

Order of Worship for Sunday, July 4, 2021 – Independence Day

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* - not available in pre-recorded service

CENTERING WORDS

Remember the days of old;

consider the generations long past.

Ask your father and he will tell you,

your elders, and they will explain to you. – Deuteronomy 32:7

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: As ancient Israel followed God's pillar of fire out of slavery, so too we must rededicate ourselves today to follow that same blazing light toward a new birth of freedom and justice.

P: We are different colors, different faiths, different cultures, yet as one people under God we celebrate and commemorate freedom.

L: We must not rest in our work or in our vigilance. We must ascend to the mountaintop to behold the fullness of the dream sown by Jefferson, and Madison, by Lincoln and King.

P: Amen.

L: For the gift of freedom is both a trust and a risk. In this promised land we must learn to use our freedom wisely, to choose carefully, and to act responsibly.

P: God of freedom, you have blessed our land and watched over us. Inspire us by your Spirit to rejoice in the gift of freedom, to use our freedom wisely and to ever strive for freedom and justice to rain down upon all our people. AMEN.

† OPENING PRAYER

Lord of hope, when the dark clouds assail, you ask us to bear the light of your love and truth about what it means to live “in dependence” upon you. When fears seem to immobilize us, you give us courage and strength to bear your witness. We thank you for your call to us. We praise you for your sustaining love for us. We honor you with our lives and our service to you; for it is in Christ's Name, we offer this prayer. AMEN.

OPENING HYMN [America \(My Country, 'Tis of Thee\)](#) United Methodist Hymnal #697

BLESSING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS – DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

JOYS AND CONCERNS - (The Lord's Prayer “trespass”)

SELECTED SCRIPTURE Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

MESSAGE God's Hand in the Founding of a New Nation

CLOSING HYMN [The Battle Hymn of the Republic](#) UMH #717

COMMISSION & BLESSING

PASTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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BIBLE STUDY: **Your Bone and Flesh**

Read [2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10](#) and [Mark 6:1-13](#)

- It appears what marked “home” for the tribes of Israel (in this passage) included a king, a covenant, and fortified cities. How might that have brought security and sense of belonging to the Israelites?
- Do you think Jesus was surprised when those in his hometown “took offense” (v. 3) at him? Do you think he was disappointed?
- Why do you think Jesus was unable to do “deeds of power” (v. 5) in his hometown? [It appears their inability to trust who Jesus said he was played a role in it.]
- How does the sending out of the twelve disciples two-by-two (v. 7) connect with what happens in Jesus’ hometown? [Jesus was rejected by his own. Just as the twelve tribes of Israel help constitute God’s people, so Jesus is signaling a renewed community who operate in his authority.]
- What are Jesus’ instructions to the disciples he sends out? How would this have created a sense of dependence on God’s provisions?
- How does Jesus send his disciples today? How do we depend on God for provisions today?
- How does “home,” biblically speaking, include a sense of call (or purpose) and sending?

CLOSING PRAYER

Covenant-keeping God, your faithfulness in spite of our faithlessness brings a sense of awe and unworthiness. Yet, by our baptisms, you call us to be a people sent in ministry and mission to all those you love in and around us. Give us the eyes to see where you are calling us and who you are calling us to demonstrate your radical love. Amen.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION **Article I of the United States Constitution**

Scripture of note from letters and speeches of the founders as informing the language...

“All legislative power shall be vested in a Congress of the United States...”

Exodus 19:7-8 - And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

1 Samuel 8:10-18 - And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

“...which shall consist of a Senate...”

Numbers 11:16-17 - God said to Moses, “Gather together seventy men from among the leaders of Israel, men whom you know to be respected and responsible. Take them to the Tent of Meeting. I’ll meet you there. I’ll come down and speak with you. I’ll take some of the Spirit that is on you and place it on them; they’ll then be able to take some of the load of this people—you won’t have to carry the whole thing alone.

“...and a House of Representatives.”

Deuteronomy 1:12-16 - So select some wise, understanding, and seasoned ones from your tribes, and I will commission them as your leaders. You answered me, “Good! A good solution. So I went ahead and took the top men of your tribes, wise and seasoned, and made them your leaders—leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens, officials adequate for each of your tribes. At the same time I gave orders to your judges: “Listen carefully to complaints and

accusations between your fellow Israelites. Judge fairly between each person and his fellow or foreigner. Don't play favorites; treat the little and the big alike; listen carefully to each. Don't be impressed by big names.

Article I, Section 8 “The Congress shall have the power to...”

“... lay and collect taxes...but all...shall be uniform throughout the United States;”

Leviticus 27:30-33 - “A tenth of the land's produce, whether grain from the ground or fruit from the trees, is God's. It is holy to God. If a man buys back any of the tenth he has given, he must add twenty percent to it. A tenth of the entire herd and flock, every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod, is holy to God. He is not permitted to pick out the good from the bad or make a substitution. If he dishonestly makes a substitution, both animals, the original and the substitute, become the possession of the Sanctuary and cannot be redeemed.”

Malachi 3:8-10 - “Begin by being honest. Do honest people rob God? But you rob me day after day. “You ask, ‘How have we robbed you?’ “The tithe and the offering—that's how! And now you're under a curse—the whole lot of you—because you're robbing me. Bring your full tithe to the Temple treasury so there will be ample provisions in my Temple. Test me in this and see if I don't open up heaven itself to you and pour out blessings beyond your wildest dreams. For my part, I will defend you against marauders, protect your wheat fields and vegetable gardens against plunderers.” The Message of God-of-the-Angel-Armies.

“...to coin money...and fix the standard of weights and measures;”

Leviticus 19:35-36 - Don't cheat when measuring length, weight, or quantity. Use honest scales and weights and measures. I am God, your God. I brought you out of Egypt.

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