

Worship on August 28, 2022 (CCLI: License Number #3156883)
(Welcoming Elder: Robert Revington)

Sunday Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 474 The love of God comes close
- Prayer for worship and Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Time for our children and youth
- Praise song – BOP 357 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: Jeremiah 2:1-13
- Sermon: Remember the devotion of your youth
- The Prayer for the people of God

We Respond

- Offering & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 434 For the beauty of the earth

We Serve

- Benediction

Announcements:

. Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us today. This is Sunday, August 28th. Jesus loves you till he gave his own life for us. We are made peace with God through him. Enjoy the peace and love of God through our worship today.

. Session apologies for not having Communion on the first Sundays of July and August.

The next Communion Service will be Sunday, September 11th, 2022.

. There will be Fellowship time in the Church Hall after Worship. Please stay and connect.

. Rev. Soong has his office hours on Wednesday from 9am-12pm.

. Bible Study (Christ-Centred Life) is on Wednesdays morning 10am to 11:15am. All are welcome. Spread the word. It will be the time of connecting each other and praying for each other.

. Prayer is unseen, yet powerful. If you have prayer needs, please let us know.

Cheryl Daddis @ cheryl@pathcom.com or Soong @ revsoonghuh@hotmail.com

. Please help Ukraine with donation and prayer.

. Thank you for your continuing support with your gifts. As we offer our gifts to the Lord, let us give our hearts and our lives to the Lord as well. May God be in the centre of your hearts.

As we come into the presence of our God, let us open our hearts and minds,
and focus on our Lord and King.

Responsive Call to Worship

Sing aloud to God who is our strength!

Raise a shout of joy to the God of all generations!

For our God feeds us with the finest wheat;

with honey from the rock God will satisfy.

Let us worship the Lord our God,

For God has done great things for us and so we bring God praise.

Praise song – BOP 474 The love of God comes close

Vs. 1 The love of God comes close where stands an open door, to let the stranger in, to mingle rich and poor. The love of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way; the love of God is here to stay.	Vs. 2 The peace of God comes close to those caught in the storm, forgoing lives of ease to ease the lives forlorn. The peace of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way; the peace of God is here to stay.
Vs. 3 The joy of God comes close where faith encounters fears, where heights and depths of life are found through smiles and tears. The joy of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way; the joy of God is here to stay.	Vs. 4 The grace of God comes close to those whose grace is spent, when hearts are tired or sore and hope is bruised and bent. The grace of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way; the grace of God is here to stay.
Vs. 5 The Son of God comes close where people praise his name, where bread and wine are blest and shared as when he came. The Son of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk the Way; the Son of God is here to stay.	

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

God of all generations, you are the Source of all life and the strength of our lives. You know us through and through. In Jesus Christ, you entered our lives and showed us how to live with hope and generosity. Through the Holy Spirit, you nourish us each day to inspire acts of hospitality and kindness to those we meet. As we worship you, fill us with your living water to refresh our faith and make us a blessing to others as we serve you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Welcoming God, we confess that we too often fall short of the kindness and compassion we meet in Jesus. You have welcomed us like guests to a banquet, yet we find it hard to welcome a stranger in church. You have shown us what matters most in life, but we are distracted by worries, busy with things that really do not matter. Forgive us, O God. Teach us to honour you and those we meet in all we do and say, for the sake of Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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, while it is true that we have sinned and fallen short of God's hope for us, it is a greater truth that we are forgiven through God's amazing love. To all who humbly seek the mercy of God I say, in Jesus Christ our sin is forgiven. So be at peace with God, be at peace with yourself and be at peace with one another.

Peace of the Lord be with you. Let us take few moments to greet each other and share our peace.

Prayer for children and youth and prayer

God of love and grace, thank you for this time of prayer. We are hopeful for our children and youth because of you. Although we are weak, you are strong. We are sinful, but you are holy. We look upon you and we rely upon you. Help us rely upon you and help us follow your guidance and wisdom. Now, it's end of the summer. In two weeks, school will begin. We pray for new beginning. As our children and youth go into the new environment, protect them. Give them confidence and help them get through. Help them meet good friends and good teachers, so they may grow in knowledge as well as in heart. Help them have you in the centre of their hearts, so everything they do, you are glorified. Make them the billboard of your love. Shine your light to this world through them. Capture their hearts and use them for you. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Praise Song: 357 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

<u>Vs. 1</u> How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear; it soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds and drives away our fear	<u>Vs. 2</u> It makes the wounded spirit whole, and calms the troubled breast; 'tis manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary rest.
<u>Vs. 3</u> Dear name! the rock on which I build, my shield and hiding place, my never-failing treasury, filled with boundless stores of grace.	<u>Vs. 4</u> Jesus, my shepherd, guardian, friend, my prophet, priest and king, my Lord, my life, my way, my end: accept the praise I bring.
<u>Vs. 5</u> How weak the effort of my heart, how cold my warmest thought, but when I see thee as thou art I'll praise thee as I ought.	<u>Vs. 6</u> Till then I would thy love proclaim with every fleeting breath; and may the music of thy name refresh my soul in death.

