

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, January 7, 2024

“In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.”

Ephesians 1:11-12

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Greeting and Blessing*

Responsive Reading*

Psalm 50:1-15 (p. 803 in the *Trinity Hymnal*)

The Mighty One, God, the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets.

From Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth.

Our God comes and will not be silent; a fire devours before him, and around him a tempest rages.

He summons the heavens above, and the earth, that he may judge his people:

“Gather to me my consecrated ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice.”

And the heavens proclaim his righteousness, for God himself is judge.

“Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you: I am God, your God.

“I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings, which are ever before me.

“I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens,

“for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.

“I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine.

“If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.

“Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?”

“Sacrifice thank offerings to God, fulfill your vows to the Most High,

“and call upon me in the day of trouble;

“I will deliver you, and you will honor me.”

** Congregation is requested to stand, if able.*

The pastor will read the plain text; the congregation will read the bold text.

All Creatures of Our God and King

All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing alleluia, alleluia!

Thou burning sun with golden beam, thou silver moon with softer gleam,

O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong, ye clouds that sail in heav'n along, O praise him, alleluia!

Thou rising morn in praise rejoice, ye lights of evening, find a voice,

O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou flowing water, pure and clear, make music for thy Lord to hear, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou fire so masterful and bright, that givest man both warmth and light,

O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

And all ye men of tender heart, forgiving others, take your part, O sing ye, alleluia!

Ye who long pain and sorrow bear, praise God and on him cast your care,

O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless, and worship him in humbleness, O praise him, alleluia!

Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, three in one,

O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Amen.

Congregational Confession of Sin

Leader: Heavenly Father, we come to you burdened by guilt and shame as we remember how often we sinned against you and others.

All: Forgive our sins, we pray, and help us to put off greed, pride, anger, unbelief, covetousness, impurity, and all the sinful, earthly thoughts and desires that still have influence in our lives.

Leader: Through the power of your Holy Spirit, enable us to put on our new nature, clothing ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another, and if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as we have been forgiven by you.

All: Above all, empower us to put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony, as we together await the return of our Savior, Jesus Christ, in whose Name we pray. Amen.

Private Confession of Our Sins

Assurance of Forgiveness

Isaiah 55:6-7

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

ADORATION AND PRAISE

First Reading*

Deuteronomy 5:6-21; Matthew 22:34-40

Congregational Response (Hymn of the Month)

(see bulletin insert for the music)

Before the Throne of God Above

Before the throne of God above,
I have a strong and perfect plea,
A great High Priest whose name is Love,
Who ever lives and pleads for me.
My name is graven on his hands,
My name is written on his heart.
I know that while in heav'n he stands,
No tongue can bid me thence depart,
No tongue can bid me thence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see him there,
Who made an end to all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God, the just, is satisfied
To look on him and pardon me,
To look on him and pardon me.

Behold him there, the risen Lamb,
My perfect, spotless righteousness,
The great unchangeable I AM,
The King of glory and of grace!
One with himself I cannot die.
My soul is purchased by his blood!
My life is hid with Christ on high,
With Christ, my Savior and my God,
With Christ, my Savior and my God. Amen.

Confession of Faith

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 37. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?*

A. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the resurrection.

Q. 38. *What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?*

A. At the resurrection, believers, being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the Day of Judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Stewardship ❖

Doxology*

Hymn 731

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Lord's Prayer*

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

❖ *Tithes and offerings may be placed in the box at the entrance to the sanctuary or given online through our church's website.*

THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

Second Reading*

Genesis 45

Congregational Response (Psalm of the Month [Psalm 50:1-6])

Hymn 316

The Mighty God, the Lord

The mighty God, the Lord,
Hath spoken unto all;
From rising to the setting sun,
He unto earth doth call.
From Zion, his own hill,
Where perfect beauty dwells,
Jehovah hath his glory shown,
In brightness that excels.

Our God shall surely come,
And silence shall not keep;
Before him fire shall waste, and storms
Tempestuous round him sweep.
He to the heav'ns above
Shall then send forth his call,
And likewise to the earth, that he
May judge his people all.

“Together let my saints
Unto me gathered be,
Those that by sacrifice have made
A covenant with me.”
Then shall the heav'ns declare
His righteousness abroad;
Because the Lord himself is judge,
Yea, none is judge, but God. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

Sermon

Pastor Ben Muresan

“Christ Is Our Exalted Brother”
Genesis 45

GOD’S BLESSING ON HIS PEOPLE

Hymn of Thanksgiving*

Hymn 650

I Will Sing of My Redeemer

I will sing of my Redeemer, and his wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross he suffered, from the curse to set me free.
*Sing, O sing of my Redeemer! With his blood he purchased me;
On the cross he sealed my pardon, paid the debt and made me free.*

I will tell the wondrous story, how my lost estate to save,
In his boundless love and mercy, he the ransom freely gave.
*Sing, O sing of my Redeemer! With his blood he purchased me;
On the cross he sealed my pardon, paid the debt and made me free.*

I will praise my dear Redeemer, his triumphant pow’r I’ll tell,
How the victory he giveth over sin and death and hell.
*Sing, O sing of my Redeemer! With his blood he purchased me;
On the cross he sealed my pardon, paid the debt and made me free.*

I will sing of my Redeemer and his heav’nly love to me;
He from death to life has brought me, Son of God, with him to be.
*Sing, O sing of my Redeemer! With his blood he purchased me;
On the cross he sealed my pardon, paid the debt and made me free. Amen.*

Benediction*

Congregational Benediction Response*

(Sung to STUTTGART [Hymn 5])

Honor, glory, might, and merit,
Be to God and God alone!
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
One in Three and Three in One. Amen.

