

Our mission is to learn the way of Jesus together as we invite others to join us at His Table.

### Our Common Practices

#### We Gather

We gather for worship more often than not.  
We gather in smaller groups to connect, learn, and grow.  
We create hospitable space for one another.

#### We Grow

We attend the means of grace daily. (i.e. We attend to the presence of God through Scripture reading and meditation, prayer on behalf of others and myself, breath prayer, spiritual reading and study...).  
We nurture our faith.  
We attend to relationships that promote growth.  
We develop and learn as human beings made in the image of God.

#### We Give

We are a generous people who give our time and resources to the mission of God and the world.  
We tithe as the means through which our community enjoys fiscal health so as to minister generously.

#### We Go

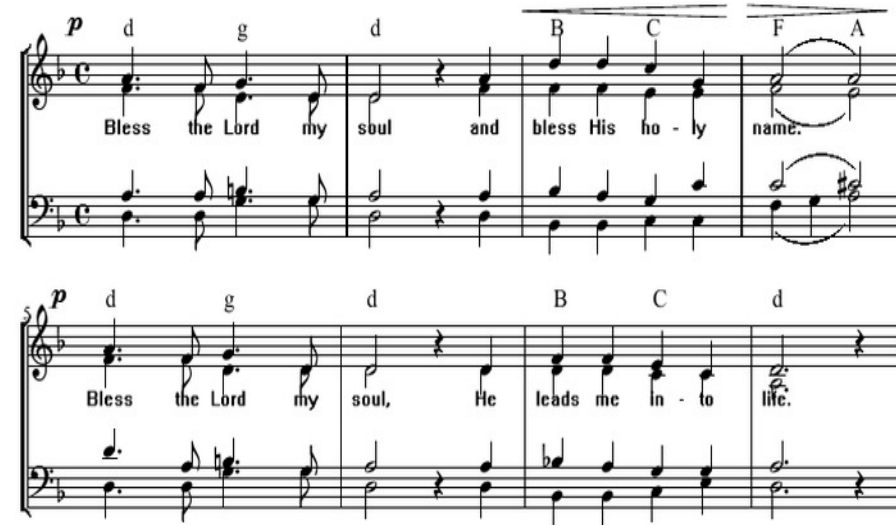
We follow Jesus into the world as His healing presence.  
We help the vulnerable among us.  
We go into the world offering Jesus' invitation to gather at His Table.

A Breath Prayer for the coming week:

"I put my trust in Your unfailing Love."

### Bless the Lord my soul

m.: J.Berthier, Taizé



### CHURCH STAFF

Rob Kazee, Pastor  
[rpkazee@gmail.com](mailto:rpkazee@gmail.com) ~ 202-997-1222

Jeff Wolfe, Pastor of Christian Formation  
[jeffwolfe125@gmail.com](mailto:jeffwolfe125@gmail.com) ~ 717-261-6173

Becky Wolfe, Pastor of Children's Ministry  
[rwolfenaz@gmail.com](mailto:rwolfenaz@gmail.com) ~ 717-514-6275

Barb Long, Director of Care and Community  
[barbaralong2016@yahoo.com](mailto:barbaralong2016@yahoo.com) ~ 717-736-6110

Bekah Kratzsch, Office Administrator  
[office@tablelifechurch.org](mailto:office@tablelifechurch.org) ~ 717-592-0299

617 16th St. New Cumberland, PA 17070  
717-744-6444

web: [www.tablelifechurch.org](http://www.tablelifechurch.org)

[www.facebook.com/tablelifechurch](https://www.facebook.com/tablelifechurch)

CHURCH OF  
 THE NAZARENE

TABLELIFE  
CHURCH



Order of Worship  
01 November 2020

The Season after Pentecost

## We Gather to Worship God

Prelude Music

Welcome

Call to Worship

Worship Reading from the Te Deum Laudamus

## We Listen to the Scriptures

Pastoral Prayer

Sermon Series: Prophetic Imagination: They Teach Us To See

Sermon: "James Cone"

