

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

May 13-19, 2019

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Acts 11:1-18 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=421996953>).

This week's readings are: Psalm 148, Revelation 21:1-6, John 13:31-35.

The theme is: Spirit of Solidarity.

While "Choosing Welcome" is Prospect's ministry theme this year, the decision about whether to choose welcome or separation is not always so clear in Scripture. The Jewish people lived with the tension of being called to welcome the alien while at the same time being warned to separate from foreign cultures in order to preserve their distinct identity. The Hebrew Scriptures are filled with stories of how God's people separated themselves from the idolatrous cultures that surrounded and at times ruled over them. Separation and disunity only serve to strengthen the power of empire. In an effort to maintain purity, early Christians continued to separate themselves from "the other," a practice that benefitted the Roman Empire. News of Peter's association with Gentiles reached Judea even before his arrival. When Peter is "greeted" by those who question him about eating with uncircumcised men, Peter tells them about a dream in which he is shown that nothing in God's creation is unclean. Peter also reports that the Spirit told him "not to make a distinction between them and us" (verse 12) and tells the story of baptizing a Gentile household. Recognizing that God has gifted them with the same Spirit, Peter cannot "hinder God" (verse 17) by turning away from Gentiles. The Roman Empire promised peace, and used division as a means of keeping that "peace." The resurrection peace that God offers unites people and leads them to stand in solidarity.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

Where are there divisions in our church, communities, and world?

How can we choose a welcome that expresses itself in solidarity?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of May 12:

Tabitha was a disciple who cared for the most vulnerable, bringing them comfort and hope.

She was loved by a whole community of people who gathered around her. Pray for the

Tabithas you know.

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