

SERVICE OF WORSHIP



For King and Kingdom!

6/26/22

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

Welcome and Introductions

Call to Worship Hebrews 1

We Confess Our Faith

Zwingli's Sixty-Seven Articles (1524)

35. *Temporal authority derives strength and affirmation from the teaching and work of Christ.*
36. *All judicial authority and the administration of justice which the so-called priestly estate appropriates to itself, really belongs to temporal authority inasmuch as it seeks to be Christian.*
37. *Furthermore, all Christians, without exception, owe obedience to them.*
38. *All Christians, without exception, owe obedience to them, provided they do not command anything which is opposed to God.*
39. *Therefore all laws ought to conform to the divine will so that they protect the oppressed person, though he may not actually lay a charge.*
40. *They alone are entitled to impose the death penalty and then only on those who give public offense, without thereby incurring the wrath of God, unless He commands something else.*
41. *When they provide just counsel and aide to those for whom they will have to give account before God, these in turn, are duty-bound to give them physical support.*
42. *Should they become unfaithful and not act according to the precepts of Christ, they may be deposed in the name of God.*
43. *In short, the dominion of the one who rules with God alone is the best and most stable; but the dominion of the one who rules by his own whim, is the worst and most insecure.*

We Apply our Faith to Life

Heidelberg Catechism, Question 108: What does the seventh commandment teach?

Answer: *That all unchastity is accursed of God, and that we should therefore loathe it with our whole heart, and live chastely and modestly, whether in holy wedlock or single life.*

We Read the Bible Together: Leviticus 18

Opening Prayer

We Raise our Voices in Song

Psalm 2

Composed by Calvin Jones, Nations Rage, 2019

Vocal Track by Calvin Jones, Used with Permission

*Why do wicked nations rage, and their useless plots design?
Kings of earth in schemes engage Rulers are in leagues combined.
They speak out against the Lord; His Messiah they defy:
“Let us break their chains and cords, Let us cast them off,” they cry.*

*But the Lord will soon scorn them all; He who sits on high will laugh.
And His anger on them falls. He will speak to them in wrath.
“Yet according to My will, I have set My King to reign;
And on Zion’s holy hill, My Anointed will remain.”*

*God’s decree I will make known: This is what He had to say:
He declared, You are My Son; I have brought You forth this day.
Ask of Me and you’ll I’ll make Heir to earth and nations all.
Them with iron rod You’ll break, Smashing them in pieces small.*

*Therefore kings now heed this word: Earthly judges, come and hear.
Rev’rent worship give the LORD; With your joy mix trembling fear.
Kiss the Son, His wrath to turn, Lest you perish in your stride,
For His anger soon may burn. Blessed are all who in Him hide.*

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 6

Composed by Calvin Jones

Vocal Track by Calvin Jones, Used with Permission

*Lord, do not chasten me in wrath. Be gracious, Lord I waste away!
Lord heal my bones and troubled soul; O Lord, how long will you delay?
Now in Your steadfast love, send help! Return, O Lord, to me and save!
For none remembers You in death, And who will praise You in the grave?*

*I'm wearied from my moans and cries; I flood my bed with tears each night.
Because of all my foes and grief, My eyes grow weak and lose their sight.
Depart from me, all evil men! The Lord has heard my tearful cry,
The Lord has heard my pleading voice, The Lord my prayer will not deny.*

*My enemies will come to shame, Upon them great dismay will fall;
They are turned back the way they came, And shame will quickly seize them all.
They are turned back the way they came, And shame will quickly seize them all.*

Pastoral Prayer of Confession

Sermon: Mark 3:31-35 "Blood and Water"

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

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

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Vocal track from San Joaquin Valley Metanoia Prison Ministries. Used with Permission

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...

So, what is the “unforgiveable sin”? What is the “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit”? This is a question that has been long debated. In context, it seems to be the attribution of the works of God to the Devil. While there are a number of sins the scriptures speak of as being unforgiveable, that is, unless we repent. Our aim was to explore this idea and apply conclusions to our lives in the church today.

Scripture Verses Cited in the Sermon:

- Parallel Passages (Matthew 12:46-50; Luke 8:19-21)
- “I have not come to bring peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34)
- “One who acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge...” (Matthew 10:32-33)
- God instructs Noah to bring his household into the Ark (Genesis 7:1)
- Noah makes a sacrifice on behalf of his household (Genesis 8:20)
- God called Abraham to bring his household into Canaan (Genesis 12:1)
- Abraham’s household included “all the people he had acquired in Haram” (Genesis 12:5)
- The people of Abraham’s household were very numerous (Genesis 13)
- Abraham had 318 trained fighting men who had been born into his household (Genesis 14:14)
- Abraham refers to Eliezer of Damascus as a member of his household (Genesis 15:2-3)
- All of Abraham’s household was marked with the Covenant Sign (Genesis 17)
- All of the Philippian Jailer’s household was marked with the covenant sign (Acts 16:31-33)
- When a person is made a part of the covenant, he is known by a new name (2 Chronicles 7:14)
- When a person is made part of the covenant, they are known by God’s name (Isaiah 43:5-7)
- When the church grew, they were called by Christ’s name (Acts 11:26)
- “There is a beloved who is closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24)
- David and Johnathan had this kind of relationship (2 Samuel 1:26)
- Jesus calls his disciples beloved in this way (John 15:14-15)

