

## We Gather to Worship God

Voluntary: i) Prelude et Fugue  
ii) Cantilène religieuse

Théodore Dubois  
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### Welcome

### Call to Worship

Minister: We come to the water edge;  
**All: between slavery and freedom.**

Minister: God calls us ever onward;  
**All: dare we step into the unknown.**

Minister: Let us go forward in faith, and worship.

**Hymn:** 161 O God, our help in ages past *St Anne*  
**(Please remain seated for the hymn, and no singing!)**

1. O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy blast,  
and our eternal home!

2. Under the shadow of thy throne  
thy saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is thine arm alone,  
and our defence is sure.

### Responsive Prayer

Minister: Hear us today, O God, as we give thanks,  
and call on your name;  
**All: help us to know your will.**

Minister: Living God, who led your people,  
from slavery into freedom,  
through fear and the unknown;  
**All: your chosen ones, in joy, go forward.**

Minister: We come before you in faith,  
so, with the surety of your grace, we ask now for your  
blessing and forgiveness;

***Silence***

Minister: Let the broken be made whole,  
let all who ask, receive, all who fear, know peace,  
for we are God's beloved;

**All: Amen.**

### **God speaks to us today**

Reading: **Exodus 14:19-31** **RSV p. 57**

Then the angel of God who went before the host of Israel moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness; and the night passed without one coming near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down upon the host of the Egyptians, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians, clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel; for the Lord fights for them against the Egyptians."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." So Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its wonted flow when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled into it, and the Lord routed the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not so much as one of them remained. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore. And Israel saw the great work which the Lord did against the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord; and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

**Voluntary:** Prelude on "Martyrs"

Charles Wood

### ***God goes ahead***

"God, who is everywhere, never leaves us. Yet He seems sometimes to be present, sometimes to be absent. If we do not know Him well, we do not realize that He may be more present to us when He is absent than when He is present."

~ *Thomas Merton*

"The death of the Egyptians upon the seashore is a glaring symbol of the ultimate doom of evil in its struggle with good. There is something in the very nature of the universe which is on the side of Israel in its struggle with every Egypt."

~ *Martin Luther King Jnr*

### **Questions for reflection**

- Can you remember a time when you were absolutely sure of God's presence in your life?
- God calls us to live out our faith even (or especially) in the face of adversity:
  - In what ways does your faith impact your daily life?
  - Was there a time when God called you into a situation that felt strange and unusual?

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"Faith is the great cure for fear."

~ *Barack Obama*

"Trust that God will give us the strength to hold our ground."

~ *Henri JM Nouwen*

## Intimations

We bring to God our Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

**All: Our Father,  
Which art in heaven  
Hallowed be Thy Name.  
Thy Kingdom come,  
Thy will be done in earth  
As it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever.  
Amen**

**Hymn:** 513 Courage, brother! Do not stumble *Courage Brother*  
**(Please remain seated for the hymn, and no singing!)**

- 1 'Courage, brother! do not stumble,  
though your path be dark as night;  
there's a star to guide the humble:  
trust in God, and do the right.  
Let the road be rough and dreary,  
and its end far out of sight;  
foot it bravely; strong or weary,  
trust in God, trust in God,  
trust in God, and do the right.
2. Perish policy and cunning,  
perish all that fears the light!  
Whether losing, whether winning,  
trust in God, and do the right.  
Some will hate you, some will love you,  
some will flatter, some will slight;  
heed them not, and look above you:  
trust in God, trust in God,  
trust in God, and do the right.

## **Closing Responses**

Minister: No matter the task ahead,  
no matter the fear in our hearts,  
no matter the questions and doubts,  
no matter the water lapping at our feet,

**All: We go in confidence to serve God.**

Minister: For with God all things are possible,  
and in God we can trust.

**All: Let us know your presence with us  
this week and every week.**

## **Benediction**

Voluntary: Study on "St Anne"

C Charlton Palmer