

Worship on October 17, 2021

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 374 – Oh for a thousand tongues to sing
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: 1 King 3:4-14
- Sermon: Prayer is asking for wisdom
- Prayer for the people of God

We Respond

- Offering – Now thank we all our God

We Serve

- Benediction

Ponder Upon Questions

Announcements:

. Welcome! Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us. This is Sunday, October 17th, 2021. It is great that we can connect to the people from in-person worship and the people from online through Zoom live streaming. Wherever you are worshipping our faithful God, may the presence of God be with you.

. Worship volunteers are always welcome for Bible readers, ushers, and etc.

. Thank you for your support with your gifts. May God use your gifts in spreading his love and mercy to the people who need the Lord. May their hardened hearts be softened with his love.

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: Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the Lord our God is very great.

All: God is clothed with honour and majesty, wrapped in light like a garment.

One: God stretches out the heavens like a tent, and rides on the wings of the wind.

All: O Lord, in wisdom you have made each unique creature. With all of them, we come to praise you.

One: Let us praise the Lord together!

Praise song – BOP 374 – Oh for a thousand tongues to sing

Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise, the glories of my God and King, the triumphs of God's grace	Jesus, the name that charms our fears, and bids our sorrows cease – 'tis music in the sinner's ears; its life and health and peace	My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim, and spread through all the earth abroad the honours of thy name.
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Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Praise be to you, O God, for the wonders of your creation. You spin the shining stars and stretch out the seas to the furthest horizon. You lift the curtain of dawn so light can chase away the night. You give the earth its seasons and each creature its lifespan, breathing life and love into each precious soul. And so, we come to praise you, knowing human greatness is a mere shadow of yours. In this hour of worship, breathe your Spirit into us once more, to inspire us to serve you with creativity and commitment, and with the honesty and humility we meet in Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ, you call us to walk your way in the world, to serve our neighbours and love our enemies. We confess these are not easy choices for us. We sometimes turn a blind eye to a neighbour in need. We like to follow the crowd rather than challenging and truthful ways you are showing to us. Forgive us, Jesus, for seeking an easier way than your way.

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, While it is true that we have sinned, it is a greater truth that we are forgiven through God's love in Jesus Christ. To all who humbly seek the mercy of God I say, in Jesus Christ, our sin is forgiven. Be at peace with God, with yourself and with one another.

Prayer for Illumination:

Holy One, you are the Source of Wisdom for the ages. Prepare us to learn from your Word. Send the Holy Spirit to open our minds and hearts to the scriptures, that we may grow wiser as we listen, and serve you more willingly as we live. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Scripture: 1 King 3:3-14

3 Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David; only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places. 4 The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the principal high place; Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." 6 And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. 7 And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place

of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. 9 Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?" 10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11 God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12 I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you. 13 I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor all your life; no other king shall compare with you. 14 If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life." **"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."**

SERMON: Prayer is asking for wisdom

Today's sermon title is "Prayer is asking for wisdom."

Today's passage is very famous. Solomon asked for the wisdom and he had a great life. God was pleased when Solomon asked him for wisdom. He could have asked for wealth, long-life, or some revenge for himself. But, he asked God understanding mind to govern God's people.

Solomon made God very happy with his desire.

Now, let's talk about how we can bring this into our lives.
Prayer.

How is our prayer life? What are we praying for? Last night, what did we pray for?
Or this morning, when we woke up, what did we pray to God?

What is our definition of prayer?
What do we think about prayer? What is prayer for us?

For me, prayer is like talking to God. There is no special topics. I talk to God about all things. When I am grocery shopping, I talk to God. "God, the price of all the things went up so much." "God, this banana looks too green." "God, my boys will love these yogurts." When I am passing some restaurants, I talk to God too. "God, these are amazing food, but I should not have them today. Too much fat. But, I know the taste of it and wow I miss that..."

Things like these. I am pretty honest with God and talk to him all the time. Also, when I make mistakes or burst out my temper, I talk to God, "God.. I did it again.. too bad.. too sad.. God.. I am so weak.. I need you.."

These are my on-going daily prayer. When I have special prayer topics, I ask God for help. Help for health, help for difficult situations, help for strength, the list goes on.

But, sometimes, we pray with blind faith.

Have you ever heard a story of parents who only prayed for their sick child and not took their child to any hospital for medical treatment?

A girl was sick one day. Her temperature was very high. She coughed a lot. She was powerless. She could not eat. She could not stand. She was very sick. Her parents loved her so much. And her parents had strong faith in God, in the power of prayer.

They prayed for her. They prayed, prayed, prayed, continuously. But, they did not take their daughter to hospital. They had firm faith that God would heal her when they prayed to God.

However, after few days of prayer, she was not getting well. She died.

What's your first reaction hearing this story?

Sadness. Anger. Stupidity.

No one would say God is powerless.

God seems not answering to their prayers of healing their daughter. But, the blame goes to the parents, not to God.

WHY?

Because what they did was not normal. What they did was not wise. Their faith is not right. Someone might say that they would do the same, then change your mind. Our God does not work like that. In some very special cases, he performs miracles, healings, in very special ways. But, in our everyday life situations, God works in our context. We have access to medicine, medical care, doctors when someone is sick.



Another example. In the flood, you need rescue. You need help. You prayed to God. “God, I need help. I am all alone here on the roof.” So, God sent you a boat. These couple asked you, “come on the boat!” But, you answered to them, “NO MY GOD WILL HELP ME.”

