

Worship on August 22, 2021

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Praise song – Good Good Father
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: Romans 12:14-21
- Sermon: Peace Making
- Prayer for the people of God

We Respond

- Offering – O God You Are My God (Step by step)

We Serve

- Benediction

Ponder Upon Questions

Announcements:

. Welcome! Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us live right now. This is Sunday, August 22nd, 2021. May God show His faithfulness through our worship today.

. There is Bible study after worship. Please stay for sharing lives, thoughts, and prayer for each other.

. Worship volunteers are always welcome.

. Thank you for your support with your gifts. God may use our gifts and us for this world and our community.

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: God hears our cries for help and rescues us from all our troubles.

All: God draws near the broken hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

One: God redeems the life of all people; none who take refuge in God will be condemned.

All: So, let us worship the One lifts us to new life and praise God's holy name.

Praise song – Good Good Father

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God of majesty and mystery, we come before you in humble wonder and worship.

Source of all that is, you are beyond our imagining; your creation astounds us with its beauty and power. Word of hope and healing, you defy our explanations with your care. Spirit of purpose and possibility, you touch us when we least expect it and show us which way to turn.

Receive our praise and prayer this day; and prepare us to receive your presence and promise in this hour of worship, Source, Word, and Spirit of Life, ever Three and ever One.

God of mercy, with the community of Christ's church gathered here and elsewhere, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. We have not loved you with our whole hearts, nor have we cared for your world or respected our neighbours as we should.

In silence, we offer our personal confessions... (Hold silence for 30 seconds.)

Forgive us, we pray,
and with your grace, remake us in the example of Christ, our Lord and friend.

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, Jesus said, "Come to me all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Friends, trust that peace and forgiveness are God's gifts to you this day. Be renewed by the power of the Spirit that moves with you into each new day.

Prayer for Illumination:

Lord, God, to whom shall we go, for you have the words of eternal life?
Guide us by your Word and Spirit this day, so that in hearing the Scriptures read and interpreted, our hearts may be converted to your ways, and our lives become a greater reflection of Jesus Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

Scripture: Romans 12:14-21

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 18 If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20 No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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

SERMON: Peace Making

Today's sermon title is "Peace Making."

Last week, we talked about one of the most important roles of Christ followers is making peace. Today's chapter talks about restoring broken fellowship. I am going to talk about Peace Making within each of ourselves as well as with others.

My wife is working full time and I cannot work with taking care of three boys. So, the youngest one goes to daycare every day and two older boys are going to any possible summer camps. They went few different summer camps this year. One of my boys has developmental delay. He's slow in development. So, whenever we send him to a new summer camp, we worry. In some summer camps, he stays very well. But, on the other hand, from some summer camp, he gets warnings and he has to take a day off as a punishment.

From Monday, they are going to a new summer camp. With nervous mind, I spend a day. Because John goes with David, I feel better because they are together. But, on Tuesday, David had to stay home and John had to go by himself. I worried even more than sending him to a new place. I held on to my phone all day long. If something happens, they would call me.

But, there was no phone call at all. And when I picked him up, one of the teachers told me that John was taking care of his group members. He held their hands and led them following the leader. He was behaving so well. He received prize stickers and got a prize at the end of the day.

Wow.

It was just wow. Because the summer camp week before did not allow him to come one full day because he was not following their rules. I had to take care of him all day long.

So different.

John is same. His character stays the same. But, what made the different consequences from two summer camps?

This made me think of the role of a leader.

From Summer Camp A, following rules comes first. There is a strict condition to remain in order and peace. But, in summer camp B, they knew how to guide and lead a person with somewhat difficult characters.

I thought of myself. "What am I doing?" "How am I doing?"

As a leader, what am I doing? Am I guiding anybody?

Am I helping anyone to bring out their possibilities like the summer camp did from John?

Same six year old boy. But, from summer camp A, he was a trouble maker. Every morning he wanted to stay home with me. But, from summer camp B, he was appreciated, he was respected, he was loved, he received prizes, and he wanted to go again and again.

This is the message of the day. What kind of life do we want to live?

Do we want to live like summer camp A, which label people and set the people's limit regardless their possibilities? Or do we want to live like summer camp B, which brings out individuals' potentials?

I was so touched and thankful for the summer camp B.

And I want to live like it.

As a pastor, as a husband, as a father, as a friend, as a son, as a teacher, as an uncle, etc.
I have many roles.

How about you? Do you see the possibilities from the people surrounding you? Or are you making complains about them? Labeling them and judging them? Disappointing them?

Someone might think that what is it to do with peace making?!

