

Worship on May 9, 2021

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP #377 – come, children, join to sing
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination – prayer
- Scripture: John 4:19-26
- Sermon: How to worship God online

We Respond

- Prayer for the people of God
- Offering (invitation and prayer)
- Offertory Hymn – BOP # 373 – Jesus loves me this I know

We Serve

- Benediction

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 Sunday. May 9th, 2021. Let us worship God with whole hearts. Today is Family Sunday. After worship, we will have snack together virtually, so please prepare your snacks and drinks. :)

. Annual meeting for last year will be on May 16, after worship. Stay after worship for annual meeting.

. No Bible study after worship

. If anyone wants to volunteer to participate in worship, please let me know.

. Thank you for your support with your gifts. May God use us and our gifts for his kingdom.

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: Let us sing to the Lord a new song,

All: for God has done marvellous things.

One: Let us make known the Lord's victory,

All: for God's steadfast love covers the whole earth.

One: Let us sing joyful praises,

All: and join all creation to worship God's holy name.

Praise song – BOP #377 – Come, children, join to sing

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Holy God, The power of your love is beyond comprehension, the breadth of your compassion without measure. In Jesus Christ, you have met us in the midst of life's joys and challenges and shown us what it means to love and be loved. You have entrusted us with the greatest commandment to love one another as Christ has loved us. In this time of worship, we offer you our love and loyalty, seeking to learn more of what love and loyalty mean for us in the midst of our joys and challenges. Receive our prayers and praise, and through the power of your Spirit, draw us closer to you and closer to each other as friends and followers of Christ, our Risen Lord.

Merciful God, We confess we often find it difficult to love others as you commanded. Though we intend to do your will, our priorities lead us in other directions. We seek our own security before the well-being of others. We fulfill our own desires rather than act for the common good. We justify our own interests and fail to understand the cost they take on the earth and other people. Forgive us. Redirect our priorities and renew our commitment to live out your love even when it demands more of us than we expect.

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, Hear the good news! Who is in a position to condemn us? Only Christ— And Christ died for us; Christ rose for us; Christ reigns in power for us; Christ prays for us. Believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and made new by God's generous grace.

Prayer for Illumination: Let us pray for the wisdom of God before reading today's scripture. Lord, we long for your wisdom and truth. Send your Holy Spirit to guide us as we listen. Prepare our ears to hear your Word and our hearts to receive it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture: John 4:19-26

19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." 25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." 26 Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you." **"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."**

SERMON: How to worship God ONLINE

Today's sermon title is "How to worship God online."

All of us never experienced church in online format. This worldwide pandemic caused church building to be closed and pushed all of us outside the church building.

How is your worship? How is your relationship with God? I measure the relationship with God with this method. Not biblical, but for me, it works. Many people who worshipped with me, it worked as well. So, try this today.

Stretch your arms as wide as you can. One end is you and the other is God. Now, show me how close or how far you are from God. I sometimes think about the distance from God and use this method to physically express the distance. It helps us to feel it more realistically.

Worship and daily meditation help us realize that God is always with us. So, it makes us aware of the presence of God in our waking hours.

In today's passage, the woman asked Jesus, "what is true worship?"

At that time, they went to Jerusalem to worship God. In other words, to give sacrifice to God for the forgiveness of their sins with their sacrificial animals. But, people built a temple nearby and said, "now, you can worship God here. You don't have to go to Jerusalem."

So, it was a big issue for the people who cannot afford the travel, time and cost to go to Jerusalem. This is why this woman is asking Jesus about true worship.

Question. What is true worship? To worship God truly, do we have to come to church building and gather together in person? Is this online worship one of the unavoidable ways due to world pandemic? When all this COVID 19 is overcome, will we go back to church building?

One survey shows that 1/3 of Christians answered that they would stay online worship even after Corona virus.

What about you? Do you desire to come back to church building? Or is this okay for you to stay home and worship God online?

In 1517, Martin Luther led Reformation because of the corruption of church. Now, year 2020, many agree that Corona Virus brought the 2nd Reformation.

Before Corona Virus, most of churches are limited by their church buildings or gatherings. So, moving into Online would be like a death sentence for them. But, God uses culture of the time. God uses the methods of the time, so that people can listen to what he is saying.

Like church before Corona Virus, the people in today's passage thought where they worshipped was the most important matter. Wherever they lived, they needed to go to Jerusalem to worship God. Whatever they do in other times and however they behaved in their daily lives didn't matter too much for them. Only important matter for them was to go to Jerusalem and cleanse their sins. It was their "ticket" to their salvation. Their act of worship God and their travel to the temple became their idol. They said they worshipped God and they went for God, but, in fact, their deeds became their false god. Their worship was polluted. They did not consider that God is

beyond any physical temple or time. God is not bound to some space. But, all they cared for was going to the temple.

