

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, December 13, 2020

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find
rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Greeting and Blessing*

Responsive Reading*

Psalm 53 (p. 805)

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

They are corrupt, and their ways are vile; there is no one who does good.

God looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand,
any who seek God.

**Everyone has turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who
does good, not even one.**

Will the evildoers never learn—those who devour my people as men eat bread and who do
not call on God?

There they were, overwhelmed with dread, where there was nothing to dread.

God scattered the bones of those who attacked you;

you put them to shame, for God despised them.

Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!

When God restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!

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

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrow's load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.

Yea, her sins our God will pardon, blotting out each dark misdeed;
All that well deserved his anger he no more will see or heed.
She hath suffered many a day, now her griefs have passed away;
God will change her pining sadness into ever-springing gladness.

For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near,
Bidding all men to repentance, since the kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet him, and the hills bow down to greet him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked, make the rougher places plain;
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits his holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad;
And all flesh shall see the token, that his word is never broken. Amen.

Congregational Confession of Sin

Leader: Heavenly Father, we come before you with guilt and shame as we consider how we have offended you by our sinful actions, our hurtful words, and our disgraceful thoughts.

All: We confess that we have walked in darkness rather than living according to what you have revealed to us in your Word. We have sinned against you and our neighbors, and we are not worthy to be called your children.

Leader: Forgive us, we pray, and cause us to grow in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

All: Thank you for the assurance we have of forgiveness through the blood of our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Private Confession of Our Sins

Assurance of Forgiveness

1 John 4:9-11

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

ADORATION AND PRAISE

First Reading*

Luke 1:26-56

Congregational Response

Hymn 196

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth:
"Go to him, your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, he whose glories knew no end;
By his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne. Amen.

Confession of Faith

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 104. *For what do we pray in the fourth petition?*

A. In the fourth petition, which is, “Give us this day our daily bread,” we pray that, of God’s free gift, we may receive a sufficient portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.

Q. 105. *For what do we pray in the fifth petition?*

A. In the fifth petition, which is, “And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors,” we pray that God, for Christ’s sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are more encouraged to ask because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

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.

THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

Second Reading*

Luke 1:57-80

Congregational Response

(also printed on p. 12 of the bulletin)

Song of Zechariah

Blest be God, the Lord of Israel;
He has come to set us free!
And a horn of full salvation
He has raised from David's seed.
God has visited his people
To redeem them as foretold
In the promise he had spoken
Thro' his prophets from of old.

God has come in might to save us
From the hatred of our foes.
From their cruel hand he frees us,
And his tender mercy shows
Mercy promised in his cov'nant
To our fathers whom he chose.
He will keep his oath to Abr'am
To release us from our woes.

God has sworn to grant deliv'rance
And restore us to our place:
Serving boldly in his presence,
Just and holy all our days.
You, my child, will be his Prophet,
Called and sent by God Most High.
You must go before the Lord now
To prepare his ways aright.

Bring the knowledge of salvation
To God's people in their sin.
Preach that God is tenderhearted,
And by him are sins forgiv'n.
His great mercy, like the sunrise,
Brightly shines in deepest night,
Guiding those who sit in darkness
To the way of peace and light. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

Sermon

Pastor Ben Muresan

“Sin and Separation: A Savior Announced”
Luke 1:46-56

GOD’S BLESSING ON HIS PEOPLE

Hymn of Thanksgiving*

Hymn 218

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation’s story, now proclaim Messiah’s birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations; Ye have seen his natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son;
Evermore your voices raising to th’eternal Three in One:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King. Amen.

Benediction*

Congregational Benediction Response*

(Hymn 115, verse 5)

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.

LORD'S DAY DEVOTION AND QUESTIONS

In Luke 1 we read about the many ways in which Jesus' first advent was announced to several people. After millennia of waiting, God's people finally heard that the arrival of the Messiah was imminent. Mary was at the center of the action because she would be the mother of the Christ. This was a high honor for her, and all the more so because of her low social status. God did not choose the daughter of a king, or the daughter of an emperor. He chose Mary, who was poor and lowly, and who humbled herself before the Lord. J.C. Ryle, in his commentary on the Gospel of John, writes:

She who was chosen of God to the high honor of being Messiah's mother, speaks of her own "low estate," and acknowledges her need of a "Savior." She does not let fall a word to show that she regarded herself as a sinless, "immaculate" person. On the contrary, she uses the language of one who has been taught by the grace of God to feel her own sins, and so far from being able to save others, requires a Savior for her own soul. We may safely affirm that none would be more forward to reprove the honor paid by the Romish Church to the Virgin Mary, than the Virgin Mary herself. Let us copy this holy humility of our Lord's mother, while we steadfastly refuse to regard her as a mediator, or to pray to her. Like her, let us be lowly in our own eyes, and think little of ourselves. Humility is the highest grace that can adorn the Christian character. It is a true saying of an old divine, that "a man has just so much Christianity as he has humility." Humility is the grace which of all is most becoming to human nature. Above all, it is the grace which is within the reach of every converted person. All are not rich. All are not learned. All are not highly gifted. All are not preachers. But all children of God may be clothed with humility.

1. Take a few moments to try to recall the main ideas from the last two sermons. How does Genesis 3 reveal that we need a Savior? How does Matthew 1 reveal how our Savior's arrival was foretold? Why is it important for us at Christmas to emphasize the whole story of redemption beginning in Genesis when we talk about the incarnation?
2. Read Luke 1:1-25. What did the angel explain would be John the Baptist's role in redemptive history? As you think of John the Baptist's ministry as it is chronicled in the gospels, how did John the Baptist fulfill his ministry?
3. Read Mary's song of praise in Luke 1:46-55 and Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. What similarities do you notice between them? What does this reveal about Mary's knowledge of Scripture and her understanding of God's grace?

HOME WORSHIP GUIDE

*The daily reading schedule follows the One Year Bible Reading Plan.
Use our church directory to pray for an individual or family each day.*

Monday, December 14

Scripture: Jonah 1:1 - 4:11; Revelation 5:1-14; Psalm 133:1-3; Proverbs 29:26-27

Catechism: The Westminster Confession of Faith: Chapter 33

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

Tuesday, December 15

Scripture: Micah 1:1 - 4:13; Revelation 6:1-17; Psalm 134:1-3; Proverbs 30:1-4

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 69

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

Wednesday, December 16

Scripture: Micah 5:1 - 7:20; Revelation 7:1-17; Psalm 135:1-21; Proverbs 30:5-6

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 70

Pray for: Our covenant children and Christian military chaplains.
The churches in Anguilla and persecuted Christians.

Thursday, December 17

Scripture: Nahum 1:1 - 3:19; Revelation 8:1-13; Psalm 136:1-26; Proverbs 30:7-9

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 71

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

Friday, December 18

Scripture: Habakkuk 1:1 - 3:19; Revelation 9:1-21; Psalm 137:1-9; Proverbs 30:10

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 72

Pray for: Our members who have ongoing health needs.

Saturday, December 19

Scripture: Zephaniah 1:1 - 3:20; Revelation 10:1-11; Psalm 138:1-8; Proverbs 30:11-14

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 73

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

Sunday, December 20

Scripture: Haggai 1:1 - 2:23; Revelation 11:1-19; Psalm 139:1-24; Proverbs 30:15-16

Catechism: The Westminster Shorter Catechism: Q/A 74

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

rcall@mtwsa.org; mcall@mtwsa.org

Karl & Sun Dahlfred | OMF International in Thailand

dahlfred@gmail.com

SONG OF ZECHARIAH



1. Blest be God, the Lord of Is - rael; he has come to set us free!
 2. God has come in might to save us from the ha - tred of our foes.
 3. God has sworn to grant de - liv - 'rance and re - store us to our place:
 4. Bring the knowl - edge of sal - va - tion to God's peo - ple in their sin.



And a horn of full sal - va - tion he has raised from Da - vid's seed.
 From their cru - el hand he frees us, and his ten - der mer - cy shows
 serv - ing bold - ly in his pres - ence, just and ho - ly all our days.
 Preach that God is ten - der - heart - ed, and by him are sins for - giv'n.



God has vis - it - ed his peo - ple to re - deem them as fore - told
 mer - cy prom - ised in his cov - 'nant to our fa - thers whom he chose.
 You, my child, will be his Pro - phet, called and sent by God Most High.
 His great mer - cy, like the sun - rise, bright - ly shines in deep - est night,



in the prom - ise he had spo - ken thro' his pro - phets from of old.
 He will keep his oath to A - br'am to re - lease us from our woes.
 You must go be - fore the Lord now to pre - pare his ways a - right.
 guid - ing those who sit in dark - ness to the way of peace and light.