But, think about it one more time. By accepting them just as they are, they are building peace in themselves. So, they can become peace makers. At least, they made peace within themselves. It is the beginning for them to spread the peace of Christ.

Without this process, we will dry up some day.

Therefore, recognizing them as they are is a very crucial peace making process.

Do we have peace in our hearts? Have we been treated like the way we desire? If not, come to God. We might have frustrations within people, but God is beyond. He accepts us just the way we are and he pours out his unending love upon us.

V15, Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Can we really do it? You know what's amazing in babies?

My 15 month baby fell down at home and was crying. But, at the same time, when he hears his brothers are laughing in the room, do you know what he does?

He stops crying but starts laughing not knowing what's going on. And he stands up and runs to them.

Can we rejoice with those who rejoice without any hindrance? Don't we have jealousy? Envious minds?

When someone is crying, can we sympathize with them?

It is very simple human nature, but can we really live this simple human way?

Our sins, our selfishness, our broken self-esteem, our desires, our past experiences, our hurts, distorted us. We are ruined by our own sinful nature.

God is urging us to restore his image, God's characteristics in us, the way we were created.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 18 If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

God is saying to us that be at peace with one another, with everybody. Go against your selfish nature. Do your best because I am helping you. You are not alone, but I am with you.

V19, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." V20, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Once we have this in our hearts, we will be able to make peace within ourselves.
Peace begins from our hearts. Peace begins here (pound heart).

With this in mind, to restore broken relationships, these are the instructions from Rick Warren.

- 1) Talk to God before talking to the person.
- 2) Always take the initiative.
- 3) Sympathize with their feelings.
- 4) Confess our part of the conflict.
- 5) Attack the problem, not the person.
- 6) Cooperate as much as possible.
- 7) Emphasize reconciliation, not resolution.

When we have broken relationships, remember the summer camp A and B. One is building a wall between people, and the other one is building a bridge.
Let us build a bridge so God's grace and love may flow through us.

Let us pray.

Gracious and loving Father God, we love to call you. We love to call you Father because you embrace us whenever we call you. Whenever and wherever we ask you, you are with us. Thank you for accepting us just the way we are. Sometimes, it is hard for us to love ourselves, but with amazing love, you just pour out your love on us. Your love surrounds us. We become free and we become peaceful within our selves, so we can make peace with others. You are the source of our lives and you are the source of our power. Come into our hearts and be with us. Thank you for your love. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

The Prayer for the people of God

O God you are my God and I will ever praise you.

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Merciful and gracious, loving Father God, we come to you and we lay down our hearts before you. Listen to our prayers and answer us in the best ways.

There are so many difficult situations around the world. Earthquake in Haiti, political crisis in Afghanistan, climate crisis, wild fires.

Have mercy on us. Restore our brokenness, broken peace within ourselves and with others.

Help the people in Haiti. Comfort the people who lost their family and life.

Lord. We care for ourselves. Teach us that caring for environment and other people is the way we are caring for ourselves. Give us wisdom and courage so we can take necessary steps to make the world better. And also, you walked ahead of us and set the example. Help us follow your steps.

There are people who are trying to run away from their own country. There are people who are sending away their babies for the safety of their babies. They are giving up so much. Protect them. Our hearts are broken when we see the pictures from Afghanistan. Protect women and

children. Give your hearts to their political leaders and let them come to you in fear of your justice and presence. Pour out your mercy upon them.

We need you Lord in making decisions. We need your wisdom for our future steps. Lead us in your ways.

We pray for our church members. If they are suffering from anything, release them from the source of pain whether it's physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational. Give them peace and fill their hearts with your love.

You are the Lord and you are our everything. In Jesus precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. In late summer, we begin to see the fruit of our labours in field and garden, the produce of God's good creation. This year, we also recognize many fields and gardens are under great stress. So, we bring what we have to share, praying that God's generosity will multiply the fruit we have gathered to support those whose summer had been much less productive. Let us pray.

Offering prayer:

God of growth and goodness, we offer what we have to share, knowing that many around us in our own communities, and around the world, have seen crops wither and soil turn to dust. So, bless what we bring this day, and use it to spread seeds of hope and wellbeing among those who face an uncertain future. Make us generous neighbours to all in need, for the sake of Christ, the Bread of Life. Amen.

Praise song – O God you are my God and I will ever praise you.

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. God love you. God understands you. God holds your hands. God lives in your hearts. God cares for you. God walks with you. Trust in his love and accept yourselves and live in peace with yourself, with others, and with God.

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. Do I have any broken relationship? What is God telling me about it?
2. What part can I play in that relationship? what is the easy way and what is the difficult way? And what does God want us to take?
3. How am I accepting my own self and how am I loving myself? What is God saying about it?