SERMON NOTES

“Christ Is Our Exalted Brother” Genesis 45

Genesis 42:23-24; 43:30-31

Genesis 44:33; John 15:13

1. Find comfort in God’s sovereign providence.

Acts 2:23

Romans 3:23

2. Find joy in Christ’s brotherly affection.

Hebrews 2:11

Matthew 11:28-29

3. Find hope in our future exaltation with Christ, our exalted brother.

Philippians 2:9-11



HOME WORSHIP GUIDE

The daily reading schedule follows the One Year Bible Reading Plan.

Monday, January 8

Scripture: Genesis 18:16 - 19:38; Matthew 6:25 - 7:14; Psalm 8:1-9; Proverbs 2:6-15

Catechism: The Westminster Confession of Faith: Chapter 28

Pray for: Our federal, state, and local government leaders.

Tuesday, January 9

Scripture: Genesis 20:1 - 22:24; Matthew 7:15-29; Psalm 9:1-12; Proverbs 2:16-22

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 66

Pray for: Our military, police, fire, and medical personnel.

Wednesday, January 10

Scripture: Genesis 23:1 - 24:51; Matthew 8:1-17; Psalm 9:13-20; Proverbs 3:1-6

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 67

Pray for: Our covenant children, and Christian military chaplains.

The churches in Oman and persecuted Christians.

Thursday, January 11

Scripture: Genesis 24:52 - 26:16; Matthew 8:18-34; Psalm 10:1-15; Proverbs 3:7-8

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 68

Pray for: Our Elders, Deacons, Women's Ministry, & the PCA.

Friday, January 12

Scripture: Genesis 26:17 - 27:46; Matthew 9:1-17; Psalm 10:16-18; Proverbs 3:9-10

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 69

Pray for: Our members who have ongoing health care needs.

The Shepherd's Church Plant in Riverside and the Manrique Family.

Saturday, January 13

Scripture: Genesis 28:1 - 29:35; Matthew 9:18-38; Psalm 11:1-7; Proverbs 3:11-12

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 70

Pray for: The preaching, and for our Sunday School teachers.

Sunday, January 14

Scripture: Genesis 30:1 - 31:16; Matthew 10:1-23; Psalm 12:1-8; Proverbs 3:13-15

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 71

Pray for: Our worship this morning.

MISSIONS CORNER

Pray for our missionaries. Their prayer requests are sent out through the Prayer Chain and their newsletters are published in Grace Notes as they become available.

Ray & Michele Call | Presbyterian Church in Belize

Dave & Darlene Eby | Africa Reformation Theol. Seminary Uganda

LORD'S DAY DEVOTION AND QUESTIONS

Genesis 45 records one of the greatest displays of emotion in the whole Bible. In this chapter, Joseph revealed his true identity to his brothers. Rather than retaliating against them for their betrayal, he embraced and kissed them. Joseph then made all the preparations necessary for them to live in Egypt so that they would be under his protection and blessed by his prosperity. Joseph reconciled with his brothers because he was convinced that God had ordained all the events of his life—both the joyful and the painful—for a greater purpose. Richard P. Belcher, Jr. explains in his commentary on Genesis:

One can only wonder what they talked about after finding out that the lord of Egypt was their brother (v. 15). This is a marvelous scene of reconciliation. Joseph has seen that the character of his brothers has changed from selfishness to sacrifice. He also does not hold a grudge against them because he sees the bigger picture of the hand of God at work. The God that they serve not only rules the nations, but He also rules the actions of people. He can use the evil actions of people to accomplish His purposes. In fact, God rules over everything in order to fulfill His covenant promises to His people and to provide what they need. A similar thought is expressed in Ephesians 1:22 where Christ is said to be head over all things for the sake of the church. The events of this world are not haphazard or governed by chance, but the God of this universe is working out all things for the benefit of His people.

1. Review the tests that Joseph put his brothers through in Genesis 42-44. What were the purposes of the tests? What evidence do you see in these chapters that Joseph was being personally affected during his encounters with his brothers?
2. Read Genesis 45:3. Why were Joseph's brothers dismayed (or "terrified" as some translators put it) when he revealed his true identity? What caused them to be assured of Joseph's love?
3. Read Genesis 45:5-8 and consider how Joseph explains God's providence. How does what Joseph says here connect with Romans 8:28? How might a deeper understanding of and trust in God's providence affect how you live?
4. How does Joseph's affection and his provision for his family point to Christ? How does knowing that Christ is your brother and that he is not ashamed of you enable you to approach him more confidently and joyfully in prayer? (Hebrews 2:11; 4:16)

