

SERVICE OF WORSHIP



For King and Kingdom!

7/16/23

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

Welcome and Introductions

Call to Worship 1 John 4:18-21

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 10

But that others who are called by the gospel obey the call and are converted is not to be ascribed to the proper exercise of free will, whereby one distinguishes himself above others equally furnished with grace sufficient for faith and conversion (as the proud heresy of Pelagius maintains), but it must be wholly ascribed to God, whom as He has chosen His own from eternity in Christ, so He calls them effectually in time, confers upon them faith and repentance, rescues them from the power of darkness, and translates them into the kingdom of His own Son; that they may show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light, and may glory not in themselves but in the Lord, according to the testimony of the Apostles in various places.

We Apply our Faith to Life

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 91: How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

Answer: *The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that does administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive the sacraments.*

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 92: What is a sacrament?

Answer: *A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.*

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 93: Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?

Answer: *The sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.*

We Read the Bible Together: Deuteronomy 11

Opening Prayer

We Raise our Voices in Song

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*

Psalm 11

Psalter of the United Presbyterian Church, 1887

Alt. 2016, Henry C. Haffner: GAINESBORO

Vocal Track by Nathan Clark George

*My trust is in the Lord;
How can you say to me,
Away with speed, and like a bird
To your high mountain flee?*

*What can the righteous do?
What can for them avail,
If their foundations be destroyed
And all they built on fail?*

*The Lord in Zion dwells,
The Lord's throne is on high;
His eyes behold the sons of men;
Oh, they will sure be tried.*

*The Lord the righteous tries;
But wicked men He hates,
For all whose hearts love violence
His punishment awaits.*

*Fire, winds, and burning coals,
On wicked men shall rain;
This is the portion of their cup,
The cup which they shall drain.*

*Because the righteous Lord
Delights in righteousness;
And with His gracious countenance
The upright He will bless.*

Psalm 91

Composed by the Psalter Project

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Vocal Track by the Psalter Project

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the shadow of the Almighty!*

*I will say to the Lord, my refuge and my fort;
my God I trust,*

*For He'll save you from the fowler's snare,
from the deadly pestilence.*

*He will cover you with His pinions;
you'll take refuge under His wings.*

*And His truth is a shield and buckler;
you will never be afraid.*

*Not of terror that comes at night time,
nor by day of the arrow's flight.*

*Not of plague that walks in darkness,
nor disease that destroys when the sun is at its
height!*

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the Shadow of the Almighty!*

*A thousand may fall beside you,
and ten thousand at your right.*

*It won't come near to you; you'll only look;
see the wicked repaid in your sight.*

*For you made the Lord your refuge;
the Most High your dwelling place.*

*No evil will come upon you,
near your tent will come no plague.*

*For His angels He will command for you,
to guard you in all your ways.*

*They will lift you up on their hands,
so that even a stone your foot will never graze!*

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the Shadow of the Almighty! The
Almighty!*

*You will tread on the lion and adder,
trample serpents, lions young.*

*He has loved me so I will save Him; Him exalt,
for He knows my name.*

*When He calls to me, I will answer;
in distress I am with Him.*

*I will rescue Him, and honor Him,
fill Him up with long life;
my salvation show to Him!*

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the Shadow of*

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the Shadow of*

*The Almighty! The Almighty! The Almighty!
The Almighty!*

He'll abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

Pastoral Prayer of Confession

Sermon: Numbers 6:22-27 "Bless Them"

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...

Jesus is asked the question, by His Apostles, "can a divorced person remarry?" How does Jesus reply and how does he approach this question?

Scriptures Referenced in Today's Sermon

- God spoke to Moses face to Face as with a friend (Exodus 33:11; Deuteronomy 34:10)
- "I call you my friends" (John 15:15)
- Friends of Jesus obey what Jesus commands (John 15:14)
- We are "blessed" while persecuted for His name sake (Matthew 5:10-12)
- We will be free from sin when we leave behind this body of death (Romans 7:24)
- "Deliver us from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13)
- Christians are the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)
- "God is light and in Him is no darkness" (1 John 1:5)
- Noah found grace in God's eyes (Genesis 6:8)
- Noah was wicked in every way (Genesis 6:5)
- "revive us again that your people may rejoice in you" (Psalm 85:6)
- God turns his face from the sinner (Psalm 27:9; 2 Chronicles 6:42)
- God looks upon his beloved (2 Chronicles 30:9)_
- "May God be gracious to us..." (Psalm 67:1)
- We are at war with the devil and evil in heavenly places (Ephesians 6:10-20)

A few notes on the Confession and Catechism:

And, so just as it is not the fault of those who proclaim the Gospel when people do not come to faith, it is not to the credit to the person who responds to the Gospel as if he were responsible for the "choice" he has made. No, all of salvation, from election before the foundations of the world to the cross to eternity yet to come is sovereignly in God's hands and only God is to be given honor for salvation and for non-salvation. It is all about God. That is the testimony of the Apostles. Any teaching that incorporates our free will into the equation of salvation is "another gospel" and should be anathematized.

