

PRELUDE

◇ A time of quiet preparation

We Gather Together/ L. Smith
Now Thank We All Our God/ J. S. Bach
Douglas Weaver, Organ

WORDS OF GREETING

WE APPROACH GOD

IN WORD

Psalm 147 (NIV)

Leader: Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God,
how pleasant and fitting to praise him!

People: **The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the exiles of Israel.**

Leader: He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

People: **He determines the number of the stars
and calls them each by name.**

Leader: Great is our Lord and mighty in power;
his understanding has no limit.

People: **Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make music to our God on the harp.**

IN PRAYER

*WE PRAISE OUR GOD

HYMN OF PRAISE 714

We Plow the Fields

WE CONFESS OUR FAITH (Trinity Hymnal p. 807)

Psalm 65

*WE EXALT OUR LORD

WORSHIP SONGS

Leader: Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good
and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through
all generations. Psalm 100: 4-5 (NIV)

WE GREET ONE ANOTHER

DISMISSAL OF CHILDREN TO CHILDREN'S WORSHIP (4 years old to 1st grade)

WELCOME TO VISITORS

WE SEEK GOD'S FACE

Prayers of God's People

CHORAL INTROIT

O Come O Come Emmanuel

WE CELEBRATE THE COMING OF CHRIST

THE ADVENT CANDLE

Ron & Becky Zimmerman

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS

OFFERING/ CHORAL OFFERTORY

Hark the Glad Sound, The Savior Comes/ M. Lightfoot

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 4:18-5:23 (NIV)

¹⁸Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Let me go back to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive." Jethro said, "Go, and I wish you well."

¹⁹Now the LORD had said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who wanted to kill you are dead." ²⁰So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started back to Egypt. And he took the staff of God in his hand.

²¹The LORD said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. ²²Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son, ²³and I told you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son.' "

²⁴At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses and was about to kill him. ²⁵But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. ²⁶So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to circumcision.)

²⁷The LORD said to Aaron, "Go into the desert to meet Moses." So he met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him. ²⁸Then Moses told Aaron everything the LORD had sent him to say, and also about all the miraculous signs he had commanded him to perform.

²⁹Moses and Aaron brought together all the elders of the Israelites, ³⁰and Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, ³¹and they believed. And when they heard that the

LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

^{5:1} Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.' "

²Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go."

³Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword."

⁴But the king of Egypt said, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labor? Get back to your work!" ⁵Then Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now numerous, and you are stopping them from working."

'That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and foremen in charge of the people: ⁷"You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. ⁸But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' ⁹ Make the work harder for the men so that they keep working and pay no attention to lies."

¹⁰ Then the slave drivers and the foremen went out and said to the people, "This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will not give you any more straw. ¹¹ Go and get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced at all.' " ¹²So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw.

¹³The slave drivers kept pressing them, saying, "Complete the work required of you for each day, just as when you had straw." ¹⁴The Israelite foremen appointed by Pharaoh's slave drivers were beaten and were asked, "Why didn't you meet your quota of bricks yesterday or today, as before?"

¹⁵Then the Israelite foremen went and appealed to Pharaoh: "Why have you treated your servants this way? ¹⁶Your servants are given no straw, yet we are told, 'Make bricks!' Your servants are being beaten, but the fault is with your own people."

¹⁷Pharaoh said, "Lazy, that's what you are—lazy! That is why you keep saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.' ¹⁸Now get to work. You will not be given any straw, yet you must produce your full quota of bricks."

¹⁹The Israelite foremen realized they were in trouble when they were told, "You are not to reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day."

²⁰When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, ²¹and they said, "May the LORD look upon you and judge you! You have made us a stench to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."

²²Moses returned to the LORD and said, "O Lord, why have you brought trouble upon this people? Is this why you sent me? ²³Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble upon this people, and you have not rescued your people at all."

SERMON

The Ways of God
series in Exodus

Rev. Thomas E. Nicholas

***WE GO FORTH TO SERVE**

HYMN OF RESPONSE 670 (vss. 1, 3-5)

If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee

*WORDS OF PEACE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE