

Worship on March 14, 2021 –Fourth Sunday in Lent

Order of worship

We Gather

- Prelude (Paul T.)
- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP# 210 – Man of Sorrow, Wondrous name
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: Romans 11:33-36
- Sermon: All for you

We Respond

- Prayer for the people of God
- Offering
- Offertory Hymn – BOP #252 – He is Lord

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 online video. This is March 14th, 2021. This is Fourth Sunday in Lent. As we commemorate the love Jesus and worship him, may his presence be with us.

. For Bible study with discussion questions, please stay after the worship.

. Lent Prayer Challenge – it is to pray for a person each day during this Lenten season.

. Worship volunteer participants – reading, song, poem, or anything. Let me know.

. There will be Good Friday worship on April 2nd @ 10:30am via Zoom.

. Communion next week.

. Thank you for your offerings. May God use our gifts for his perfect plans and use us to shine his light to the 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 (Today's reader is Sam.)

One: The journey to Jerusalem is long. This is a wilderness journey and we are not always comfortable. But we trust and we persevere.

All: We are pilgrims on a journey. We are travelers on the road.

One: God's people are familiar with wilderness. After Egypt, they wandered in hunger and thirst— confused and tired—waiting for the promised land. Our destination is different. We aim for Jerusalem—where it all ends— and where there will be new beginnings.

All: We are pilgrims on a journey. We are travelers on the road.

One: Let us pray.

All: God of the wilderness, give us strength when we wander. When we stray and grieve, hunger and thirst, you have promised to make water spring up in the desert. Quench our thirst. Feed us with manna. Strengthen us when we are tired or lack trust. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

Praise song – BOP# 210 – Man of Sorrow, Wondrous name

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Gracious God, Great and wonderful are your works! Your steadfast love is everlasting. You have come among us in Christ Jesus to save us. Where there is darkness, you bring light. Where there is sadness, you speak words of hope. Where there is despair, you bring new possibilities. You bring healing for the sick, and forgiveness for the sinner. You bring justice for the oppressed, speaking truth instead of lies. Stir us with your Spirit, O God, in this time of worship. Awaken our joy and reverence as we offer you our songs and our silence, our prayers and praises, for you are our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Merciful God, Even as we praise you, we are aware of our failures as your disciples. We take your love and acceptance of us for granted. We are often careless with our relationships, more focused on ourselves than on you or those around us. We spend our days distracted by the news, rather than seeking your light and truth. Forgive us. Awaken our spirit of commitment and compassion. Give us a new vision of your purposes and our place within them, so we may serve you more faithfully, day by day.

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

Sisters and brothers in Christ at St. Andrew's, by grace we have been saved through faith. This is not our doing but God's gift to us. Know that God forgives you, and forgive one another. So may the peace of Christ be with you.

Passing the Peace

Prayer for Illumination:

God of light and truth, send your Holy Spirit to move in us and among us this day. Speak to us through the scriptures, read and interpreted, so that they lead us to encounter your Living Word, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Scripture: Romans 11:33-36 (Sam)

33 O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 34 "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" 35 "Or who has given a gift to him, to receive a gift in return?" 36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

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

SERMON: All for you

Today's title is "All for you."

As I write this sermon, I was very very pleasant to be able to prepare and preach this sermon.

Everything is all for God. It is not about us, but God. **"Everything comes from God alone. Everything lives by his power, and everything is for his glory."** Romans 11:36

This is the conclusion of this whole book. And this is the key point of the whole Bible and our life. **"Everything comes from God alone. Everything lives by his power, and everything is for his glory."** Amen and that's it.

This is the ultimate goal of the whole universe and all the creatures in it. Everything created by God reflects his glory in their own ways. God's inherent glory is what he possesses because he is God. It is his nature. It does not change. He has his own glory no matter what. We cannot add anything to it or we cannot change his glory. It is same as that we cannot make the sun shine brighter. Even though God's glory is unchanging and permanent, he commands us to recognize his glory, honour his glory, declare his glory, praise his glory, reflect his glory, and live for his glory.

How do you receive this? What is God telling you through this?

To live for God's glory, for me, in other words, God is inviting us to his glory. That's what makes me so thrilled.

Revelation 4:11, "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

Amen to this!! All the glory and power and honour and wisdom are due to our God alone!

This, for me, sounds like God is calling us that "You are worthy, my precious children! I am inviting you to my glory and honour and power for I created all things for you."

The most glorious and powerful God is mindful of us, each of us, in our specific situations.

When I was preaching for little children, I did this. This BIG God (stretching my arms as far as I can) loves small and tiny me (showing how little we are with my thumbs and index fingers).

Then one of the girls laughed so much. And I loved it.

This BIG and glorious and huge God loves small tiny unnoticeable me **WITH HIS EVERYTHING.**

WOW!! WOW!!

How are you doing these days? Whether you are experiencing ups or downs of your life, listen to this love message from our God.

