

An American flag is draped across the frame, with the blue field of stars in the upper left and the red and white stripes in the lower left. The flag is set against a dark, textured background. The text "God bless America!" is written in a white, cursive font on the right side of the image.

*God bless
America!*

Zion Lutheran Church
Traditional Worship Service
July 4, 2021

WELCOME

INVOCATION

PASTOR: We make our beginning in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

PASTOR: We gather this morning appreciating our freedom to worship God.

ALL: May God continue to bless the Church of Christ in this land.

PASTOR: We draw near to the God who rules over all nations.

ALL: May God continue to bless our country and all the countries in the world.

PASTOR: We seek to live in harmony and peace together with all peoples on the earth.

ALL: May God continue to establish peace on earth and help us understand that it begins in our hearts.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

PASTOR: Dear Father in heaven: There is no greater feeling of liberty than to experience the freedom from sin and death that You have provided for us through Jesus Christ. Today our hearts and souls are free to praise You. For this, we are very thankful. On this Independence Day, we are reminded of all those who have sacrificed for our freedom, following the example of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Let us not take our freedom, both physical and spiritual, for granted. May we always remember that a very high price was paid for our freedom. Our freedom cost others their very lives.

PASTOR: Lord, today, bless those who have served and continue to give their lives for our freedom. With favor and bounty, meet their needs and watch over their families.

PASTOR: Dear Father, we are so thankful for this nation. For all the sacrifices others have made to build and defend this country, we are grateful. Thank You for the opportunities and freedoms we have in the United States of America. Help us never to take these blessings for granted. Help us to live our lives in a way that glorifies You, Lord. Give us the strength to be a blessing in someone's life today and grant us the opportunity to lead others into the freedom that can be found in knowing You. In Your name, we pray.

ALL: Amen.

My Country 'tis of Thee

**My country tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died!
Land of the Pilgrim's pride!
From every mountain side,
Let freedom ring!**

**Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song.
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.**

**Our father's God to, Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

PASTOR: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

PASTOR: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

ALL: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

PASTOR: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

ALL: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

PASTOR: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

BIBLICAL FREEDOM LITANY

PASTOR: In our distress, we prayed to the Lord

ALL: and He answered us and set us free. (Psalm 118:5)

PASTOR: So, if the Son sets us free,

ALL: we will be free indeed. (John 8:36)

PASTOR: And because Christ has indeed set us free,

ALL: We know that is how we must stay. Being careful not to get tied up again in slavery. (Galatians 5:1)

PASTOR: And remember, if we were slaves when the Lord called us,

ALL: we are now free in Christ.

PASTOR: And if we were free when the Lord called us,

ALL: we are now slaves of Christ (I Corinthians 7:22).

PASTOR: The Lord gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry.

ALL: The Lord frees the prisoners. (Psalm 146:7)

PASTOR: And since the Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon us,

ALL: He has anointed us to bring Good News to the poor.

PASTOR: He has sent us to comfort the broken-hearted

ALL: and proclaim that captives will be released. And prisoners will be freed. (Isaiah 61:1)

INDEPENDENCE DAY PRAYER

PASTOR: Almighty God, bless our nation and make it true to the ideas of freedom and justice and brotherhood for all who make it great. Guard us from war, from fire and wind, from compromise, fear, and confusion. Be close to our president and our statesmen, give them vision and courage, as they ponder decisions effecting peace and the future of our world. Make us more deeply aware of our heritage, realizing not only our rights, but also our duties and responsibilities as a citizen. Make this great land and all its people know clearly Your will, that we may fulfill the destiny ordained for us. In Jesus name,

ALL: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Deut. 10:12-13, 17-21

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?

For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall preserve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen.

PASTOR: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE LESSON: *Galatians 5:13-26*

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is now law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

PASTOR: This is the Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

PLEASE STAND FOR THE READING OF THE HOLY GOSPEL.

PASTOR: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.

