

SERVICE OF WORSHIP



For King and Kingdom!

6/11/23

LIGHT OF RESURRECTION REFORMED CHURCH
A SERVICE OF HOLY WORSHIP
ZELIENOPE GATHERING
ELEVENTH DAY IN JUNE, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD,
TWO-THOUSAND AND TWENTY-THREE
PENTECOST SUNDAY

Welcome and Introductions

Call to Worship 1 John 4:7-9

We Confess Our Faith

The Canons of Dordt (1619): The Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine: The Corruption of Man, His Conversion to God, and the Manner Thereof.

Article 5

Neither can the Decalogue, delivered by God to His peculiar people, the Jews, by the hands of Moses, save men. Though it reveals the greatness of sin, and more and more convinces man thereof, it neither points out a remedy nor imparts strength to extricate him from this misery, but, being weak through the flesh, leaves the transgressor under the curse. Man cannot by this law obtain saving grace.

We Apply our Faith to Life

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 76: What is the Ninth Commandment?

Answer: *The ninth commandment is: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”*

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 77: What is required in the ninth commandment?

Answer: *The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor’s good name, especially in bearing witness.*

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 78: What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

Answer: *The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbor’s good name.*

We Read the Bible Together: Deuteronomy 6

Opening Prayer

We Raise our Voices in Song

Psalm 54

Composed by Calvin Jones

Vocal track by Calvin Jones, Used with permission.

By Your name, O God, now save me; give me justice by Your strength.

To these words of mine give answer; O my God, now hear my prayer.

Strangers have come up against me, even men of violence.

And they seek my life's destruction, God is not within their thoughts.

See how God has been my helper how my Lord sustains my soul;

To my foes He pays back evil in Your truth destroy them all!

I will sacrifice with gladness; I will praise your name, O LORD.

He has saved me from all trouble; God has conquered all my foes.

Psalm 119 2 (Verses 9-16)

Composed by Bill Cain of Messenger Music, 1989.

Vocal Track from Bill Cain. Used with Permission.

*How shall a young man cleanse his path?
By keeping watch thereon according to Your Word!*

*With my whole heart have I sought You.
Let me not wander from your commandments!*

*I have hid Your Word in my heart
unto the end that I against You may not sin.
Blessed are You, Jehovah!
Teach me Your statutes; Your statutes!*

*I have, with my lips, testified--
spoken with my lips all the judgments of Your mouth.*

*In Your testimonies' way
I have rejoiced as in all wealth.*

*I'll meditate in Your precepts,
And I will scrutinize; I'll scrutinize Your ways.*

*In Your statutes myself I'll Delight!
I will not forget Your Word!*

Psalm 111

Composed by Calvin Jones, 2020

Vocal track by Calvin Jones, Used with permission.

*Alleluia praise the Lord.
In His congregation praise.
In the council of the just
with my whole heart my anthem raise.
For the acts of God are great,
And are studied by all us
who have pleasure in His works of honor.
They are glorious.*

*And His righteousness remains
now and for eternity.
As He makes His wonders known,
His grace and mercy fall on me.
He recalls His promises.
Those who fear Him, these He feeds.
All the nations, He will give to us
by His almighty deeds.*

*True and righteous are His works.
All His precepts we can trust.
They will stand forever and are done*

*in truth and uprightness.
His redemption He has sent
to His saints who overcame.
He commands His covenant forever
Holy is His name.

Fearful is the name of God.
It is awesome in our sight.
The beginning of all wisdom is
to fear the God of light.
Understanding they will have
who obey what God proclaims.
All His laws and precepts they instruct.
Forever praise His name.*

*Alleluia praise the Lord.
Praise Him for eternity.*

Pastoral Prayer of Confession

Sermon: Mark 9:49-50 "A Covenant of Salt"

Benediction

Psalm 150D

Taken from The Book of Psalms for Worship

Crown and Covenant Publications, 2010

7408 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15208

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Melody from Geistliche Kirchengesang, Cologne, 1623.

Harmony: Ralph Vaughan-Williams, 1872-1958

*Praise God within His holy place
There in His mighty heav'nly space!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
O praise Him for His mighty deeds;
Praise Him for greatness He exceeds!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*Praise Him with dance and tambourine!
Praise Him with woodwind brass and string!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise with the cymbal's crashing sound!
All living things make praise abound!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

If you missed last week...

As Hell is an often down-played doctrine in the church today and as Jesus speaks so prolifically about Hell and its nature, it seemed prudent to take the time, given that this is the only spot in Mark where Jesus teaches on Hell, and devote our time more topically to the doctrine of Hell itself.