Scripture Readings: Amos; Romans 6.1-4

## We Come to the Table

Prayers of the People

The Peace

We Eat and Drink Together

The Lord's Prayer

## Baptism Liturgy

The Church Renews Her Baptism Covenant

Words of Affirmation

Candidates Bear Witness

Baptisms

## We Go to Live in the Reign of God

Community Life

Gossiping the Good Stuff

Doxology

Blessing and Sending

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## Sermon Reflection Guide

### Amos 1.1, 2; 2.6-7, 10-11; 4.1; 5.6-7, 21-24; 9.7

The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa. Thus says the LORD: I will not revoke the punishment; because they sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals— they who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth, and push the afflicted out of the way; father and son go in to the same girl, so that my holy name is profaned; I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite. And I raised up some of your children to be prophets and some of your youths to be nazirites. Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel? Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on Mount

Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, Seek the LORD and live, or he will break out against the house of Joseph like fire, and it will devour Bethel, with no one to quench it. Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood, and bring righteousness to the ground! I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt?

### Romans 6.1-4

What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

### Question for Everyone

(1) I like the comfy confines of predictability and routine.

(10) I like wide open journeys with an unknown destination.

Where are you on this range?

### You Want to Go Back to Egypt?

God's exodus is hard and few have the courage to remain faithful to God's liberating work in the world. Many start with enthusiasm and then fizzle out when the going gets tough, especially when God leads us in ways we hadn't anticipated. God's saving work will lead us to places we could not have anticipated, to ways of seeing and engaging the world that would have been inconceivable to us back in Egypt. Liberation (the exodus journey) is a long obedience in the same direction, but we don't know where this journey will take us. Talk about the ways God has led you to unanticipated places.

How did you respond?

### Amos

Amos asks, "are you not former slaves whose chains of bondage were broken by my grace? Are you not the ones who sing in full voice: 'my chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth and followed thee?' Are you not my liberated children?"

Why are these questions important?

### Amos' Context

Amos preached to Israel in a time of relative peace and prosperity. And because of Israel's prosperity, it could be asserted that Amos's book is the most accessible Prophet for American Christians to hear. This is because we enjoy a level of prosperity, even during a pandemic, that would have been

inconceivable for most Christians for most of Christian history. One of the biggest challenges for American Christians when engaging the Bible is the fact that a large portion of the biblical narrative was written to disempowered people and we are not that. Response?

### Righteousness and Justice

The God who liberated the Jews from Egyptian bondage did so in order that they would be free to worship Yahweh unhindered by soul-crushing tyranny. But it wasn't only for the sake of righteousness that Israel was liberated. The people of God were liberated to do God's justice in the world. We have learned from Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea that justice is about judging with equity on behalf of the disempowered. Justice is about the protection of the vulnerable, empowerment of the powerless, the resurrection of the lowly. Amos makes it clear that God is not the least bit impressed with religious performances without the doing of justice. How are categories of righteousness and the doing of justice related?

### Revival

Piety without justice is a fool's errand when it comes to pleasing God. Revival will not come while we remain subjugated to the ideologies of our host culture, especially the ones that domesticate a passion for the oppressed. Response? Are you domesticated by ideologies that diminish your passion for oppressed populations?

### James Cone: A Theologian of Liberation

One of the great theologians of the late 20th century, Cone forces us to look hard at suffering, oppression and, ultimately, redemption. He said: "The true power of the Christian gospel lies in its clear call for liberation of the oppressed and a fierce condemnation of their oppressors. . . . I believe that until Americans, especially Christians and theologians, can see the cross and the lynching tree together, until we can identify Christ with "recrucified" black bodies hanging from lynching trees, there can be no genuine understanding of Christian identity in America, and no deliverance from the brutal legacy of slavery and white supremacy. . . . The cross is a paradoxical religious symbol because it inverts the world's value system, proclaiming that hope comes by way of defeat, that suffering and death do not have the last word, that the last shall be first and the first last. Secular intellectuals find this idea absurd, but it is profoundly real in the spiritual life of black folk." (*Said I Wasn't Gonna Tell Nobody: The Making of a Black Theologian*). Response?

### The Sacrament of Baptism

The sacrament of baptism is a celebration of liberation, cruciform liberation. How is cruciform liberation different from other methods of liberation?