



PRAYER MEETING

August 16



The Fruit of the Spirit: Freedom

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Leader

We come to worship you, Lord God, maker of heaven and earth. You gave life to all things and made them to live in the beautiful freedom of their created purpose. We believe that in you, we can find the freedom of being dead to sin and alive in Christ. We worship you for the gift of freedom and new life.

Help us to live with you in such a way that we may walk in increasing measures of freedom from sinful patterns and pressures and problems. Holy Spirit, lead and guide and change us so that we may experience the freedom of being healed and made completely yours.

Be glorified, our Lord and Savior. May all come to know your marvelous freedom. In the name of Christ who overcame sin and death to make us free, Amen.

Call to Worship

Galatians 5: 13-14, 16-24

New International Reader's Version

My brothers and sisters, you were chosen to be free. But don't use your freedom as an excuse to live under the power of sin. Instead, serve one another in love. The whole law is fulfilled by obeying this one command. "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

So, I say, live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your desires controlled by sin want you to do. The desires controlled by sin do not want what the Spirit delights in. And the Spirit does not want what the desires controlled by sin delight in. The two are at war with each other. That's why you are not supposed to do whatever you want.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the authority of the law.

The result of sin's control in our lives is clear. It includes sexual sins, impure acts, and wild living. It includes worshiping statues of gods and worshiping evil powers. It also includes hatred and fighting, jealousy and fits of anger. Sinful desire is interested only in getting ahead. It stirs up trouble.

It separates people into their own little groups. It wants what others have. It gets drunk and takes part in wild parties. It does many things of that kind. I warn you now as I did before. People who live like this will not receive God's kingdom.

But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good.

It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed their sinful desires to his cross. They don't want these things anymore.

Today, Father, we thank you for the **freedom** you provide through your Son Jesus Christ.

Music

Quiet your hearts and minds as you listen to today's music. Open to God and listen to what the Holy Spirit might say to you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFntDIAyOG8>

Place of Freedom, Highlands Worship

Praise

“This day, we praise You, O God for your attributes and your works. We praise you for the freedom from sin you make possible through the sacrifice of Jesus. We praise you for leading us into continuing freedom through the sanctifying work of your Spirit.

Congregational Psalm/ Passages from Psalms

Leader and People Together

Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Remember, Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good.

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore, he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart and free me from my anguish. Look on my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins.

Ps 25:4-9, 16-18

I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD. I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people. Truly I am your servant Lord, you have freed me from my chains.

Ps 116:13, 14,16

The LORD is righteous; he has cut me free
from the cords of the wicked. *Ps 129:4*

I cry to you, Lord, I say, “You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living.” Set me
free from my prison, that I may praise your
name. *Ps 142: 5,7*

He remembered us in our low estate and
freed us from our enemies. His love endures
forever. *Ps 136: 23-24*

Praise the LORD, my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. Blessed are those whose hope is in the Lord their God. He remains faithful forever.

The Lord sets prisoners free, the LORD gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord. *Ps 146 selected verses*

Reading about the Word of the Day

Paul says in Romans 6 that you and I are “set free from sin.”

How are we set free? By the cross of Christ. You’re set free so that you never again need to respond when sin calls. God has thoroughly defeated sin and Satan, so that when the enemy beckons, we need never tremble. The issue was settled when Christ died, when he dealt with sin and set you free.

Freedom from the clutches of sin has been won for us at great price on the cross.

But you still have to choose.

Is there any area of your life where you sense that you are not absolutely free? If that is true, then release that area of your life—and all your life—to the truth of God.

“If you abide in My word, you shall be my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.”

John 8:31-32

Ask Him to help you understand His truth and live it out. As you do, your life will become a powerful demonstration of what God did on the cross to deal with sin... Sin no longer has dominion over you, and you are free—totally, joyfully, completely free—in Christ.