Jesus said to the woman, **“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (vs24)**

God is spirit. What does this mean? God is not restricted by space and time. God is beyond buildings. God is beyond our thoughts and hopes. God is not only with us when we worship. God is always with us. God is not only with us when we are in the church building. God is with us everywhere we are. If we think about God or if we acknowledge God only when we worship him and only when we are in church buildings, then we are limiting God. If we continue to do so, we are becoming Sunday Christians. We are only Christians on Sunday morning at church. When the people built another temple on Mount Gerizim, where Jesus and the woman was, they limited God in their own created space.

Online worship can be a great tool for us to go back to the heart of worship. We need to know that God is spirit and we are worshipping in truth, not by our thoughts or ideas. By knowing these two, that we are to worship God in spirit and in truth. We can overcome our physical limits: the space and our own ideas. We have freedom in space. We don't have to be at certain place to call out our Father God. Everywhere we are standing, God is with us. And we worship God in truth. It is true that God is not limited by our imaginations or thoughts. It is true that we are God's temples. Each person is the temple of God. When we worship God, God is focusing on us. When we worship God, it helps us to realize that God is always with us.

Having a church building is a great blessing. But, sometimes, our possessions become our stumbling block to worship God, even though it's a great gift from God. Knowing this, let us remember that God is spirit, God is free, God is not bound to anywhere or to anything.

Still, it is not easy for us to stay in front of the screen as we worship God and have fellowship together, but let us see how God will work through this change, and challenge.

With our next generations, and with post COVID church, online worship will be more frequent. Let us be free and let us focus on the truth as we worship God.

Let us pray.

Emmanuel, God with us. Thank you that you are always with us. We believe that you are with us in our own space right now as we stay home or anywhere. Gracious God, it is a big change that we worship you anywhere. We didn't want to leave our church building, but we had to because of COVID 19. But, this challenge is teaching us that we can worship you in different ways. And this makes us ponder upon the core of our worship. You are spirit. You are not bound to a certain place or a certain time. You are with us all the places where we are. And you are with us all the time. Thank you for reminding us your constant presence and love for us. Help us live in you. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for the people of God

Loving Father God, we thank you for calling us in your presence. Especially, today, as we celebrate this Family Sunday, we are before you with our family members. As we worship you as family, bound our hearts together and help us love each other and help us unite our hearts with your plans for each family.

We pray for our young people. Send your light of the gospel to them. Show them exactly how to live and walk safely in you. Help them become excellent in what they do and help them make influence to today's world. Let them become the display of your goodness and glory. Protect them safely in this different and difficult time.

Also, we pray for mothers at this time. Heavenly Father, mothers are amazing. Bless them. Pour out your love and power and wisdom and strength, and endurance, and patience and all the things they need upon them. Protect them all the time. Make them healthy and sound. Through mothers' lavishing love, let our children learn your love from them. Let them become the pipeline of your love to the next generation.

Although the vaccine is available for many, but we still need to stay away from each other. The weather is becoming nicer every day and it is more difficult to stay home all the time. Give us strength to save lives. Through staying home, we are saving others. But, help us be aware and be cautious when we have to be out. Although it is difficult to be free outside, we still praise you for the beauty of your creation. And we thank you for calling us to take care of your creation.

We pray for your wisdom and power to be good stewards of what you have entrusted us. Help us use resources wisely and protect this earth as clean as possible. Now we are more aware and we will try our best. Give us courage to embrace discomfort and learn to grow in you.

We pray for our church. Thank you for our connectedness and love for our church and for each other. Even though we are separated physically, help us pray for each other and let our connectedness be continued.

Protect each of our congregant, and walk with us, in your light.

In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. On May 13, the church worldwide marks Jesus' Ascension, which assures us that he will be present with his followers throughout every generation and in every culture and context. As we offer our gifts in thanksgiving, remember that they continue to honour Christ Jesus as Lord of all times and all places. Let us pray.

Offering prayer:

Generous God, we bless you for your gift of life renewed through Christ's love. Bless us and the gifts we bring so that our lives may reflect the hope and renewal we have found in Christ throughout our community and in the world you love, in his holy name. Amen.

Offering – BOP # 373 – Jesus loves me this I know

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Look around you. God made you family for a reason. Love each other and be patient to each other and accept each other. That is how we love God. Through the week, remember the core value of worship. God is spirit, he is free, and he is always with you.

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.

Postlude

Family Sharing Time

How is online worship? Benefit of it? Shortfalls of it?