Scriptures Referenced in Today's Sermon

- "Every gift of your sacrifice will be salted with fire..." (Leviticus 2:13)
- No forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22)
- Jesus died once for the remission of sins for the Elect (Hebrews 10:10)
- "There is no longer an offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:18)
- We are to make a sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:15)
- We are called to present our bodies as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1)
- The offering of the Philippians was an acceptable and pleasing sacrifice to God (Philippians 4:18)
- The portions given to the priests was a "Covenant of Salt" (Numbers 18:19)
- God's covenant with David to keep his son on his throne as a Covenant of Salt (2 Chronicles 13:5)
- "ate the salt of the palace" (Ezra 4:14)
- we are baptized with fire (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16)
- we are salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13)
- the will of the Father to raise up those He brings to Jesus in faith (John 6:40)
- live in peace.... (2 Corinthians 13:11)

A few notes on the Confession and Catechism:

The language of the Canons of Dordt is self-explanatory. All the Law can do is to point out how miserable we are in our sinful condition. We need a remedy. We need a divine Savior. We need Jesus Christ. The Law anticipates Christ, but leaves us under its strict tutelage until such a time as God ordained His Son to take on flesh and walk amongst us, dying for the sins of His Elect on the Cross.

Again, the Catechism is quite straight-forward. Do not lie or speak in such a manner that will injure your good name, your neighbor's good name, or the name of God Himself.

A Note on Church History: The Synod of Carthage (AD 411)

As we move through the next decade or so of Councils, the debates around Pelagianism will be fleshed out and argued by the church. Given the influence of Pelagianism on Arminianism today, it seems prudent to dedicate some time to look more closely at each of the six points that Pelagius was teaching in the church and how their answers laid the fruit for the rise of what would be called "semi-Pelagianism" which is very nearly what would later be revived as Arminianism.

The first of the objections was that Pelagius taught: "no one could be without sin but he who possessed the knowledge of the Law." On its surface level, it speaks to what we read this morning as part of our confessional reading. Possession of the Law does not imply either one's ability to obey the law or the remedy for disobedience. In fact, man cannot obey the Law on his own strength and its purpose (apart from the civil purpose and sanctifying purpose) is to drive us to our knees in repentance and seeking a savior who could and did fulfill the Law on our behalf.

Thus, the Christian states that he has nothing that he brings to the table in salvation. As the old gospel song goes: "Jesus paid it all; all to Him I owe..." As a Christian, I have done nothing to contribute to my salvation. All the merit is in Jesus. Hence, we refer to the atonement as "Vicarious" in nature...Jesus did all the work and we benefit from it.

While this matter was being debated, the Pelagians argued that what was meant by their statement was that those who knew the Law of God were better equipped toward the obedience of it. This, of course, can only be said of a regenerated individual. Once again, on our own we do not have the ability or desire to obey the Law. At the same time, there is a level of truth to the statement, for as Paul writes, until he knew what the Law was he did not know he was breaking the law. So, in a limited sense, Pelagius' statement could be understood as orthodox and it was on this principle, that the Council declared that Pelagius was teaching in accordance with the church.

Why We Do What We Do in Worship

Call to Worship — This is a brief passage of Scripture that calls God's people to gather and worship. The Bible never requests, but commands that we worship our God. It should be noted that worship is active and participatory, not passive. Worship is not to be a show that is attended but it is to be an activity in which we engage. Thus, we confess our faith together and we sing together. While prayer is led by the pastor, it is encouraged that you pay close attention to the words and make these words your own. Also, when the Scriptures

are read and preached, we are called upon to think about what is being said and how it applies to us — following along with the reasoning of the pastor.

Confession of Faith and Catechism — Unity comes by committing to those doctrines and practices held by the True Church through the Ages. In the words of St. Anselm: “For I do not seek to understand so that I may believe; but I believe so that I may understand. For I believe this also, that unless I believe, I shall not understand.” The creed articulates what we believe and the catechism teaches us how to apply that to life.

The Belgic Confession was published in 1561 and forms the backbone of the theology of the continental Reformed church. The Canons of Dordt, published in 1619 will be the confession we affirm next, its primary importance being that it clarifies some of the language in the Heidelberg Catechism that had been understood in unfortunate ways. Even so, the Heidelberg Catechism, published in 1563, still stands as the catechism of the continental Reformed faith. These three documents together are referred to as “The Three Forms of Unity,” and serve to provide the basis for the theology held by this congregation.

