

# All Saints' Celebration

## Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>

### Summary:

This worship/educational experience is intended to facilitate the observance and celebration of All Saints' Day in a congregation. The format is intended to be interactive and intergenerational.

As in many Protestant, evangelical congregations, All Saints' Day is either misunderstood or ignored completely. It is our conviction that this day on the Christian calendar provides an excellent setting for the congregation to remember and celebrate several aspects of the Gospel and the Christian life including the following:

- It is right and necessary for Christians to recognize and remember those who have died in the faith and to lament our collective grief to a gracious God
- The Gospel is grounded in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and his victory over death and hell and thus gives believers hope of resurrection
- The Christian faith comes to us because of the faithful witness of real people who have gone before us as presented in Scripture and history, many of whom have sacrificed their lives for their witness
- It is right and good to recall and even emulate the faith of those who have gone before us
- It is equally good to recognize and give thanks for the lives of those who mentor us in Christian faith even now
- As our lives intersect with faithful disciples of the past, we draw encouragement for our journey of discipleship today

### Before dinner begins:

- "Introduction to All Saints Day" handouts placed at each table
- Votive candles in place at each table

### Schedule:

6:00 – Wednesday night dinner begins/All Saints slideshow begins looping

6:50 – Infants through 1<sup>st</sup> grade dismissed to childcare

6:55 – Adjust lighting in the room; Pass out children's word searches, coloring pages, "draw a saint," with crayons, pencils to children at tables, permanent markers

7:00 – All Saints Celebration Begins

## **We Gather in Worship**

Introduction to All Saints' Day and welcome (testimony, prep. For Sunday) Jason

Greeting Phil

Pastor: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!*

People: And also with you!

Opening Prayer Phil

Almighty God, you have kindled the flame of your love in the hearts of your saints and martyrs through the ages. As we rejoice in their triumph, may we also learn from their example. And as we remember and celebrate their lives, we ask that you would grant us a similar faith and love. In the name of your Son, Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

## **We Hear God's Word**

Testimony #1 - Steve McCormick

Testimony #2 - Richardson Family

Psalm of Lament: Psalm 88:1-3, 13-14, 18 Shawn

Guided moments of silence to recognize the lives of those who have died in the faith: Shawn  
From our congregation in the past year - Lois Van Note, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
From the church universal  
Family and friends  
Those martyred for the faith and those suffering persecution

New Testament Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Eli Stewert

Reader: We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

People: For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.

Reader: For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord,

People: that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died.

Reader: For the Lord himself, with a cry of command,

People: with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Reader: Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.

All: Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks Be to God!

### **We Respond to God's Word**

Testimony #3 –

Whitney Martin

Celebrating the saints of our lives instructions (careful with glass!):

Jason

Approx. 10 minutes of sharing stories at our tables, soft background music during conversation

Volunteers pass out stained glass pieces & lighters

Table sharing, mark name on stained glass piece

Song: "When It's All Been Said and Done" –

come forward to place piece in basket, light candle at table and return to seat

### **We Depart to Share**

Closing Reading

Jason

*\*Pastor: Lord God, by your grace we are running a race.*

*\*People: We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses--*

*\*Pastor: Patriarchs and matriarchs, prophets and psalmists, disciples and evangelists, martyrs and saints.*

*\*People: We thank you for their example. We praise you for their lives of faith. For all your saints, O Lord, who strove in you to live, who followed, obeyed, and adored you.*

*\*Pastor: Lord God, by your grace we are running a race.*

*\*People: We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses--*

*\*Pastor: Loved ones now resting in you, who guided us, nurtured and cared for us; ancestors who worked and traveled, lived and died that we might be who we are, where we are--your precious children in this community of believers.*

\*People: We thank you for their example. We praise you for their lives of faith. For all your saints, O Lord, who strove in you to die, who counted you their great reward - accept our thankful cry.

*\*Pastor: Lord God, by your grace we are running a race.*

\*People: We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses--

*\*Pastor: Family members and members of this congregation; fellow believers in every country, every denomination; friends who help, guide and uplift us-- children of your family, sheep of your fold, saints of your redeeming.*

\*People: We thank you for their example. We praise you for their lives of faith. For this, your name we bless, and humbly pray anew, that we like them in holiness may live and die in you.

*\*Pastor: Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely,*

\*People: and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,

*\*Pastor: looking to Christ, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.*

\*People: Amen.

Benediction (Jude 1:24-25)

Michael

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen!

Sound - Joey Shald

Powerpoint - Jonathan Phillips