While the language of the Sacraments is rather short and concise in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, you may remember that the Heidelberg Catechism contains 21 questions on the sacraments. That does not mean that the Westminster Divines did not consider the sacraments important, but it is a reminder that one of the issues that the Reformed church needed to distinguish itself from the Roman and Lutheran churches was around the question of sacraments: what they were and who were to receive them. With such a foundation laid, the Westminster Divines did not feel it essential to spend as much time fleshing out the language.

How many sacraments are there? Only two. These were not only ordained by Jesus in his practice, but they were also ordained by Moses and Abraham before him. With Abraham there was circumcision and the feast of bread and wine with Melchizedek. With Moses there was Passover and the Red Sea crossing. Both speak to the two sacraments set apart for the people — sacraments we continue to practice today in baptism and Holy Communion.

The sacraments serve as signs and seals. They are signs of a promised reality and then that sign is sealed to us when it is accompanied by faith. Calvin's view did waiver on this within his writings; it took the puritans to work the language through until we have what we commonly use today.

A Note on Church History: The Big Picture

We have spent over a year covering various Councils of the ancient church. There are many more to go, indeed. Yet, as we wrap the conversation up here at LORR, let me remind you of the principles that have guided this study from beginning to its eventual end.

First, the Word of God is the final authority in all things. God's word is inspired by the Holy Spirit through faithful men, who wrote as the Spirit carried them. These men's personality can be seen in word choices and themes found within their books, but ultimately, every word is the very Word of God. Thus, the Scriptures are without error in their original manuscripts and are incapable of leading us into error.

Second, The Canon of Scripture is Closed. The Jewish scriptures were closed in the Council of Jamnia around 90 AD. The Christian Canon was closed at the end of the Apostolic era and was finalized in Christian understanding by the Synod of Hippo in 393. Nothing can be added to it or taken away from it.

Third, given that the Holy Spirit saw fit to preserve the Scriptures (our only standard for faith and practice) through the practice of Church Councils, other things that the Councils taught also ought to be listened to.

Fourth, the Councils are not inspired documents and they are not infallible. The Council's too, must always submit to the authority of Scripture. Thus, the Scriptures correct erroneous Canons of the Councils, not the other way around. The conciliar decrees are still essential to the church as the church moves into new ages with different challenges to orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Thus, they form a body of case-law to govern the life of God's people. The Scriptures form the absolute and unchangeable law.

Fifth: Times and circumstances change; the Word of God stays the same forever. That means that at times, the church needed to figure out how to repel heretics and false teachings as well as to manage its own government as it spread. They looked to Acts 15 and the Council of Jerusalem as their model. Thus, there were Local Councils, Regional Councils, Provincial Councils, and Universal Councils designed to preserve what had been believed by all Christians through all time. It should also be noted that the Acts 15 Council was not a new creation of the Apostles, but that followed a Jewish practice dating back to Exodus 3 and their time in Egypt.

Sixth: Where the Canons of the Councils are contrary to Scripture, these Council rulings should be discarded.

Seventh: Where the Canons of the Councils are consistent with Scripture and address matters of life and the health of the church in a given context, they should be viewed in that context.

Eighth: Where the Canons of the Councils give instruction to the church, for instance in terms of discipline, we should take heed and submit to the ruling, while recognizing that sometimes the type of punishment should be viewed in the context of the time the Council was written. For instance, in cases of some sins, people were barred from the sacraments for upwards of ten years — sometimes for a lifetime. This should be tempered not

only by Scripture's teachings but also by grace when there is genuine repentance.

Ninth: Where the Canons of the Councils speak of standards for the church, and they are consistent with Scripture, these standards should be seen as law and the church should obey.

Tenth: Where the Canons decree a teaching as heretical, as it did with Arianism or Pelagianism, we should view these as examples of "another gospel" which should be anathematized.

Eleventh: The Councils speak to a number of elements that Christians still are bickering about today. We are poor historians and poorer theologians when we ignore what God has ordained through the church. Questions like the nature of baptism, that women should not be ordained to positions of authority, the singing of psalms, and the rejection of what we would call "premillennialism" today are just a few examples of matters the church addressed clearly in these councils.

As we go our ways, remember, we are men and women under authority. We are not our own. And God has established guides in our lives to guard us from evil decision if you will take the time to study these matters.

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 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 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.**