ALL: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL: *John 8:31-38*

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

PASTOR: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

NICENE CREED (spoken in unison)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Lord of All Nations, Grant me Grace

Lord of all nations, grant me grace
To love all people, ev'ry race;
And in each person may I see
My kindred, loved, redeemed by Thee.

Forgive me, Lord, where I have erred
By loveless act and thoughtless word.
Make me to see the wrong I do
Will grieve my wounded Lord anew.

With Thine own love may I be filled
And by Thy Holy Spirit willed,
That all I touch, where'er I be,
May be divinely touched by Thee.

SERMON

OFFERING

INDEPENDENCE DAY PRAYER

PASTOR: Almighty God, bless our nation and make it true to the ideas of freedom and justice and brotherhood for all who make it great. Guard us from war, from fire and wind, from compromise, fear and confusion. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

PASTOR: Be close to our president and our statesmen. Give them vision and courage as they ponder decisions effecting peace and the future of our world. Make us more deeply aware of our heritage, realizing not only our rights, but our duties and responsibilities as citizens. Make this great land and all its people know clearly your will, that we may fulfill the destiny ordained for us. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

PASTOR: Eternal God, stir our minds and stimulate our hearts with a high sense of patriotism on this Fourth of July. May all that this day symbolizes renew our faith in freedom, our devotion to democracy, and redouble our efforts to keep a government of the people, by the people, and for the people truly alive in our world. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

PASTOR: Grant that we may highly resolve on this great day to dedicate ourselves anew to the task of ushering in an era when good shall live in the hearts of a free people, justice shall be the light to guide their feet, and peace shall be the goal of humankind: to the glory of Your holy name and the good of our nation and of all mankind. Lord, in Your mercy,

ALL: hear our prayer.

PASTOR: Lord God Almighty, in whose name the founders of this country won liberty for themselves and for us, and lit the torch of freedom for nations then unborn, grant that we and all the people of this land may have the grace to maintain our liberties in righteousness and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PASTOR: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

PASTOR: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up unto the Lord.

PASTOR: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

ALL: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PASTOR: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:

Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.

Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

PASTOR: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

PASTOR: Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Before You, Lord, We Bow

Before You, Lord, we bow, our God who reigns above
And rules the world below, boundless in pow'r and love.
Our thanks we bring in joy and praise
Our hearts we raise to You, our King!

The nation You have blest may well Your love declare,
From foes and fears at rest, protected by Your care.
For this bright day, for this fair land—
Gifts of Your hand—our thanks we pay.

May ev'ry mountain height, each vale and forest green,
Shine in Your Word's pure light, and its rich fruits be seen!
May ev'ry tongue be tuned to praise
And join to raise a grateful song.

Earth, hear your Maker's voice; Your great Redeemer own;
Believe, obey, rejoice, and worship Him alone.
Cast down your pride, Your sin deplore,
And bow before the Crucified.

And when in pow'r He comes, oh, may our native land
From all its rending tombs send forth a glorious band,
A countless throng, with joy to sing
To heav'n's high King salvation's song!

Jesus Shall Reign

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does its successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown His head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With ev'ry morning sacrifice.

People and realms of ev'ry tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns:
The pris'ners leap, unloose their chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all who suffer want are blest.

Let ev'ry creature rise and bring
Honors peculiar to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud amen.

BLESSING

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

PASTOR: We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

PASTOR: Almighty God, You rule all the peoples of the earth. Inspire the minds of all women and men to whom You have committed the responsibility of government and leadership in the nations of the world. Give to them the vision of truth and justice, that by their counsel, all nations and peoples may work together. Give to the people of our country zeal for justice and strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with Your gracious will. Forgive our shortcomings as a nation; purify our hearts to see and love the truth. We pray all these things through Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

BENEDICTION

PASTOR: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

All: Amen.

America the Beautiful

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife.
Who more than self their country loved and mercy more than life!
America! America! May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness and every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam undimmed by human tears!
America! America! God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea!