

SERVICE OF WORSHIP



For King and Kingdom!

7/10/22

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

Welcome and Introductions

Call to Worship Hebrews 13:3

We Confess Our Faith

Zwingli's Sixty-Seven Articles (1524)

- 50. God alone remits sin through Jesus Christ His Son, our only Lord.*
- 51. Whoever ascribes this to a creature, robs God of His honor and gives it to one who is not God. That is sheer idolatry.*
- 52. Therefore, confession which is made to a priest or to a neighbor should not be advocated as the remission of sin, but simply as seeking advice.*
- 53. Imposed works of penance derive from human counsel – with the exception of the ban. They do not remove sin and are imposed merely to deter others.*
- 54. Christ has borne all our pain and travail. Hence, whoever attributes to works of penance what is Christ's alone, errs and blasphemes God.*
- 55. Whoever refuses to remit any sin of a penitent person, cannot claim to be acting in the name of God or Peter, but in the name of the devil.*
- 56. Whoever remits certain sins for money alone, is fellow to Simon and Balaam and the very messenger of the devil.*

We Apply our Faith to Life

Heidelberg Catechism, Question 110: What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?

Answer: *God forbids not only such theft and robbery as are punished by the government, but God views as theft also all wicked tricks and devices, whereby we seek to get our neighbor's goods, whether by force or deceit, such as unjust weights, lengths, measures, goods, coins, usury, or by any means forbidden by God; also all covetousness and the misuse and waste of His gifts.*

We Read the Bible Together: Leviticus 20

Opening Prayer

We Raise our Voices in Song

Psalm 16

Composed by Don McCrory - Sterling

Vocal Track by Matthew Montgomery, Used with permission.

Preserve me, O God, for I'm trusting in You.

"Yes, You are my Master," I said to the LORD;

Besides You I do not possess any good.

In Your holy messengers I take delight.

Those running to idols will multiply griefs.

I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood,

Nor will I confess their vain names with my lips.

The LORD's my inherited portion and cup.

You care for my lot, where the lines fell to me,

My pleasant and lovely inherited land.

The LORD who gives counsel to me I will bless,

For surely my mind teaches me through the night.

The LORD ever present before me I keep.

He stands at my right hand; I shall not be moved.

My glory rejoices, my heart is made glad;

And also my flesh will live safely at ease.

For You'll not abandon my soul to the grave,

Your Godly One You will preserve from decay.

Life's path You will show me; full joy is with You;

Your right hand holds pleasures for me evermore.

Psalm 67

Composed by Gustav Holst, 1918; arranged by Brian Coombs, 2003.

Vocal track by Matthew Montgomery. Used with permission.

O God, show mercy to us,

And bless us with Your grace;

And cause to shine upon us

The brightness of Your face;

So that the whole world

may truly know your way,

*And so that Your salvation
All nations see displayed.
O God, let peoples praise You;
let all the peoples praise.
Let nations come rejoicing
And songs of gladness raise.*

*For You will judge the peoples
with perfect equity;
To nations of the whole earth
A governor You'll be.
O God, let peoples praise You;
Let all the peoples praise.
The earth has brought its bounty
Throughout its harvest days.
Since God, our God, will bless us.
Yes, God will blessing send,
That all the earth may fear Him
To its remotest end.*

Psalm 4

Composed by Nathan Clark George, 2012.

Vocal Track by Nathan Clark George, Used with Permission.

*Answer Father, when I call,
O God of my righteousness.
You have given me relief,
When in deep distress.
Answer, Father, and be gracious
to the servant in your care;
show your mercy in my trouble;
O Lord, hear my prayer;
O Lord hear my prauer.*

*How long will you sons of men,
turn my honor into shame?
How long will you love your lies,
speaking them in vain?
Know the Lord has called the Godly,
Made them holy, one and all.*

*Know the Lord will surely hear me
when to Him I call;
when to Him I call.*

*Tremble now but then dep[art,
from all these besetting sins.
Meditate within your heart,
rest, be silent.
Offer righteous sacrifices,
Bring your faith unto the Judge.
Lay your silent hearts before Him.
Place in Him your trust;
Place in Him your trust.*

*Many say, 'Who brings us good?
Lift your light and bless the ground!'
But more joy is in my heart,
than when wine abounds.
So in perfect peace now resting,
I will both lie down and sleep.
You alone, O Lord Protector,
my soul safely keep;
my soul safely keep.*

Pastoral Prayer of Confession

Sermon: Mark 4:10-12 "The Hidden God"

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

LAASST UNS EFREUEN 88.44.88

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...

We began the Parable of the Sower. The thing that makes this parable unique is that we not only have Jesus' explanation of the parable, but we also have Jesus' explanation of why he taught in parables in the first place. Thus, last week we looked at the parable itself and discussed some of the interpretive guidelines that one must use when they encounter a parable. We also drew some conclusions and application from the elements of the parable itself, namely that the seed is alive and that while not all are called to the vocation of sowing, all are called to scatter some seed in their own areas of influence.

Scripture Verses Cited in the Sermon:

- Parallel Passages (Matthew 13:10-17; Luke 8:9-10)
- God shows his mercy to the elect by destroying the reprobate (Romans 9:22-23)
- None can come to Jesus unless the Father brings them (John 6:44)
- Adam knew his wife (Genesis 4:1)
- The Fool says to himself that there is no God (Psalm 14:1; 53:1)
- Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord'... (Matthew 7:21)
- These will not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21)
- Prophets searched and inquired as to the time of the coming of the Messiah (1 Peter 1:10)
- The mystery of God's salvation is something into which angels long to look (1 Peter 1:12)
- Teach in parables so they do not repent and be forgiven (Isaiah 6:9-10)
- God dwells in thick darkness (1 Kings 8:12)
- One cannot perceive God's plans during times of trial (Job 23:8-9)
- God hid his face from the house of Jacob in judgment (Isaiah 8:17)
- God is a God who hides himself (Isaiah 45:15)

- Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ (Romans 10:17)
- Must be born again to see the kingdom (John 3:3)

A few notes on the Confession and Catechism:

In Zwingli's articles, we transition into the question of the forgiveness of sins. The Roman Catholic Church had held for many years that they were the mediator of God's forgiveness to man. From this came the phrase, "There is no salvation outside of the church." And while there is truth to this (for Christ only redeems His elect and He brings His elect into the church body), Rome took it too far, turning attention to themselves for the financial gains of the church rather than turning attention toward Christ.

Thus, Zwingli clearly emphasizes that what Rome is doing is idolatry as they seek to supplant Christ. He also condemns the notion of refusing to forgive others who come in repentance. Christ has done the work for us, in our gratitude, we are to forgive one another.

The Catechism moves on to the eighth commandment: "You shall not steal." The catechism points out that not only is the act of theft condemnable before God, but also those things that might be considered invisible theft — uneven weights, for example. Stores sometimes do this when it comes to "sales prices" by elevating the price ahead of the "sale" and then discounting them to the original price. While consumers ought to do due diligence and educate themselves as to pricing, the merchant who seeks to do this is defrauding his customers in the eyes of God. I have known builders who intentionally build in the cost of supplies for personal projects into their bids, which is another way of creating unjust measures.

One of the other aspects of theft is the misuse of gifts and skills. God is the source of these, they need to be used and not squandered. Further, they need to be used for the glory of God and not simply for personal ends. Over the years, I have been grateful for those who, both inside and outside of worship contexts, have plied their professional skills toward strengthening Christ's kingdom. An example of this took place during this past Synod, where I was appointed to serve on the Standing Finance Committee. Three of the other men on the committee were professional "money people" and it was fascinating to see how they approached the finances of the church, using their gifts so that Christ's work can be done.

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

The Creed that we know today as the Nicene Creed is actually the revised AD 381 edition, which we will discuss in more depth when we arrive at the Council of Constantinople. The Creed drafted at the AD 325 Council of Nicea was written not only to oppose Arianism, but was written to stand against a Creed that Arius had written (and was circulating) around AD 320. In this Creed, Arius argued that the Son had been created before all time and thus was the means by which the Father created the universe. The key to understand is the word "created." Arius did not believe that the Son was eternal, but that he was created prior to the creation of anything else. That means that the Son's existence is dependent on the Father's existence and that the Son's glory is second to the Father's. Arius still used the language of "Trinity" (as do Mormons), but the meaning of Trinity has been altered.

The creed, as we are familiar, read as such:

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible; and in the one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, only begotten of the Father, that is, of one substance of the Father. God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of the same substance with the Father, by whom all things were made in heaven and in earth, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, was incarnate, was made man, suffered, rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens and He will come to judge the living and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost. Those who say there was a time when He was not, and He was not before He was begotten, and He is of another hypostasis, or of another substance (than the Father), or that the Son of God is created, that He is mutable, or subject to change, the Catholic Church anathematizes.

Of the Bishops present at the Council (318 were present), only 5 refused to sign their affirmation to the Creed. Debate ensued regarding these five dissenters. It was declared that nothing novel had been added and that the Creed of Nicea taught what had always been held by the church at all times in all places. After debate, three of the five recanted and agreed to submit to the new Creed. The final two were anathematized and excommunicated from the church.

History has preserved several versions of the lists of these delegates, allowing us to know who they were and from what region they came. This undoubtedly affirms the ecumenical nature of this document and as such, it has been passed down through the generations.

When this document was presented to Emperor Constantine, he treated it as if it were divine Scripture. In turn, he argued that the writings of Arius were to be burned (along with the books of those who supported Arius. The Bishops who had been loyal to Arius were also deposed and banished from the Empire. Arius originally fled to Palestine, where he continued to revise his Christology, making his error more subtle (yet it was still present). Arius died about 10 years after Nicea. The sad thing is that his disciples took Arius' views outside of the empire and it would not be until the 7th or 8th centuries before the Arian churches were disbanded. Today, Arianism exists, but only in cults like the LDS and Unitarianism.

Though we have discussed this many times in our context, the presence of the Creed (as well as the Confessions) clearly establishes the fact that there are propositions that one must hold to be Christian. Christianity is not a free-for-all system of doctrine nor is it a buffet line. If one does not align with even the smallest aspect of these Creeds, one cannot claim to be a Christian.

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.

*While what we are doing may seem rather novel,
across the scope of 2000 years of church history, the modern
practice of
singing anything and everything has proven to be the novel
approach.*



LIGHT OF RESURRECTION REFORMED CHURCH

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