- Early Christians referred to themselves as “The Friends” (3 John 15)
- “He who came by the water of the womb and the blood of the covenant...” (1 John 5:6)
- Family of Jesus is “he who hears the Word of God and does it” (Luke 8:21)
- “You are my friends if you do what I command you” (John 15:14)
- “For this is the will of God, that we keep His commandments...” (1 John 5:3)
- God shows mercy on “thousands of them who love me and keep my commandments” (Exodus 20:6)
- “You shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgements...” (Leviticus 18:5)
- “It is no vain thing for you; it is your life.” (Deuteronomy 32:47)
- “Not everyone who calls me ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven...” (Matthew 7:21)
- “Therefore, whosoever keeps these words of mine and does them...” (Matthew 7:24)
- “The Face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (Psalm 34:16)
- “Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him” (John 3:36)
- You are either a child of God or a child of Satan...one or the other (1 John 3:4-10)

A few notes on the Confession and Catechism:

The language of the Confession forms the basis for Article 36 of the Belgic Confession. The key is that governments ought to be faithful to the Word of God in all of their judgments. If they are not so, they become unstable and the Christian is justified in seeking to see that government overthrown. This idea would be further developed by Calvin by the insertion of the notion of lower and higher magistrates. Lower magistrates have a dual responsibility — first to the people they are charged to govern and second by the higher courts. Yet, notice the priority is to the people they govern. Thus, Calvin would argue that a lower governmental body has the right to resist a wicked government, but an individual does not, unless the government commands something that is explicitly against the Word of God.

There is a movement today that is often referred to as “the Two-Kingdoms” movement, which essentially states that the state has autonomy in the worldly things and that Christ has autonomy in spiritual matters...and that there is no overlapping of the two. This is an erroneous way of thinking; Christ sits enthroned over all things — both natural and supernatural. Thus, his Law is to be applied in both areas and is sovereign over secular things as well as over spiritual matters. Thus, unlike what is taught by this group, Christ rules over both kingdoms.

As to the Catechism, the seventh commandment calls for chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage. Perhaps the biggest challenge for most westerners is that we are called upon to loathe unchastity with all of our hearts. While we may give lip service to that idea, how often do we watch movies or television with unchastity portrayed? While we may look in the other direction or find it distasteful, is that really “loathing”? I think probably not.

A Note on Church History: The Council of Nicea (AD 325)

One of the challenges that the church has faced through the ages has to do with the inclusion of “holy days” in the church year. Some have promoted it with vigor, always seeking to include new ones where possible. Others have seen this practice as adding to the Word of God and thus outside of the pale of the

Regulative Principle of Worship. On a personal note, I am not fond of any holy days as I think that they can distract a congregation from the work that is to be done and from the teaching ministry of the pulpit. On the opposite side of the argument, it is to be recognized that God did include several holy days in the Old Testament Law (which were fulfilled by Christ) and sometimes a holy day can be utilized for the education of the people.

The Council of Arles (AD 314) ruled that it was good to make a special celebration of the resurrection of Christ on one day of the year that was held along with other churches in a region or in a given area. This showed unity amongst the brethren to a watching world. Of course, this was usually referred to as a “Paschal” celebration, which is a reference to Jesus being the “Paschal Lamb,” a reference to 1 Corinthians 5:7, where Paul refers to Jesus as “Our Passover Lamb.” Why the English-speaking world deviated from this practice is quite the mystery and is a testimony to the spiritually destructive effects of syncretism.

Overall, the church was receptive to the idea of a unified celebration of Christ’s death and resurrection, but the questions that followed were “when and how?” There were essentially three parties that came forth in this debate. The first was a minority party, which held that the Paschal celebration was essentially the Christian Passover and should be followed in essentially the same manner as did the Jews. Obviously, no lamb was to be present, though. This made the Paschal meal a kind of bridge of Jewish and Christian notions

This first opinion was eliminated without a great deal of debate. The reality is that the Christian Paschal celebration was to be something distinctly Christian, not something shared with the Jews. Jesus had fulfilled all of the Jewish elements and thus, the elements of the Jewish Seder Feast (apart from those appropriated by Christ) were distinctly Jewish and not distinctly Christian. Thus, the Council ruled this group’s arguments out of order.

The two majority groups were loosely arranged between the Latin and the Greek churches in the west and east respectively. The western view held that the Day of the Cross should always be recognized on a Friday and the resurrection always on a Sunday. The eastern churches argued that the Sacrifice of Christ should always be celebrated on the 14th of Nisan and the Resurrection on the 16th. Thus, some years the eastern and western churches would celebrate on the same day, but in most years there would be a variance.

The conclusion was that the resurrection should always be celebrated on a Sunday, the First Day of the Week, and that it should fall on the first Sunday after Passover, to keep it as close to the historical day of the Resurrection as possible. This was not as well received by the eastern church as had been anticipated, but would become the rule of the church. What followed was a debate as to when Nisan began as it was based on a Jewish lunar calculation of the year, after the equinox. Yet, sometimes, due to the Jewish calculations, the 14th of Nisan fell before the Equinox. What then was to be done?

The decision was made that the celebration of the Resurrection should always fall after the full moon which followed the spring equinox. If the full moon fell on a Sunday, then it would be the following Sunday that was celebrated as Resurrection Sunday. This permitted the Christian Church to abandon the Jewish calculation of days and establish its own. Of course, another point of interest is that the eastern world followed the Julian calendar and the western world follows the Gregorian calendar, which means that there are still variances in the date of celebration today. The Synod of Whitby in AD 664 sought to smooth out this calculation further, nevertheless, what we have today when it comes to Resurrection Sunday’s date, is a result of these debates.

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.

It is our hope, once fully organized, to appeal to become a member of the Reformed Church in the United States.

If you are interested in knowing more, please see Pastor Win, the Literature Table, or check the denomination out online at: www.rcus.org. This is the denomination which holds Pastor Win's ordination credentials.

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 today, 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 Trulio all commit the church to singing psalms as does the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The The authors of the Canons of Dordt 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 worship.



LIGHT OF RESURRECTION REFORMED CHURCH

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**Pray that we may
make Disciples of the
Nations.**