God sent you a help, the boat, but you did not take the help.

Another example. Car is broken down. What do we do? Do you call for Roadside assistance? Or do you pray to God until your car is fixed and working again?

Prayer is like looking for ways to fix the problem. In the process of solving problems, what do we need? WE NEED WISDOM. That is prayer.

Listen to Solomon's prayer which pleased God.

6 “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. 7 And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of

my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. 9 Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

Solomon did not ask God teach him how to govern God's people. He asked for wisdom so he could have an understanding mind to govern God's people.

Prayer is not asking God the specific way how to solve the problem. Prayer is not asking God for the answers for problems. Prayer is asking God for wisdom, inspiration, aha moment. God is the Creator. We have the image of God. This means that we have God's creativity. We are creative like God. God provided us with ability to think and imagine. We invent. We develop things. We are able to find answers. Prayer is asking God for wisdom. We are created to use our brain and our abilities.

Then, what is wisdom? The answer is in Solomon's prayer.
understanding mind to govern your people,
able to discern between good and evil;

We can say that wisdom is the appropriate application of knowledge.

If we apply Solomon's prayer in our lives, what could be understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil?

How to live in society. How to act in common sense. How to make good influence. How to help others. How to love others with God's good intention in our hearts.

If we go back to the example of sick daughter, what could we do?
We could take her to hospital. We should pray for God's healing, but at the same time, we need to do our parts. We need to use what we are given from God. When we are sick, we can go to hospital, we can take medicine, we can go to doctors.

Also, what do we do with broken car? We can call CAA, or other roadside assistances who can fix it, or we can study and learn how to fix car. With our skills and knowledge, we can make good influence. We are learning and developing. We are becoming more able. But, for many of us, leaving it to the professionals, that is the wisdom.

We have Jesus. Who is Jesus? Jesus is the King of the Wisdom. Who is wiser than Jesus?
If there is a problem, we don't just pray for it over and over. We need to fix the problem with wisdom. Blind faith is not faith. Blind faith destroys everything.

God of wisdom is with us. King of wisdom is with us. God wants us to be with him. God wants us to learn his wisdom through prayer.

Faith is wisdom. If we have God's wisdom, we are able to solve the problem. And this is the power of God's people. This is how we can become the light and the salt of the world.

From now on, pray to God for wisdom for your situations. With God's wisdom, solve the problem. Live with wisdom.

Let us pray.

Jesus, you are the King of wisdom. You created everything in the whole universe and you know everything in it. Thank you for opening the path to you. Teach us your wisdom, so we live our daily lives with your wisdom. We want to live in confidence. We want to light your world and make it tastier becoming the light and salt. With your wisdom, we want to show you to the world and we want to praise you, we want to glorify you. Be lifted up through our lives. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for the people of God

Oh God you are my God. How can we thank you enough for your love and for you are being our God! It is great that you called us your children. You embraced us with unconditional love and patience. And even now, you are waiting for us to give more. You are gracious Father and you want to pour out all the good things to us. Thank you.

As we come to you this time, grant us your wisdom, so we can discern between our needs and wants. And give us courage to lay down our own wills and take your wisdom with humble hearts.

We are praying for people who are in suffering, difficult situations. Especially, God, we need your healing hands upon those who are suffering with physical pains. God of love and power and mercy and grace, place your hands upon the people who are in pain, on the pain spot, at this time. Heal them in your ways. Take away pain. And be with their medicine, with their medical assistance, and with their strength, help them overcome their sickness. Make them clean. There are various situations our congregants are experiencing. Help them.

Also, with our church building open right now, we need your wisdom on what to do and what not to do to keep everyone safe from virus. What do we do with our renters? What do we do with the children who cannot be vaccinated? What about singing hymns? What do we do with our fellowship time? How do we connect to each other in more practical ways? What about financial needs?

Give us wisdom and courage, so we make insightful decisions for you and for your people.

Lord of wisdom, Lord of love, be with us. Guide our steps and protect us so we are able to overcome our difficulties and please you through our lives. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. The scriptures remind us how much we depend on God's goodness. Jesus invites us to put others' needs before our own, to serve in the world as he did. Our offering is one way we offer God our thanks for all we have received, and one way we can serve those who depend on our kindness as well as God's. Let us pray for our offering.

Offering prayer:

Great and gracious God, we offer you these gifts, small tokens of our love for you. Bless them with the power of your Holy Spirit so they may accomplish more than we can even imagine, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and our Friend. Amen.

Praise song – Now thank we all our God

Verse 1: Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices, Who wondrous things has done, in whom God's world rejoices, Who from our mother's arms has blessed us on our way With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today	Verse 2: Oh may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us, And keep us all with grace, and guide us when perplexed, And free us from all ills in this world and the next	Verse 3: All praise and thanks to God who reigns in highest heaven, The Father and the Son and Spirit now be given, The one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore, For thus it was, is now and shall be evermore
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Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Our God is the Giver of wisdom. God made Solomon wise and gave him a great life. Our God is waiting for us to listen to us. Pray to God. Ask him wisdom, so we live with him.

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. Where do I need God's wisdom in my daily life?
2. Do I have the experience of the wisdom of God in my life?
3. What is God telling me through my life's situations?