Prayer for Illumination:

O God, we are standing before your words with humble and desperate hearts. Make our hearts still before you and make yourself known to us. You are our God and you are our lamp in the darkness. Shine your light upon us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture: Jeremiah 2:1-13

1 The word of the Lord came to me, saying: 2 Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the Lord: I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed

me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. 3 Israel was holy to the Lord, the first fruits of his harvest. All who ate of it were held guilty; disaster came upon them, says the Lord.

4 Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel. 5 Thus says the Lord: What wrong did your ancestors find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthless things, and became worthless themselves? 6 They did not say, "Where is the Lord who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that no one passes through, where no one lives?" 7 I brought you into a plentiful land to eat its fruits and its good things. But when you entered you defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination. 8 The priests did not say, "Where is the Lord?" Those who handle the law did not know me; the rulers transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal, and went after things that do not profit. 9 Therefore once more I accuse you, says the Lord, and I accuse your children's children. 10 Cross to the coasts of Cyprus and look, send to Kedar and examine with care; see if there has ever been such a thing. 11 Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for something that does not profit. 12 Be appalled, O heavens, at this, be shocked, be utterly desolate, says the Lord, 13 for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and dug out cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns that can hold no water.

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

SERMON: Remember the devotion of your youth

Today's sermon title is **"Remember the devotion of your youth."**

This title came from v2, **"I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holy to the Lord, the first fruits of his harvest. All who ate of it were held guilty; disaster came upon them, says the Lord."**

MSG, "I remember your youthful loyalty, our love as newlyweds. You stayed with me through the wilderness years, stuck with me through all the hard places. Israel was God's holy choice, the pick of the crop. Anyone who laid a hand on her would soon wish he hadn't!" God's Decree.

What is the emotion of God in this?

Why does God have to say this to his own people?

God's own people WAS in love with God at that time. But, what about now?

V4, "What wrong did your ancestors find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthless things, and became worthless themselves?"

This shows that the people of God stopped following God. God's own people no longer enjoyed God. God's own people quit glorifying God.

God heartbreaks and he cries out to his own people. "I remember the good times we were together in love and harmony. We looked at each other's eyes and never got tired of each other. We had intimacy. We were open to each other. I trusted you and you trusted me. You had me in the centre of your heart. We went through ups and downs together. No one dare to hurt you out of my hands.

But, what happened? What did I do wrong to you? Why did you leave me? Why are you seeking the things making you more thirsty and more hungry? These, what you are chasing after, cannot give you satisfaction. These do not make you happy. They will take away the JOY from you. Do not ruin yourself with worthless things. You will have to take the consequences of your choice.

We intentionally choose what to have in the centre of our hearts. Some might say that they are unknowingly influenced by the current culture. God's pain spoken out.

Listen to this excuse one more time. **"I am influenced by the stream of this current culture unknowingly."**

So irresponsible to one's own life. If you are running a business, would you say that?

Unknowingly, my business was controlled by the current culture. There might be some situations, but if you are running a business, you should be able to analyse what influences your business. If it's the case of children education, unknowingly, they learned and accepted this culture's values. We lose chance to raise them with Christ-centred values.

What influenced our lives?

V5. What wrong did your ancestors find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthless things, and became worthless themselves?

This teaches us that the ancestors of the audience left God.

V6. They did not say, "Where is the Lord who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that no one passes through, where no one lives?"

The Lord is accusing the ancestors. They did not ask about the Lord and they did not educate their children with God's stories in their lives.

V7. I brought you into a plentiful land to eat its fruits and its good things. But when YOU entered you defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination.

Who is YOU in v7?

The descendants of the people of God who experienced God's miracles, who experienced exodus, who ate manna in the deserts, who hid from the scorching sun in the desert in the shadow of the pillar of the cloud of the Lord, and who warmed themselves in the pillar of the fire of God in the freezing cold of desert. Also, YOU is the people of their descendants who entered the promised land with milk and honey. They entered the promised land, but they did not glorify God. God poured out blessings upon them, God helped them leave the legacy of faith, so their family are able to build the household of faith. However, they turned God's blessing into abomination. God's glorious name became curse, shame, hatred and misery on this generation of people of God.

The Bible is timeless. God is not limited in time. So, this YOU is us as well. We are inherited the legacy of faith, we are blessed abundantly by God's amazing grace and love. God gave us promised land. But, what are we doing with the blessings God poured out upon us?

Where are we standing here in the spectrum of YOU?

God continues, v8, **"The priests did not say, "Where is the Lord?" Those who handle the law did not know me; the rulers transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal, and went after things that do not profit."**

The word **profit** is in **Hebrew, ya'al**. The word **Baal** means **no ya'al**, which means **no profit**.

This shows that the priests and prophets chased after profit. They lost their focus. God calls this abomination. God sees this SIN.

