

Sunday Order of worship on November 19, 2023

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Stephen Knowles)

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 298 Glory be to God the Father
- Prayer for worship and Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song – BOP 348 Tell me the stories of Jesus
- Prayer with children

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- First reading: Isaiah 60:1-3
- Second reading: Psalm 90:1-12 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
- Sermon: Arise and shine
- Prayer for the people

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 830 Praise God from whom all blessings vs. 1) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 461 Be thou my vision

We Serve

- Benediction

Responsive Call to Worship

Let us praise the God of Truth!

Hallelujah! We seek God's truth.

Let us praise the God of Peace!

Hallelujah! We seek God's peace.

Let us praise the God of Love!

Hallelujah! In Christ we know God's love and so we offer our praise!

Praise song – BOP 298 Glory be to God the Father

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Transforming God, you take the night and give us day. You take our struggle and give us peace.

You take our sadness and give us joy. You take our fear and give us courage.

You take death and give us new life. O God, you give and you give and you give.

So we come to praise you and offer our love and loyalty as your willing servants in the name of Jesus Christ who enriches our lives with grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit who prays within us when we cannot find the right words to honour you, God most kind and generous.

Trusting God, you placed your mission in our hands and gave us gifts to accomplish amazing things in Jesus' name. We confess that sometimes we've taken credit for what your love has

done. Sometimes we've called our own desires your will. Sometimes we've stepped back and let others carry our responsibilities. Forgive us when we've failed to honour your trust in us. Renew us and amend us. Guide us and walk with us.

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

Hear the good news of our Jesus Christ! Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ – and Christ died for us; Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. So trust God's promise. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and given a new start by God's generous grace. **May the Peace of the Lord be with you.** Let us take few moments to greet each other and share our peace.

Praise Song: BOP 348 Tell me the stories of Jesus

Prayer with Children

Prayer for Illumination:

God of the generations, the Scriptures are a legacy to us from your faithful people over many centuries. Just as your Holy Spirit inspired poets and prophets, evangelists and epistle writers, and guided their translators again and again, send your same Holy Spirit to inspire our understanding of Word and our response to live by its wisdom, for the sake of Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

- First reading: Isaiah 60:1-3
- Second reading: Psalm 90:1-12 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

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

SERMON: Arise and shine.

Today's sermon title is "**Arise and shine.**"

That's what we are doing every morning, right? I hope and pray that all of us arise and shine every morning with the love and grace and mercy and power of our faithful God.

First of all, thank you for the time off last week. Thanks to the session and the whole church for the generous care for me. I have 5 weeks of vacation a year and it is a lot. I will use this time to refresh and recharge myself to become a better pastor, so we will come to the Lord more closely.

During my time off last week, I was able to attend a retreat. It's called **Renewal Fellowship within the Presbyterian Church in Canada.** The retreat was sponsored by Vaughan Community Church, so I paid \$50 only for \$650 retreat. It was only for the ministers who serve within the Presbyterian Church in Canada. I was able to meet some old friends from my college. It was a great pleasure to meet them again and update each other's person life and ministerial life

and challenges and fruits. Also, I met many new ministers and learned a lot from them. So, I hope and pray that my learnings from the retreat will be beneficial to you as we continue to worship God together.

First of all, I learned the importance of prayer. We used to have a prayer chain group. But, unfortunately, due to the resignation of the leader, it stopped. So far, there was no volunteer to take the charge of the prayer chain. So, soon, I will come up with something we all could possibly participate in prayer for our church, our members and family, for our church's ministries, and for our worship, but without too much pressure on one person. So, stay tuned.

Speaking of prayer, how is your prayer life?

In today's passage, the author, Paul, gives us the image of **day and night**. We are the people of light. **V5, For you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.**

What is the image of night? I usually get up early in the morning. For many, it's still night. 4am, 3:30am. OR 7am, when I am too tired. I love the stillness of the early morning – or night. It could be night because everyone is still sleeping. But, I like the quietness of night. When I am up, it's calm. It's dark. I could hear a pin drop. So, very quietly, I come down to the basement where my study is.

Although it's night for most of the people, for me, a day begins. It's no more night.

What do I do first? "**Let there be light!**" I turn on the light first. In broad and bright light, I begin to open my Bible or computer.

In brightness, on the desk, with the open Bible, what's my condition? Sober. Awake.

In today's scripture, the underlying idea is this. **We are the people of light. But, despite our true identity, we act like we are not the people of day, we live like we are not.**

V2, "For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night." The judgement or the end of time or the calling of the Lord for the people of God will come, but there would be no warning. Nobody knows when.

The thief in the night comes in secret. No one knows.

While we are the people of DAY, we live like the people of night, then we cannot be aware of what's coming. In other words, we are not ready. So, Paul is urging us, the people of God to be ready. That's what the people of light means.