“This BIG God loves small you.” – with motion

I am following the reading schedule of the Bible to finish a whole Bible this year. And I am reading this book, “From God to you 66 Love letters.” This is a short reflection for each book of the Bible. I just finished **Deuteronomy, the 5th book of the Bible. It’s subtitle, in this book (66 love letters) is “You Fail Me, But I Never Fail You.”**

The Israelites after the exile, they continually complained to God. God provided everything they needed but still they complained. They failed God all the time, but God was still faithful, God never failed them. In this book, the author imagined what God tells to the Israelites,

“If you love Me only when I immediately satisfy your desires, your love is merely one more form of self-centeredness. Your love becomes trust only when you choose to believe that I brought you out of something bad to bring you into something good before you experience that something good.” Then your love is sustained by confidence in My character, not by enjoyment of current blessings.

Don’t we try to use God like the Lamp of Genie?

With his great love, he sure satisfies our immediate needs, not always, but many times.

But when God is commanding us to glorify him, he invites us to enjoy him. He promises satisfaction. But, not the satisfaction from our immediate needs, but he means the satisfaction in him. In his presence, in his love, in his care, in his deeds, in his glory.

So far, we covered six chapters of this book (The Purpose Driven Life). The first section, 7 chapters including today’s, is the introduction of how we are made to give God glory.

From the next chapter, we will take a look at 5 different sections of how we can glorify God. There are five big ways to glorify God according to this book.

1. **We bring God glory by worshipping him.**
2. **We bring God glory by loving other believers.**
3. **We bring God glory by becoming like Christ.**
4. **We bring God glory by serving others with our gifts.**
5. **We bring God glory by telling others about him.**

My prayer to go over this book is to cause the change in our daily lives. We all live for ourselves. But, the Bible tells us to live for God. Turn from your own self-centeredness, but turn to God and God’s people.

Living the rest of our lives for the glory of God will require a change in our priorities, our schedules, our relationships, and everything else. Sometimes, we have to choose different path instead of easy and comfortable ones.

This is what Jesus said, **John 12:27-28, “Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say – ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father glorify your name.”**

Jesus stood at a fork in the road. Would he fulfill his purpose and bring glory to God, or would he shrink back and live a comfortable, self-centred life? We face the same choice.

Will we live for our own goals, comfort, and pleasure, or will we live the rest of our lives for God’s glory, knowing that he has promised eternal rewards?

It is the time to settle this issue now. Once we determine that we will live for the glory of God, then what will happen? How would we change our lives? Will we maintain our willingness to live for God for the rest of our lives? Yes and NO.

YES, because God is with us helping us and holding our hands.
But, NO, because we will fall, for sure. But, God will never fail us.

So, whether we fall or not, we are in his hands. What matters is that we lay down our self-centeredness and let God lead our lives.

This BIG God is waiting for us with his great love. His arms are open wide waiting for us. May all of you come to God and experience the warm hug God is longing to give you.

Let us pray.

Loving Father God, we thank you that you are waiting for us. You are pouring out your love upon us. You are the most glorious God and no one and nothing can change your glory. But, still, you desire us to be with you. You are inviting us to join your glory. What are we! Gracious God, we are so small and weak, but we are strong because of you. We are great because you are holding our hands. Thank you. Open our hearts, and let us live our lives for you. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for the people of God

Gracious God, thank you for calling us in your presence. Thank you for opening the direct way to communicate with you through prayers. This time, we are coming to you with our prayers. Listen to our prayers and speak to each of our hearts so we may understand your will, and your love for us.

This is exactly one year of our church closure. For one year, we haven't had any in-person gathering worship. Thanks to the technologies, we find ways to connect. But, it is not the same as gathering in person. At the same time, there are number of people who do not have access to these technologies. We thank you for the service and love for each other and our desires to connect to each other. Even though we are not able to meet in person, but still, we are praying for each other. Also, there are committed people who are delivering written script to the people who do not have access to technologies. Also, there are people taking care of our church building. There are people who are continuously serving our community with their time and gifts. With many individuals' love and service, we are hanging in there. Thank you. Fill each of our needs and desires of hearts. And place the hope for you in our hearts. And pour out your love and grace and wisdom and blessings upon each person in our church. Even though this situation is not getting any better, let our hearts not be shaken by it but we become more confident because of each other. Heavenly Father, bless our church.

We pray for individuals. There are people who are suffering with their physical pains. There are people who are struggling with their relational issues. There are people who are having hard time with their spiritual wellbeing. And there are many other difficulties. Let us bring our prayers and needs before your feet now, and humble our hearts. And wait for you quietly, so that you can work in our lives. You are the mighty God and all powerful God. Answer our prayers.

In your love, we wait for you. Let us live in your presence and be with you all the time. Thank you. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. The season of Lent leads us on, closer and closer to the Cross. As we contemplate Jesus lifted up on the Cross for our sakes, consider what the gift of his mercy and grace means for you. Let your offering express your thanksgiving for such an amazing gift from God. Let us pray.

Offering prayer:

Lord Jesus, you gave so much without counting the cost. Bless these gifts with your generous love. Send them and us into the world to bless it with the same hope and healing we have found in you. And let us not count the cost until we too have given all we can for your sake. In Jesus' name, Amen.. // Let the Lord's offering be received as we sing our hymn.

Offering – BOP 252 He Is Lord

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. THIS BIG GOD pours out his love upon us, small and weak, and selfish. God, with his great love, will change us. As you go into your daily lives, remember God's huge love for you and live in his love.

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. My own response of today's worship – my own reflection of the message.
2. Where in my daily routine can I become more aware of God's glory?
3. How can I give God glory in my daily life?