

Worship on January 17th, 2021

Order of worship

We Gather

- Prelude (Paul T.)
- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP# 568 – I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: 1 John 4:7-16
- Sermon: God's love in us

We Respond

- Prayer for the people of God
- Offering (invitation and prayer first)
- Offertory Hymn – BOP# 64 – Be still and know that I am God

We Serve

- Benediction
- Postlude (Paul T.)

Ponder Upon Questions

Announcements:

. Welcome! Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us live right now and those who are worshipping God through this video. This is Jan. 17, 2021. God is faithful. Let us give our praise and worship to him as we worship together.

. The Purpose Driven Life Bible study will start on this week via ZOOM. Time will set with the participants.

. Thank you for your offerings. Our faithful God will use our gifts and us in his ministries spreading his love and grace in the whole world.

As we come into the presence of our God, let us calm down our hearts and minds, and focus on our Lord.

Responsive Call to Worship

One: Before we were born, God knew us. **All: God knit us together in the womb.**

One: God searches out our paths, and tracks us along our way.

All: So we praise God, because we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

One: There is nowhere we can go where God is not with us.

All: How wonderful are all God's works! Let us worship God together.

Praise song – BOP# 568 – I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew----- PPT

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God ever creating, ever loving, ever leading, You are stillness when we are frantic; You are truth when we are confused and perplexed. You give us freedom when we are paralyzed by fear; You send us light when we stumble in the darkness. You are love when we feel lonely and empty. For all that you are, all that you have been, and all that you will be for us, we praise you, Creator, Christ, Spirit. We turn to you in worship to listen for your voice and seek your way for us.

Desiring to be transformed people, we bring to you our prayers of confession:

Merciful God, you call us to fullness of life but we have settled for much less. We have wandered from your ways and wasted your gifts. We ignore the pain of others, and turn our faces from injustice. At times we have hidden from the truth, especially when it calls us to do what we are afraid to do. We have given up in despair when problems around us seem overwhelming. Forgive us our small faith. Give us courage to listen and respond when you call.

This time, we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's Prayer:) **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Dear friends at St. Andrew's, Believe the good news! In Christ, God has offered us forgiveness for all our sins and shortcomings. Trust that this forgiveness is for you, and know that God's steadfast love and grace endure forever. Thanks be to our faithful God.

Before we read today's scripture, let us pray for the wisdom of the Lord.

Prayer for Illumination:

Spirit of truth and life, speak to us in the rich and ancient words of the scriptures. Let us hear your call so that we may leave behind our old ways, and follow in the footsteps of Christ, the Living Word. Amen.

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-16

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16 So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

“This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.”

SERMON: God's love in us

We hear so much about love in books, songs, and conversations that we begin to lose sight of its spiritual dimensions. As believers, we must remember that God's love is of a much higher caliber. It is the starting point of our salvation. If God had not loved us first, we would be destined for eternal condemnation rather than eternal life.

Today's scripture itself is the sermon of the day. In Touch, (SHOW THE BOOK) this is my daily devotion and I follow the Bible reading schedule from this book. Tuesday was my sermon writing day. I was reading Genesis, so I was going to preach on Genesis. But, when I read Tuesday's message and the passage of the day, I changed my mind instantly. When I read 1 John passage, it was a sermon itself. It struck my spirit.

Please listen to the scripture again.

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

God is the beginning of love and we are in his love. When we live in his love, we are to love one another.

9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.

Okay, so far, the Bible says that God is love, but there was not a proof. In vs. 9, God proved his love for us by sending his one and only Son Jesus Christ for us.

10 In this is love, (this is the love of God:) not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

If we love one another, God's love is made complete in us. God's love is expressed in the perfect way through us when we love one another. We realize the love of God for us; and others will see the love of God through our love.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

We are not able to love. With what we have in us, we are not enough. Without the Spirit of God, we cannot love God, we cannot love one another.

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world.

Why do we need a Saviour? Because we cannot save ourselves. We are that small. We are not able. We are far from love or perfect. To “that” us, God came. For that “unlovable” us, God sacrificed. God sacrifice his most precious.

15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16 So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

So, God does everything. God initiated love. God made us love him back with his Holy Spirit. Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we won't be able to know the love of God. And God gives us strength to love one another, so we can abide in him. We have a wonderful God. We have a faithful God.