Henry Blackaby, Experiencing the Cross

Scripture Reading

2 Cor 3: 12-18 NCV

We have this hope, so we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who put a covering over his face so the Israelites would not see it. The glory was disappearing, and Moses did not want them to see it end. But their minds were closed, and even today that same covering hides the meaning when they read the old agreement.

That covering is taken away only through Christ. When a person changes and follows the Lord, that covering is taken away.

The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Our faces, then, are not covered. We all show the Lord's glory, and we are being changed to be like him. This change in us brings ever greater glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Reflect

Scripture Reading repeated

2 Cor 3: 12-18 NCV

We have this hope, so we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who put a covering over his face so the Israelites would not see it. The glory was disappearing, and Moses did not want them to see it end. But their minds were closed, and even today that same covering hides the meaning when they read the old agreement.

That covering is taken away only through Christ. When a person changes and follows the Lord, that covering is taken away.

The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Our faces, then, are not covered. We all show the Lord's glory, and we are being changed to be like him. This change in us brings ever greater glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Individual Silent Prayer

A time to pray and talk to God about what you heard and noticed. Pray for your needs. Pray thanks. Confess sin. Ask for help. Pray for others, for direction, for guidance, for God's glory.

Response

Responsive Reading

Leader and People

Leader: Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations.

People: In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth.

Leader: He will be a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

Is 42: 1,4, 6-7

People: This is what the LORD says: “In the time of my favor I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you. Say to the captives, ‘Come out,’ and to those in darkness, ‘Be free!’ He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water. *Is 48: 8,9,10*

Leader: It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Gal 5:1

Together: You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

Gal 5:13

Leader: Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

1 Pet 2:1-3

Together: Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.

1 Pet 2: 13,15-17

Leader: To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Jn 8:31-32

People: They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?”

Jn 8:33

Leader: Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. *Jn 8:34-35*

People: For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that we should no longer be slaves to sin. *Rom 6:6,14*

Leader: Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace. *Rom 6: 11, 14*

Together: But thanks be to God that, though we used to be slaves to sin, we have come to obey from the heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed our allegiance. We have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

from Rom 6:17-18

Together: If the Son makes you free, you will be truly free.

Jn 8:36

Prayer for the World

Leader: Lord, we pray for God's loving-kindness to be the foundation of our hope

People: We pray for God's mercy in stopping the spread of this virus;

Leader: We pray for God's healing of those who are sick throughout the world.

People: We pray for God's strength for medical personnel serving tirelessly

Leader: We pray for God's insight to be given to researchers seeking solutions

People: We pray for God's wisdom to guide and direct civic leaders, health officials, and world leaders.

Leader: We pray for God's peace to guard us from fear or anxiety

People: We pray for God's provision for those whose livelihoods and income have been affected by this crisis

Leader: We pray for God's creativity to make us agents of love and compassion, that all believers would display the character of Christ.

People: We pray for racial reconciliation, justice, compassionate civil dialog, understanding, and true unity

Together: Lord, we pray for healing for our nation, that Your righteousness and truth and justice would be known, and that the Holy Spirit would draw people everywhere to the saving power of Jesus.

Lord's Prayer

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader

How great is the freedom You, Lord, have fought to give us. Nothing else makes us truly free. We thank you; we thank you; we thank you that you want us to be free and to live in your perfect and loving freedom.

Lead us, Master, to use our freedom as you want - loving others so that they, too, will come to know that you purchased freedom from sin through Jesus' death and resurrection.

With grateful hearts, we thank you. Amen

Closing Prayer

from: *The Pattern of Our Days:*

Worship in the Celtic Tradition from the Iona Community

God of the spirit of kindness, in the glory
of earth and sea and stars, in the patterns
of humor and tenderness and connection,
we celebrate your generosity.

Forgive us when we forget the gift in our every breath, the care that sustains our every moment, the grace that can transform our every day.

Set us free from the prison of grudging hearts, mean desires, resentful spirits.

Give us the courage to act with justice and generosity, and draw us into love that does not calculate or keep scores. Amen.