Listen to the MSG, **"But friends, you're not in the dark, so how could be taken off guard by any of this? You're sons of Light, daughters of Day. We live under wide open skies and know where we stand."**

When do we take off our guards? When we know that there's no danger nor surprise. The Bible says, do not take the guard off because it's not the time to sleep yet. We are the people waiting for the Lord's return, so we have something to wait in readiness. Let's continue, **"So let's not sleepwalk through life like those others. Let's keep our eyes open and be smart. People sleep at night and get drunk at night. But not us! Since we are creatures of Day, let's act like it. Walk out into the daylight sober, dressed up in faith, love, and the hope of salvation."**

At night, when we sleep, what is our body posture? We lie down.

Do you know **BOXING**? It's of game of punching each other. But, the most important thing is to stand till the end.

Ephesians 6 talks about **the Armour of God. Belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of gospel, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.**

It's great to have them all. But, **why do we have them?**

The Bible says **to stand.**

V11, "Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

V13, "Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm."

V14, "Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth" and so on.

So many scripture references of the importance of STAND.

We are the people of DAYLIGHT, so we are to STAND, firm and strong.

Why? Because we are waiting for the Lord.

I get up in the middle of the night. Why? To prepare this. To be faithful to God's calling.

Who doesn't like to sleep? Who likes to take guard on all the time? Who likes to stand firm against the evil? Who likes to watch out? Who likes to be careful?

V9, "For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." ... [so] we may live with him."

Why is it given to us? Why the salvation? It's for our own good. It's for us to live with Jesus.

Can you imagine living with Jesus?

The One who knows us from the beginning. The One who has our names on his palm. The One who came to us, to earth, in a human form.

To help us understand what that means, please join my imagination.

The Creator God came into the form of his own creature.

It's not the same, but it's to help our understanding.

If we have a compassionate heart for ants. They are ants in the one end of the table and they are facing to the other end. What's going to happen to them when they reach the other end? They are going to fall. So, we, with a great love, became one of the ants. And we teach them the truth.

This is not the way. If you keep going this way, you are going to fall. Because if we, human, tell the ants the truth, they are not able to understand us. So, in order to love them, in order to communicate in their language, we have to become ants.

It's my imagination to compare Jesus' becoming human. For Creator God, we are not even ants.

We are way too smaller than ants. But, Jesus came to save us to live with us.

What a great love?!

Then, our next question is HOW? How can we live with God? How can we awake and sober before God? My short answer according to the Bible, we cannot be awakened or be sober or stand firm by our own power.

So, what we need is to be with Christ.

There is only one way. Prayer. How do we pray? According to the will of God. How do we know the will of God? The Bible! This is the manual of our life. Some people call this Bible the love letter from God.

How is your prayer life? How are you using your life?

I hope and pray that you will be able to live with God, in the presence of God.

Be sober and awake in the Day and stand firm with the power of Christ given to us.

Let us stand together in prayer and in encouragement and in love.

Let us Arise and Shine! Let us live our lives to the fullest.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Prayer for the people:

Glorious God, you are my supply, my breath of life, and still, more awesome than I know.
You are my reward worth living for, and still, more awesome than I know.
You are the Creator and we are mere creature. How could we know who you are and how could we even imagine your wisdom. You always give us good gifts. You called us out from death and gave us life. You called us out from darkness, and placed us in light.
Loving God, help us live as your people. Help us live as the people of Light.
You called us to live with you. So, God, together, help us pray and come to you in our daily lives.

In the world around us, there are too many challenges. We hear news about shootings and crimes. Also, we hear a lot of mental breakdowns around. God of love and mercy, hold our hands. Shine your light upon us. You are pouring out your love upon us all the time. Open our eyes to see and open our hearts to embrace your love and light.

We pray for our church. We have difficulties, but we still try. We try to stay as your church, as the Beacon for the community, and the refuge where we can lay our burdens and difficulties. Give us life. Fill us with your life. Help us connect and love each other and pray for each other. That's the only way we can support and gain power from you. Lord Jesus, we are yours. Help us lay our wills and desires down and align our hearts to yours. Watch over us and be with us.

Be glorified and be worshipped through our lives, through all we do, and through all our relationships.

In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: In the Church that bears Christ's name, we receive the legacy of faithfulness offered to us across many generations. How is it continued? Through the people who stood firm in the Lord. Through the people who live in their true identity, as the people of the day. Let us be ready for the Lord and continue the legacy of faithfulness for the Lord, for our own sake, and for our next generations. Let us praise God and honour him with the Doxology (BOP #830.)

Doxology 830 & Offering prayer:

Faithful God, we offer humble thanks today for your generosity to us through the Church that bears Christ's name. Receive our gifts as tokens of our love and loyalty. Use them to sustain the life and mission of the Church in ways we cannot imagine. For our everyday life and for our next generations, we believe that you are working diligently and faithfully. Use us and be glorified through our lives. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Song for the Journey BOP 461 Be thou my vision

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. We are living in the Light. We are the people of the Day. We are standing firm in the Lord. We are to live with our Lord Jesus Christ who came for us to invite us to share his life. Be strong and be confident. You are not alone. You are 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.