God's love does not end by giving us love. But, it extends to transforming our being. God, with his love, adopted us. Romans 8:15-17, ***“15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.”***

We are not just loved but we are going to inherit the kingdom of God with God's own Son, Jesus Christ. We are going to be glorified with Jesus, our Saviour and Lord. We are going to be with him.

God's love for us made sinners like you and I his Children. We were the enemies of God, but now we are the children of God. God's love adopted us. And His love made us co-heir with God's one and only Son Jesus Christ.

Lastly, I will read today's passage in MSG translation.

7-10 My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love—so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God.

11-12 My dear, dear friends, if God loved us like this, we certainly ought to love each other. No one has seen God, ever. But if we love one another, God dwells deeply within us, and his love becomes complete in us—perfect love!

13-16 This is how we know we're living steadily and deeply in him, and he in us: He's given us life from his life, from his very own Spirit. Also, we've seen for ourselves and continue to state openly that the Father sent his Son as Savior of the world. Everyone who confesses that Jesus

is God's Son participates continuously in an intimate relationship with God. We know it so well, we've embraced it heart and soul, this love that comes from God.

Are you abiding in the love of God? Never let the world's shallow concept of love take away our love from God. This love of God transforms our hearts, our identity from enemies to children, and made us co-heirs with Jesus. Let us love one another and let us display God's love in us to the world we are called to.

Let us pray.

God is love. We've heard this so many times. But, we didn't really think about the true meaning of it. Thank you God for giving us opportunity to think about your love. Your love is amazing. You are always with us and always patient with us and always love us. You changed our position. We were far off from you, but now we are called to your side. We were enemies, but now we are the beloved children of yours. We live because your love. Thank you. Help us remember your love in our daily lives and be confident because we are loved by the most awesome God. Thank you. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for the people of God

Gracious and loving Father God, we thank you for your love for us. We thank you for the technologies that we can gather together in different form that we used to gather. As we share our hearts and worship you in different forms, be present among us as we seek your face. This time, we are coming before your presence with our needs and wants. Please listen to our hearts and fill our hearts with wisdom and courage.

First of all, we pray for the coming Bible study. We are going to read The Purpose Driven Life and seek the wisdom of yours as we discern the purpose our lives. As we seek your wisdom, please come into our hearts and stir our thoughts and ideas, so we are ready to change our lives. Open our hearts and ears, so we listen to your voice with our whole lives. Prepare our hearts so we can follow your ways as we try to come closer to you.

We also pray for the people who are seeking your help in their lives. We pray for those who have physical pains. Jehovah Rapha, God who heals, place your hands upon the people as they seek your healing power and with your love and power, heal them. There are people who have struggles with their minds, relationship issues, stress, work problems, and financial crisis caused by COVID 19, and many other difficulties. God, who hears our smallest sighs, come into their lives and give them strength to overcome not because of their own power, but because of your love and power and wisdom and guidance.

And there will be new elders in our church. We pray for them. We bless them. Give them wisdom. Give them strength. Give them intimacy with you, so they may stay close to you and focus on you as they carry on their lives and their new elder responsibilities.

Heavenly Father, because of your love, we live. Because of your grace, we are grateful. We invite you in our lives, our daily lives. Be present in our lives. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. May the gifts we offer today serve God's holy purposes in the church and in the world for the sake of Christ our Lord. Let us pray for the offering first.

Offering prayer:

God of new possibilities, in Christ you create a future for each of us, giving us strength and opportunities to flourish in our faith. Thank you for these gifts. Use them and us to create new possibilities in the world for those who are uncertain about what the future holds. Our gifts are a token of our trust that you hold the future for us all. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Let the Lord's offering be received as we sing our hymn.

Offering – BOP# 64 – Be still and know that I am God

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. God is love. God's love for us is everywhere in our lives. Experience his love in your surroundings. Walk with God in his love. See with God's eyes, with his love. Talk to the people you meet with God's love. Love others as God loved us first.

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Ponder Upon Questions:

- 1) When was the last time I confessed the love of God for me?
- 2) How do I experience the love of God?
- 3) How can I make God's love known to my surroundings?