

Sunday Worship on July 28, 2024

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Kevin Johnston)

Sunday Order of worship

We Gather

- Call to worship
- Praise song – BOP 757 Come sing, O church in joy!
- Prayer for worship and Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song BOP 104 Your faithfulness, O Lord is sure

We Listen

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: 2 Kings 4:42-44
- Second reading: Psalm 145:10-18 (refrain 1)
- Third reading: Ephesians 3:14-21
- Sermon: A prayer for you
- Hymn – BOP 730 O for a world where everyone
- Prayer for the people

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 830) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey – BOP 324 Great is thy faithfulness

We Serve

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

Responsive Call to Worship

All God's works give thanks to the Lord.

We will lift up our voices in praise.

The Lord is near to all who call upon God in truth.

We will sing of God's power and speak of God's loving kindness.

Let us worship God who is faithful in all things.

Let us praise God's holy name forever.

Praise song – BOP 757 Come sing, O church in joy!

Prayer of Adoration

Gracious and generous God, We gather with grateful hearts, amazed by the abundance in your creation, abundance to share in food, in friendship and in faithfulness. We gather with hopeful hearts, seeking another taste of your love for us. O God, your love is both mysterious and miraculous, with the power to transform times that overwhelm us and lives that hunger for hope. By the power of your Holy Spirit, move among us in our worship. Open before us the new possibilities you create for us in Christ, the Bread of life, bread for our journeys.

Prayer of confession (Unison) (Let us come to God with the Prayer of confession in Unison)

Gracious and Generous God, we gather each week to be fed by your love, trusting that you will embrace us. We confess we are not nearly so generous with our love. We are often suspicious of others, fearful of what they seek from us. We criticize what others do, but rarely question our own motivations. Forgive us, O God, and awaken our generosity toward others.

Heavenly Father, hear us, as we offer the Prayer that Jesus taught us: (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

The Letter to the Ephesians declares that Christ dwells in our hearts through faith, for we are being rooted and grounded in his love. The forgiveness he offers is a gift of this love that is wider and deeper than we can ever imagine. Receive God's forgiveness and be at peace with God, with yourself and with one another. **May the Peace of the Lord be with you.**

Praise song – BOP 104 Your faithfulness, O Lord is sure

Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)

- First reading: 2 Kings 4:42-44
- Second reading: Psalm 145:10-18 (refrain 1)
- Third reading: Ephesians 3:14-21

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

SERMON: A Prayer for you

2 Kings and Psalm talks about God satisfying our desires. It is a great reminder for us that God cares for us. God knows our needs. God knows our desires. Our hunger and our desperation. We remember the Lord's Prayer. Jesus first praises God for his name and the first request is to give us our daily bread.

There is a famous **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**. What comes the first? Just like the Lord's prayer, physiological needs come first. On this pyramid of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the most desired human needs are food, water, air, warmth, clothing, sleep, and rest. Once we have those, we seek safety. Friends and family come after physiological and safety needs.

In Matthew 4, when Jesus was tempted, the first temptation of the devil was to make a stone into a loaf of bread. **Matthew 4:3, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”** We have to be mindful of the timing. Jesus was led up by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. The Bible says, **“afterwards he was famished.”** Imagine that you fasted for 40 days. Maybe that's too much for us to imagine. Imagine that you fasted for 3 days. Then, you could develop the ability to smell a bread from a mile distance. When someone mentions any name of the food, then you will drool.

Why the temptation of the food comes first? Because it is the most basic need of human being. Jesus knew it and he understood it because he experienced it with the same body as ours.

The city of Ephesus was located near a port, so it was the central place for trading. They were very passionate about politics and intellectual growth. There was an enormous library called the **Celsus Library** where apostle Paul reached. Therefore, we could assume that they could satisfy their physiological and safety needs.

To them, Paul writes his prayer for them in Ephesians 3. **V14, “For this reason I bow my knees before the Father.” For this reason?** Like we talked about last week, the people in Ephesus were going through a big change. Because of the gospel, Jews and Gentiles were worshipping God together. “For this reason” is the provision of the mystery of the church, a new status in Christ, for the believers. So, whatever the reason you came to God, there is no division. But, you are to look into your inner being.

V16, “I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit.”

How is your inner being? Couple therapists say that if a couple could share their inner feelings for about 15 minutes a day, then they could maintain their marriage in a good relationship. It's not about the problems they face such as their children or finances. They are supposed to talk about their inner selves, their feelings, their thoughts. Taking care of inner being is that important.

Is your inner being alive? How do you care for your inner being?
Paul prays for the inner being to be in the love of Christ.

V17, “and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.”

I pray that you stand on the love of Christ. Put your hope in his love. Build your house on the Rock of our salvation. Because of his love, we are saved.

