

Worship on June 6, 2021

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Praise song – Because He lives
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: Job 1:13-22
- Sermon: He is real no matter how I feel.
- The Lord's Table

We Respond

- Offering
- Offertory Hymn – My Hope is built on nothing less (hymn)

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, June 6th, 2021. Let us come to our faithful God with all our hearts.

. After worship, there will be Bible study. We will share our lives and thoughts and we will have time to pray for each other.

. Good news! The hearing case of Azi and Sam were approved. Praises the Lord!

. Worship volunteers are always welcome.

. Thank you for your support with your gifts. May God use us and our gifts for his kingdom. We will continue to support India. Please remember.

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: We give you thanks, O Lord, with our whole hearts.

All: We give thanks for your steadfast love and faithfulness.

One: O God, we call on you, for you will increase our strength of soul.

All: Though we walk in the midst of troubling times, you will stretch out your hand to us.

One: So we gather to worship God, trusting in God's goodness and guidance.

All: We come to offer our prayers and praise, seeking God's renewing love day by day.

Praise song – Because he lives

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God of creation and compassion, we praise you for your attention to each and every blessed creature, marvelling at the detail and the grandeur you call into being. You tend the fragile beauty and balance in the world, receiving praise from the depths of the sea to the tops of the mountains. You have seen your church grow from tiny beginnings to a worldwide community of those who follow Jesus, full of diversity in voice and vocation. Receive our praise as we witness your patience and perseverance with all you have made. Open our eyes to the purposes you have for us, for our congregation, and for our denomination. Awaken us with the insight of your Spirit and reveal to us how best to serve you in the world you love. For we offer ourselves to you in the name of Christ, our Lord.

God of purpose and possibility, you give us work to do and the skills we need to accomplish your calling. Yet we prefer to follow our own ways. We resist your wisdom and fail to consider the suggestions of others. We think we know better. Forgive our stubborn nature and our unwillingness to reconsider our own views. By the power of your Holy Spirit and the grace of Christ our Lord, give us a teachable spirit to learn new ways to serve you and live as good neighbours in church and community.

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, The prophet Micah reminds us that God requires three things of us: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

To all who turn away from self-interest and seek reconciliation with God and neighbour in kindness and humility, God offers forgiveness and peace. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Prayer for Illumination:

Lord God, Loving God, our souls wait for you, more than those who watch for the morning. Send your Spirit upon us as your Word is read and interpreted, so that we will hear your voice and know the way of truth and love, through Christ, the Living Word. Amen.

Scripture: Job 1:13-22

13 One day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the eldest brother's house, 14 a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were feeding beside them, 15 and the Sabeans fell on them and carried them off, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you." 16 While he was still speaking, another came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; I alone have escaped to tell you." 17 While he was still

speaking, another came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three columns, made a raid on the camels and carried them off, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you.” 18 While he was still speaking, another came and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house, 19 and suddenly a great wind came across the desert, struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; I alone have escaped to tell you.” 20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, shaved his head, and fell on the ground and worshiped. 21 He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” 22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrongdoing.

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

SERMON: God is real no matter how I feel.

Today’s sermon title is “God is real no matter how I feel.”

This is 14th Sunday with The Purpose Driven Life. This chapter 14 concludes our second section about worshipping God.

We talked about what worship is. It is pleasing God. We could do anything if it pleases God. We could dance, we could help others, we could enjoy weather, we could stand still, and many more different things we do for God. Also, God wants friendship from us. He wants to be our best friend. The BIG God wants small us. Amazing.

When everything is going well, when we are happy and have peace in our minds, we worship God and praise God without much hindrances.

But, when our lives are full of troubles, when we feel like we are abandoned by God, do we all know how difficult to worship God? We don’t even want to call out the name of God. Whether because of our outside circumstances or inward problems, there are times that God hides his face from us.

Rick Warren says that the reason God hides his face from us is to test our friendship, so our relationships with God grow deeper and become more mature.

I run these days. At first, I was able to run only for 5 minutes. Every day, I ran few more minutes. Gradually, I increased my running distance and time. My heart is pumping crazy. And I breathe so hard. My legs are shaky after running. But, next day, I run again. I run even more and longer. How can I do that? Because of the training, I build strength.

Our faith is like that too. God is teaching us very important lesson when he takes away our feeling of God’s presence. This is the test of God. In the absence of God’s presence, can we remember the promise of God that he will never leave us alone and he will never abandon us?

Many many times, from the Bible, **God promised, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” But, God has not promised “you will always feel my presence.”**

One famous writer, Philip Yancy, says, **“any relationship involves times of closeness and times of distance, and in a relationship with God, no matter how intimate, the pendulum will swing from one side to the other.”**

The time of the absence of God’s presence is called by many different, but similar, names by great faith leaders through many centuries. **The dark night of the soul, the ministry of absence, the ministry of the night, and the winter of the heart.**

Today's question is, how do we overcome this spiritual dryness.

There is nothing wrong with experiencing the absence of God's presence. Remember? This is God's test. We are seeking the experience of God than seeking God himself. Through these dark times, we are able to practice remembering God's promise and seeking God himself, not satisfying our desire of spiritual entertainment.

Rick Warren suggests 4 ways to maintain our faith when God hides his presence from us.

ONE, Tell God exactly how you feel – God knows how we feel and God knows there are ups and downs in relationships. So, we are free to be honest with God. If we admit our hopelessness, is this faith or not? “God, I am hopeless!” – this is a statement of our faith. This shows our trust in God and our feeling of despair at the same time. Furthermore, we are telling God that we trust God will deliver us.

