

## ***Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time***

***July 18, 2010***

***Worship 9:30***

### **EARLY CHURCH WORSHIP**

***(133 C.E. to 380 C.E)***

In the first century, the distinctive feature of "Christian Worship" was a fellowship meal held on the first day of the week, in the home of the followers of Jesus. As the second century approached, a number of factors combined to cause the growing church to realize that its corporate worship could not continue strictly as a community meal.

First, Gentiles, rather than Jews, became the largest population in the Christian movement. The Gentiles had converted from various pagan religions and had no tradition of "religious family meals" that were such a key part of Judaism and from which the Christian Eucharist had developed.

Secondly, the number of Christians increased in sufficient number so that the growth prevented all the Christians in one community from gathering for a shared meal in a single home.

Also, the number of new converts necessitated an increased emphasis on the teaching role of the church during the Lord's Day service.

By the middle of the second century, about one year after Jesus' death, the followers gathered each Sunday for a worship service that began with scripture lessons, a sermon, followed by intercessory prayer. Next came the kiss of peace, the offertory (bread and juice), the Eucharistic Prayer, the people's Amen, and the Communion.

The third century saw a clearer separation of the service into two distinct parts. The first part, consisting of lessons, sermons, and prayers was attended by baptized Christians and adult converts from paganism called Catechumens. At the end of this preparatory part of the service, the Catechumens were dismissed. The Eucharist proper, beginning with the kiss of peace and offertory, was called the Service of the Faithful, for only baptized Christians.

Today's service, based on descriptions of worship by Justice Martyr during the second century, is meant to be a representation of worship from the period in the evolution of the church (133-380 C.E.) called the Early Church.

*Resources*    *The Church of Our Fathers*, Roland Bainton

*History of Christian Worship*, Richard Spielmann

*Worship Old and New*, Robert Webber

*A Brief History of Christian Worship*, James White

## HOUSE FELLOWSHIP WORSHIP

Greeting and Introduction

Musical Prelude

\*Call to Worship

One: Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord.

**All: The heavens declare God's righteousness;  
all the people see God's Glory.**

One: Know that the Lord is God.

**All: It is God who made us, and not we ourselves;  
we are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture.**

One: Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth.

\*Hymn

*"Holy, Holy, Holy"*

#277

\*The Lord's Prayer

One: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be your name,

**All: Praise be to God.**

One: Your Kingdom come.

**All: Praise be to God.**

One: Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

**All: Praise be to God.**

One: The bread which you will give us in your Kingdom give us this day.

**All: Praise be to God.**

One: And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us.

**All: Praise be to God.**

One: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**All: Praise be to God. Amen.**

Blessing of the Poor and Those in Need

One: Brothers and sisters, if there are those here who hunger and thirst, or those who sorrow, I invite you in the name of the Son of God, come forward.

(Pause for movement.)

**All: We, who are in Christ, enclose you in the mystic circle of the Church.**

One: Luke 6:20-23

One: Go in peace, and praise God, and the blessed Son.

Imprecations to the Rich

One: Brothers and sisters, if there are those here who are rich, or full of sin, or

slow to practice love, I adjure you, in the name of the Son of God, come forward and repent. (Pause for movement.)

**All: We, who are in Christ, enclose you in the mystic circle of the church.**

One: Luke 6:24-26

One: But God is slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. Through the grace of our Savior, your sins are forgiven. Go in peace, and praise God, and the blessed Son.

Psalm of Praise (Psalm 148)

Page 721

Special Music

Readings for Edifying the Saints

Letter from Paul — Romans 14:1-10a, 15:1-6

Memoirs of the Apostles — Luke 6:37-42

Message to the Children

Message to the Adults

The Canticle of Mary

One: Let us sing, with the blessed Mother of Jesus, our praise to God our Savior.

**All: (From Luke 1:46-55)**

Page 732

Prayers of the Community of Faith

\*Kiss of Peace

The Lord's Supper

(In the Early Church, the Lord's Supper was celebrated every Lord's Day, it began with the kiss of peace. This meal served as both a reminder of the "Spirit of Christ" present in the Community of Faith, a remembrance of Jesus' sacrificial life and death, and a celebration of the blessings to faithful Christians.)

Words of the Church Fathers

(A letter written by Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, to the Church of Philippi — 100-117 C.E.)

\*Closing Hymn

*"Praise with Joy the World's Creator"*

#273

\*Mite box

\*Postlude