

Prelude

Choral Introit “Dare to Dance” ©1989 Trisha Watts, Willow Music, Forestville, N.S.W
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Call to Worship

We are a resurrection people! Those who seek new life – new beginnings. And we, the church, must be a place of knowing and growing and accepting love. We hear today the question asked by the Ethiopian eunuch: “Here is water. What is to keep me from being baptized?” As we dance into diversity and acceptance, may the Spirit guide our steps for nothing is keeping us from it!

Sung Response:
**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,
Dare to dance again!**

Dancing requires that we pay attention to the steps, that we watch for the steps of those who have danced this dance of life before – those whose seeking and questioning and dreaming can lead us to seek and hope and dream. Imagine now a dreamer in whose steps you would like to follow. How did they choreograph their dance of life? Now, imagine yourself following their steps with courage and joy!

Sung Response:
**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,
Dare to dance again!**

This is the call!
Look to the skies be it rain or shine.
We lift up our heads to meet the day.
Look around and see that you do not dance alone.
We fortify our hearts with compassion and action.
If rain still lingers, open the umbrellas of praise and set out anyway.
For we are called to dance again!

Opening Hymn of Praise “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah” UMH #127.
Words: William Williams, 1745; trans. from the Welsh by Peter Williams and the author, 1771. Music: John Hughes, 1907. *Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-733303. All rights reserved. Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

**1. Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me till I want no more;
feed me till I want no more.**

**2. Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,**

be thou still my strength and shield;
be thou still my strength and shield.

3. When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee;
I will ever give to thee.

Opening Prayer

Holy One, Justice-Seeker, Lover of Creation –
Open us to learn new steps of faithfulness.
Give us courage and patience.
Come and dance with us, engage with us, as we seek you –
so that we can be risen with Christ and in Christ.
Be with us now, we pray. Amen.

Anthem: “Offertory” Text: Micah 6:6-8, Music: by John Ness Beck, Beckenhorst Press, Inc. Used with Permission.

A Story for All Ages (*Children's Time*)

Prayer following A Story for All Ages

“We offer thanks
we offer thanks
for dreamers true
for dreamers true
for all they are
for all they are
and all they do
and all they do.
Let us become
let us become
dreamers too
dreamers too
and bring new life
and bring new life
to me and you

to me and you!

Amen!

Amen!

Hymn "Guide My Feet" TFWS #2208. Words: African American spiritual. Music: African American spiritual; harm. by Wendell Whalum. *Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-733303. All rights reserved. Used with permission under CCLI License #11306163.*

1. Guide my feet while I run this race.

Guide my feet while I run this race.

Guide my feet while I run this race,

for I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain)

2. Hold my hand...

3. Stand by me...

4. Guide my feet...

Scripture Lesson Acts 8:26-39 (*NRSV, adapted*)

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went.

Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The eunuch replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.

Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?"

He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

The Word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon “From You Comes My Praise: Guide My Steps” Rev. Matthew Sergent

Prayers of the People

Hymn for Stepping Out “Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us” UMH 381 (verses 1-3).
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1. Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
much we need Thy tender care;
in thy pleasant pastures feed us,
for our use thy folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Thou hast bought us, thine we are.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Thou hast bought us, thine we are.

2. We are thine, thou dost befriend us,
be the guardian of our way;
keep thy flock, from sin defend us,
seek us when we go astray:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Hear, O hear us when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Hear, O hear us when we pray.

3. Thou hast promised to receive us,
poor and sinful though we be;
thou hast mercy to relieve us,
grace to cleanse, and power to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
We will early turn to thee.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
We will early turn to thee.

Benediction

Poet and songwriter Leonard Cohen

penned these words that we can surely lift to God:

“Dance me to your beauty with a burning violin
Dance me through the panic till I'm gathered safely in
Lift me like an olive branch and be my homeward dove
Dance me to the end of love

Oh, let me see your beauty when the witnesses are gone
Let me feel you moving like they do in Babylon
Show me slowly what I only know the limits of
Dance me to the end of love.”

May we follow the lead of the Spirit
as we find expansive ways to dance the dance of love.

And may the Loving God,
Risen Christ,
and Dancing Spirit
fill you with all you need
for the days ahead.

And all God's people said,
“**Amen!**”

Postlude