TWO, Focus on who God is – God's unchanging nature – Because God is faithful, he constantly loves us. He is always with us. He knows what we are going through. He cares for us. He has good plans for us. Like Job in today's scripture, even though he lost too many things on the same day, **V22, “In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrongdoing.”**
“Never doubt in the dark what God told you in the light.” – V. Raymond Edman.

THREE, Trust God to keep his promise. When I was with youth group, I frequently told them to claim your promise to God. God already gave us promises and it is our time to take our right. God told us that he will never leave us. He will always love us. He will care for us no matter what. These are the promises of God and these are for us. Why don't we take his promises? These are for us to pick up. No matter how we feel about God, God is real. Whether we experience his presence, love, care, joy, and guidance OR NOT, God is faith and he is still there. His promises are still valid for us. Circumstances cannot change the character of God. God's grace and love is still in full force for us.

FOUR, Remember what God had already done for us.

Some children say to their parents, “what have you done for me!?”

What is this nonsense?! – they were born because of their parents. They gave the children life.

Their parents protected them for safe delivery, they supported kids to grow up.

What did God do for us? HE GAVE US LIFE. Some people might have experienced God's guidance in various ways and the other might not have experienced any help or guidance yet.

BUT, does it affect our eternal life? NO. Jesus came for us, lived for us, suffered for us, died for us, cleansed our sins for us, and rose for us. Jesus gave his life for our life. And now? Jesus is holding our hands and is walking with us.

There are times that we feel so distant from God. But, think about the cross of Jesus. Jesus gave up everything so we could have everything.

V20 – [after all the sad news,] then Job arose, tore his robe, [in sadness,] shaved his head, and fell on the ground and worshiped. V21, he said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Job had a great faith in God. Job knew that God gave all the things he had freely and it was God's freewill. At the same time, to take away all the things God gave him freely, it's God's

freewill as well. God gave us all the things we have without cost. It is God's decision if he decides to take all away from us. Whether we have or not have, God is the same. Whether we feel his presence or not, God is unchanging; God is there faithfully. Let us have faith in God, not in our feelings.

Let us pray.

Gracious Father God, we believe in you. We believe that you are real and you are faithful with your promises to us. You will never leave us alone, whether we feel you or not. We know that you will always love us. You are unchanging and you are faithful. In the time of darkness, help us remember your promises and help us trust you, not our own feelings. We are short-sighted. So, many times, we don't understand your good plans for us. Help our unbelief. Have mercy upon us. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Supper – Communion

Jesus said: Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Let us come to the Table of the Lord and join the feast.

*(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say **BOLD print together**)*

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: Holy God, Creator of heaven and earth, in your Son Jesus Christ, the Word became flesh, giving us a vision of your glory, that all people might be brought out of darkness into your marvelous light. In your awesome presence, **we lift our hearts in joyful praise.**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: We praise you, most holy God. With a rush of wind and tongues of fire, you fulfilled the promise of Christ by sending your Holy Spirit to form the church. By that same Spirit you grace us with gifts, empower us to proclaim your gospel and to serve you in the world. Remember us and dwell in our hearts **as we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour are yours, almighty God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE

When we break the bread, it is a sharing in the body of Christ. (BREAD)

“This is the body of Christ broken for you.” (Let us take it)

When we bless the cup, it is a sharing in the blood of Christ (CUP)

“This is the blood of Christ shed for you.” (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

Praise the Lord! Your love and grace are in our lives. Your promise for us still stands strong. Your faithfulness is our hope. Thank you Lord for your love. Thank you God for your grace. Thank you Holy Spirit for your guidance. As we join the feast you prepared, and as we consume your body and your blood, let us remind ourselves that you are in us and we are for you. You are our King and Lord.

We thank you and praise you for Azi and Sam. They've been praying for this so long and they finally got accepted legally in Canada. Thank you for giving them freedom to worship you and freedom to love you and freedom to praise you. With their lives, Lord, let them be the salt and the light making this world come closer to you. Lead their lives and guide their steps.

We pray for our denomination. Later today, General Assembly will begin. There are decisions to be made for our future steps. As we make step forward, guide us and lead us with your love and wisdom. Let all the churches across Canada make one voice in worship and praise you as well as in witness your love and grace to the world. Give wisdom and courage to the Rev. Daniel Scott as he serves as Moderator leading the national church. Give us united hearts and obedient hearts for you.

Lastly, we offer up our congregation to your hands. Protect us safely and give us peace in ourselves, in our relationships surrounding us, and in our hopes and plans. Heal our physical body, our emotions and feelings, and our relationships.

With all our hearts, we long for you. Be in our lives. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. Today, the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada opens in a new way, drawing commissioners from across Canada together online. Our offering supports the ministries and mission we undertake together, in this country and around the world. Consider how your gift to God is multiplied in the witness of our denomination, combined with so many others! Also, it will help the Crisis in India. Let us pray.

Offering prayer:

God of grace and goodness, we offer our gifts in gratitude for all we receive from you, in Christ and in creation. We trust you can multiply them in ways we cannot even imagine. Bless the ministries of our congregation and of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in these challenging times. Surprise us by what you accomplish through us as we sow seeds of generosity in the gifts we bring to you. And remember those who are in desperate needs. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Offering – Our hope is built in nothing less

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. God is faithful. God loves us no matter what we do and did and will do. God is with us whether we want him or not. God is holding us whether we know it or not. We might experience the absence of God's presence, but remember God's promises for us that we will never leave us alone.

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. If I were in Job's shoes, losing his possessions and his children or my most precious treasures, what would I say to God?
2. Have I desperately sought God's presence?
3. What is the most important promise of God for my life?