

Welcome to Worship (Commentary)

Pastor Kim A. Stover

July 27, 2019

*Jesus teaches his followers to pray.

*Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Reverend Kim A. Stover's Ordination to Word and Sacrament.

Introduction to the day

Persistence in prayer evoked the admiration of Jesus and wins the attention of the Lord when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. The life of the baptized—to be rooted and built up in Christ Jesus the Lord—is to be rooted in prayer. God hears and answers prayer and so strengthens God's own. "When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me."

Worship Notes

Thanks to Reverend Andrea (Stover) Bates for being here today and to her congregation in Welcome, North Carolina, Our Saviour Lutheran Church.

Thanks also to Reverend Jill Henning, Assistant to Bishop-elect Kenneth Strickland (SES) for blessing us with her presence on behalf of the Southeastern Synod.

Thanks to John Womack, the Bell Choir team, and the Chancel Choir for their contributions of time and talent, enriching this day of worship.

Thanks also to the Church Council's leadership as well as past president Jim Kraus for encouraging and organizing the Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Reverend Stover. You are all invited to the reception luncheon following worship in the Fellowship Hall.

The Gathering Hymn, ***Lord, You Give the Great Commission (ELW 579)***, was often sung during Kim's and Sue's seminary years. At that time, while the melody was familiar, the text used here was copy writ in 1978, and so was fairly new 25 years ago. The refrain anchors the gifts of God in the Spirit's power, a matter not to be forgotten or taken for granted.

Because we are in ordinary time (green), the Kyrie is let go and the Gloria stands alone.

The scripture texts herein are those appointed to the day, Lectionary 17—Proper 12, 7th Sunday after Pentecost. Mary Kay Kates is our reader.

Pastor Stover will chant the Psalm of the Day, #138, because he likes to do this and finds the discipline of practicing a spiritual one. Please join in the refrain. Pastor will also introduce the Gospel of the Day with the Gospel Acclamation, because he likes to, though this and the Psalm could be chanted by anyone with a voice and desire.

The Psalm refrain, "O Lord, your steadfast works endure forever. **Do not abandon the works of your hands, O Lord**" is also used in our Prayers of Intercession, rather than the more

familiar, "Lord in our Mercy...Hear our prayer." Pastor Stover often utilizes a scripture verse as a prayer refrain to both reinforce the scripture, but more importantly connect the responses to the immediacy of both prayer and the day's worship. Other than that he is kind of tired of the familiar response and so finds this exercise a way of more deeply engaging the prayer. It's just the way he is. Julie Boyer is our Prayer Leader.

The Hymn of the Day, ***For the Bread Which You Have Broken (ELW494)***, was chosen by Rev. Bates as she considered the Gospel reading.

Communion Hymns were selected for the service by John Womack, but used differently in the service than originally conceived. ***In the Singing (ELW 466)*** is wonderfully meditative and the three added verses came about as Pastor Stover considered the original stanzas. They may or may not be used. Follow John's lead. ***Day by Day (ELW 790)*** is just a lovely song which can be sung in the consolation of having received Holy Communion. ***What a Friend We Have in Jesus (ELW 742)*** is offered as a familiar favored hymn for many people. The sending hymn ramps things up a bit—as we lean on the everlasting arms sung with the musical flourish of a former Baptist musician. We might be hungry by this time, but we'll be happy regardless.

Come as you are!

Pastor Kim Stover