The definition of sin in the Bible is that missing the target. You know the **bullseye? (picture)** God's plan is perfect. God's ways are perfect, accurate, and flawless. If we follow God's way, we cannot miss the bullseye. Missing the target means that we lost God from the centre of our hearts. We live our lives with our own strength, not with the power of God. And God concludes the evils of God's people. **V13, "For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and dug out cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns that can hold no water."**

The people of God left God. They used their own power to support themselves by building a cistern. Just like today, water system is deeply related to life. To survive, water is a must. After leaving God, they tried to manage their life by their own power. They want their own foundation of life, apart from God. But, as we can see, without God, no water, no life.

What is the core of believing in God? We confess that he is our Lord, our Master, and our Owner. **Who controls our lives?** The Master! The Owner. But, we are coming to the place of our own owner. We try to become our own master. The cracked cisterns show that human beings cannot secure our own lives.

Isaiah 53:6, "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

We go our own ways. Apart from the bullseye, we do whatever we want to do. Disobeying God's will, leaving the path of God, is missing the bullseye, missing the target. Taking our own opinions and going our own ways are sin, evil to God's sight.

Here, in our reality, we need to focus on the second half. **"The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."**

This Isaiah 53 introduces JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR AND LORD who bore our cross and took all our sins.

"He was looked down on and passed over, a man who suffered, who knew pain firsthand. One look at him and people turned away. We looked down on him, thought he was scum. But the fact is, it was our pains he carried – our disfigurements, all the things wrong with us. We thought he brought it on himself, that God was punishing him for his own failures. But it was our sins that did that to him, that ripped and tore and crushed him – our sins! He took the punishment, and that made us whole. Through his bruises we get healed. We're all like sheep who've wandered off and gotten lost. We've all down our own thing, gone our own way. And God has piled all our sins, everything we've done wrong, on him, on him."

Once we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, what we need to do is to remember the devotion of our youth. This could be literally our youth, but it's more likely the beginning of our faith when we first fell in love with Jesus Christ.

The two evils God's people committed are our reality. We cannot get away from them. The only way to be at peace with God is to have Jesus. Let us remember our first love with Jesus Christ who first loved us and saved us.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Prayer for the people of God

Gracious and loving Father God, in your love, we gain life. In your love, we satisfy our thirst. In your love, we satisfy our hunger. We tend to go our own ways. That's our sinful nature. We run away from you and we try to manage our own lives with our own power. And in emptiness in our hearts, we fall. We experience hopelessness, desperateness. Although he once fell in love with you, although we shared intimacy with you, there come times of forgetfulness. We thought we had you in our centre of our hearts, but we are swept away by our surroundings. We are more influenced than we make influence. Help our weakness. Help us live with you. Help us remember you in our daily lives. So, we follow your values. So, we experience your presence in our daily lives. Gracious Father God, put the longings for you in the centre of our hearts and be present in the centre of our hearts.

At this time, we pray for our sisters and brothers in our church. We are few but we are strong when you surround us. Lord, give us your power and love. Fill our hearts with your presence. There are your children who are going through difficult times. In their cry, incline your ears. Embrace them with your loving arms. Hold them tight, so they are empowered by you. Pour out your love lavishly, so they gain power to stand up again. Give healing in their bodies, in their relationships, in their situations, in their emotion, and their brokenness. You are the only hope. You are the only power that we can hold on to. Merciful God, we need you, apart from you, we cannot. Apart from you, we are empty. We are lost. In each person's life, Lord, be at the centre. It's not us inviting you in our lives, but it is you that take over our everything. Capture all that we are and help us let us stop holding onto ourselves, but let go, so we experience you. Gracious and glorious Father God, meet us here and heal us in your presence.

We call you Lord God. Help us stop chasing the values of this world and start following your values. Help us realize that you are our purpose of our lives. Be praised and be worshipped and be glorified through each of our daily life. You are the Lord. In Jesus' precious and powerful and beautiful name, we pray Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. The Letter to the Hebrews reminds us: "Do not neglect to do good and share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." Let us share what we have as we present our offering, so that God's good work may continue. Let us pray for our offering.

Offering prayer:

O God, bless the gifts we bring today, as well as the time, talent, and concern we will offer you this week. We trust that, through the power of your Spirit, these gifts will accomplish more than we can ask or imagine, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Song for the Journey BOP 434 For the beauty of the earth

<u>Vs. 1</u> For the beauty of the earth For the glory of the skies For the love which from our birth	<u>Vs. 2</u> For the beauty of each hour Of the day and of the night Hill and vale and tree and flower
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Over and around us lies Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our sacrifice of praise	Sun and Moon and stars of light Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our sacrifice of praise
<u>Vs. 3</u> For the joy of ear and eye, For the heart and mind's delight For the mystic harmony Linking sense to sound and sight Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our sacrifice of praise	<u>Vs. 4</u> For the joy of human love, Brother, sister, parent, child, Friends on earth and friends above For all gentle thoughts and mind Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our sacrifice of praise
<u>Vs. 5</u> For each perfect gift of thine, To the earth so freely given Graces human and divine, Flowers of earth and bud of heaven Lord of all, to Thee we raise This our sacrifice of praise	

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. We are weak and we fall, but God is strong and God holds us. This is our hope. Although we are sinful, let us remember what Jesus did for us, and remember his love for us.

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.