V18, “I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saint, what is the breadth and length and height and depth”

3 dimensional understanding. It is the ability to have many different perspectives. Very simply speaking, 4 year old boy's understanding of life is like 1D. 12 year old boy's understanding of life is like 2D. And adult's understanding of life is like 3D. Breadth, length, height, and depth. Through many different experiences, we could expand our perspectives and understanding. So, Paul's prayer for believers is that KNOW HIS LOVE THROUGH AND THROUGH. But, Paul does not end here.

V19, “and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

This is my favorite part and this is the highlight of Paul's prayer.

From v18, knowing the love of Christ through and through, we already came close to God. Some might feel, it's enough. But, it was not enough for Paul.

“Knowing the love of God through and through is great, but not enough.”

I want you to know Christ's love, but not just the knowledge. I want you to experience his love and I want your heart to be filled with his love. Not just filled, but filled with all the fullness of God.

That is the desire of Paul for believers. This is the desire of Paul for us. This is the desire of God for each of us. God wants to pour out his love upon us and he wants YOU to be filled with the fullness of God.

When was the last time you had **the feeling of wholeness? Fulfilled feeling? Completeness? Satisfaction? Contentment? Overflowing?**

Referring to the spiritual condition of mankind, Blaise Pascal said, **“There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each [person], which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ.”**

Paul knew that we all have the vacuum and he wanted that space for God to be filled with God’s fullness.

This is **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs**. Which need do you have to meet first? If you are trying to meet the needs of physiological needs, then focus on it. Until you meet physiological and safety needs, please know that Jesus understands. Jesus does not force you to come and give your service to him. He’s not a slave master.

Incarnation. This is Jesus coming to us embodying in the same body as ours. WHY? **Emmanuel**, God with us. To be with us. When you stay with someone, what does that mean?

Spend time together. Understand that person. To care for that person. To help that person. To support that person. To pray for that person. To love that person.

Jesus came to be with us, Jesus came to care for us, and Jesus came to love us.

This is **my prayer note**. Every morning, I use three books. I start with my daily meditation book. Then, I write down my prayers. I usually write down names of my family members, friends, pastors in our presbytery, and people from our church. Then, I read daily portion of the Bible.

I have been praying for each of you from the beginning of my day here. Few months ago, someone mentioned that I should inform how I am praying for the people in our church to them. I am kind of shy to show my prayer note, but please know that you are in my thoughts and my prayers. So, please let me know if you have any prayer needs. It helps me to know how to pray for you.

Let us be **rooted and grounded** in the love of Christ.
Let us know his love with 3 dimensional understanding.
And let us surpass the knowledge and experience his love in our lives.
So that our lives are filled with the fullness of God.
May God be with you always.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Praise song – BOP 730 O for a world where everyone

Prayer for the people

Be glorified God. Accept our worship. May our worship and our prayers be pleasing to your heart. Let our hearts and our lives be rooted and grounded in your love alone. Help us plant our seeds daily. Help us take time for you in our daily lives. Give us time to take care of our inner being in your love. Like the philosopher Pascal said, there is a special place for you in our hearts. Thank you for teaching us that we have that vacuum. Help us fill that space with you and with your fullness. We want to experience you with all our senses. Let the knowledge knowing your love may not stop in the knowledge level, but help us know your love with our experience. Let your love overflow in our hearts.

With your overflowing love, we want to remember the people thirst and hunger for you. Let your love fall upon them. Let your glory fall upon them. Let your love and grace fall upon them. Like a drought, some hearts are dried up, barren, there seems to be no hope. Teach them your love. Let them have new perspective. You are still holding them. You are still taking care of them. You never give up anyone. May your love be flourish in the places of wars, famine, fear, violence, desperation, hopelessness, persecution, brokenness and low self-esteem. Place them in your love.

We remember our people from our church. Heal us and recover our health. Give peace where there are struggles and misunderstanding. Encourage those who are depressed and cannot have hope. Show your power. Show your love. Capture our hearts and teach us who you are and what you can do. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. Give us faith.

Whenever we come to God, you always welcome us. Thank you for your love for us. We love you and we want to love you more and more day by day. In Jesus' precious and beautiful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering:

When we give our offerings to God, what do we feel? Is it just a membership fee? Our offering is the expression of our love for God. It is our gifts to show our thanks and love for him. May God fill your hearts with his love and may God satisfy your needs as well. As we praise and worship God with gifts, Let us praise God and glorify him with the Doxology (BOP #830.)

Offering prayer:

God of abundant love, we offer our gifts to you willingly, and yet they seem so small in a world of great need. Bless and multiply them in your love. Surprise us with your power, working in us and through us, to accomplish worthy things in the name of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life. Amen.

Song for the Journey – BOP 324 Great is thy faithfulness

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world where God called us to be. Look around. Where is your life built on? If you were a tree, where are you rooted? May it be the love of Christ. Sometimes, even though I love my children so much, when children come to me, it bothers. I want my own time. But, unlike the love of human father, our Heavenly Father welcomes us all the time. Let your life be rooted and grounded in his love.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, our Father, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.