Singing Psalms — Singing is a part of the Christian practice and Christian song has influenced much of the greatest music throughout the western world. While we have a rich tradition in Christianity of hymns and praise songs, many of them are laced with some very poor (and sometimes heretical) theology. This challenge is nothing new and the early church councils, when faced with such difficulties, chose to look to singing from the Canon of Scripture. This was largely the position of the Reformed church until the eighteenth century when it was once again abandoned for hymnody. In light of the theological quagmire found in some hymns, it is the practice of LORR to sing Psalms for Sunday morning worship. Other songs can be sung on other days of the week, but it is our practice to sing God’s word back to him as we gather on the Lord’s Day for worship. We also believe that the psalms do a better job of addressing the human condition than do many of the hymns and praise songs out there. You may let your guard down as you sing the psalms, they are God’s inspired Word that you are singing. Also, note that the psalms are read before they are sung and a few comments made on them; this ensures that we understand what it is that we are about to sing.

Pastoral Prayer — Here the pastor leads us in confessing our sins before God and lifting up our needs before His almighty throne.

Sermon — This is the central part and heart of our worship service, where we are instructed in the Word of God — both in meaning and in application. We encourage you to take notes where helpful and ask questions afterwards regarding things that may not have been understood. The sanctuary is the “classroom of Christ” in the traditional sense, where God’s people are taught and disciplined.

Benediction — This is the pronouncement of God’s blessing on the body of faith as we close our worship and re-enter the world around us. In many ways, the sanctuary is meant to be a kind of “embassy of heaven” while the world around us is our mission field. Go and make disciples.

A Note about the Offering — While many churches “pass the plate” as it were, we feel it more appropriate to

have a basket on the side table as you enter church. Your offering to God will be used to further the Kingdom of Heaven.

A Note about Children in Worship – It is our conviction that children belong in the worship of God’s people as much as humanly possible. That means that we will be patient with those distractions that come from our little ones and parents should never feel afraid to bring them and work to engage them in all we do. It is our belief that as children watch their parents participating in worship, they too will follow. We also encourage parents to help prepare their children for worship. Typically, children love to play-act, so one wonderful way of preparing for worship is practicing our worship service at home. In fact, we have many of our psalms on a CD that people are free to have. It is hoped that these will help not only our children but our adults learn the psalms so that we can joyfully sing them together.

A Note about Guests – We also love guests in worship, both in the form of mature believers who are looking for a more Biblically grounded worship service and new believers who are freshly seeking to develop and understand their faith. We do encourage you though, when you invite friends, prepare them so that they can get the most out of our service. Past sermons are all published online, bulletins can show them our order of service, and you can spend some time talking about the ground we have covered in the Gospel of Mark. We recognize that our approach to worship may be a little different than your guests may have experienced in other places, but we believe that with but a little preparation, any Christian should be able to engage in our worship in a meaningful way. We also believe that the natural outcome of worship that is Biblically centered and confessionally grounded is growing (thriving even!) in Christian faith and maturity. So, invite others, but do them the favor of orienting them so they are prepared to participate fully.

Our goal is not simply to organize a new church; our goal is also to call the western church to reformation that she might again put away the works and innovations of men and embrace the Scriptures as well as her Creeds and Confessions boldly.

Will you join us in committing yourself to this vision as well?

We are grateful for the many resources available to assist in singing psalmody in worship.

I would like to extend a personal thanks to Pastor Uri Brito and Providence Church (CREC) in Pensacola for letting us “sing along” with them in some of their congregational singing.

Also, a special thanks to Bill Cain who has extended the same to us along with many of his own psalm renditions.

A very special thanks also goes to Calvin Jones, who has encouraged me both with his psalms and his commitment to worship in Spirit and in Truth.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to those who have been lights along the way of spiritual faithfulness. It should be noted that while singing psalms is no longer commonplace in the western church, for the majority of Christian history, it was the dominant way that Christians praised God.

Matthew and Mark both record that Jesus sang psalms with his Apostles after the Last Supper (Matthew 26:30 & Mark 14:26 – probably psalm 118, which was customary at Passover);

Paul instructs the churches to sing Psalms (Ephesians 5:19 & Colossians 3:16);

James teaches us that if we are happy, we should sing psalms (James 5:13);

the Councils of Laodicea, Chalcedon, and Trullo all commit the church to singing psalms as does the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The authors of the Canons of Dort also held to the practice of psalm-singing for worship and the Westminster Assembly held that Psalm-singing was so important

that they funded a psalter in English so that the local church could have it as a tool for their worship.

*Truth can only ever be understood
in the light
of the resurrection of Christ.*



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Pray that we may
make Disciples of the
Nations.