

**Sunday Worship on April 27, 2024**

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Gord Osborne)

**Sunday Order of Worship**

**We Gather**

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to Worship
- Praise song BOP 16 I worship you, O Lord (Psalm 30)
- Prayer for Worship and the Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song BOP 358 There is a redeemer

**We listen**

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: Acts 9:1-6
- Second reading: Psalm 30 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Revelation 5:11-14
- Sermon: **The Focus of Heavenly Worship**
- Hymn BOP 356 You, Lord, are both lamb and Shepherd
- Communion
- Prayer after communion

**We Respond**

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 830) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey BOP 757 Come sing, O Church, in joy

**We Serve**

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

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**Responsive Call to Worship**

Sing praises to the Lord, you faithful;

**We will give thanks to God's holy name.**

Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

**We will give thanks to God's holy name.**

God has turned our mourning into dancing! Let us praise and not be silent!

**Lord our God, we will give thanks to your holy name, now and always!**

**Praise song – BOP 16 I worship you, O Lord (Psalm 30)**

**Prayer of Adoration**

God of the Risen Christ and the rising earth, we come giving thanks for all the wonder in your creation: for the tiny perfection revealed in a baby's fingers grasping ours, in each daffodil unzipping its jacket to greet the spring, and each rock face worn by wind and water, bearing its rugged beauty with your praise. These details lift our hearts to praise you, too. So let the details of the story of the Risen Christ lift our hearts this day, that we may greet a new week as an occasion to discover him in our midst, making all things new with the springtime of your Spirit.

Receive our heartfelt worship, O God, Creator, Christ and Spirit, ever Three and ever One, now and evermore.

**Prayer of confession (Unison)** *(Let us come to God with the prayer of confession in unison.)*  
**God of grace, we acknowledge ways in which we fall short of your hope and purposes for us. We confess that we find it difficult to forgive others and ourselves. We carry grudges about things done by others long ago, and things we have done still haunt us. Forgive us and give us the grace to forgive others and ourselves; amend who we are and set us free to begin again with you and one another.**

**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**

Friends in Christ, while it is true we have all fallen short of God's intentions, 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, Jesus offers forgiveness and new life. So be at peace with God, with yourself, and with one another.

**May the Peace of the Lord be with you.** *(Let us bless each other with the peace of the Lord.)*

### **Praise song – BOP 358 There is a redeemer**

### **Prayer for Children**

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

- First reading: Acts 9:1-6
- Second reading: Psalm 30 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Revelation 5:11-14

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

### **SERMON: The Focus of Heavenly Worship**

Have you ever been part of a worship service so powerful that you felt like you were standing at the gates of heaven?

The music, the prayers, the sense of God's presence. It moves you deeply.

I led praise and worship with the guitar for a long time. One time, out of 6 strings, one broke in the middle of worship. The music wasn't perfect, but it didn't bother us too much. But, few minutes later, one more string broke. And then one more, then one more... On that day, I led worship with 2 strings. But, we all focused on God, not the music I was playing. Our hearts were lifted up to God alone. We were waiting on God. Our spirits were eager to be with God in his awesome presence. As I read this Revelation passage, I reminded that worship service.

What was your best experience of worship? Emotion, willingness, atmosphere, relationships with people around you, the songs, the passage, the preaching, and your desire for God.

Every aspect of worship meets at the focal point. That is Jesus Christ, our Sacrificial Lamb. That is what John witnesses in Revelation 5.

Heaven is not a place of boredom. It is not a place of silence. It is a place of worship. Loud, joyful, focused on worship. Full of the presence of the Lamb

**The focus of heavenly worship is the Lamb, Jesus Christ.**

Every time we worship, Jesus is the focus, just like the heavenly worship depicted in Revelation 5. When we come here on Sunday, and whenever we come to the presence of God, **our heart's focus should be Jesus Christ the Lamb of God, our ultimate Sacrificial Lamb.**

In Revelation 5:11-&12, John says, **"11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 singing with full voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"**

In the throne room of heaven, the attention is not on the splendor of the surroundings. It's not on the angels themselves. It's not even the songs they sing. **It is on the Lamb: Jesus Christ.**

And notice how he is described: **"The Lamb who was slain."**

Heaven's worship focuses first on the sacrifice Jesus Christ. Not on Jesus' miracles, his teachings, or even his resurrection power. **The only focus is on the Lamb who was slain.** Jesus is worthy because he gave his life to redeem sinners, us.

In Psalm 30, David praises God for rescuing him from death reminding us Jesus' salvation. **Psalm 30:3, "O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit."**

David's rescue points forward to a greater rescue. It points to what Jesus did on the cross for all who would believe. Our worship today must reflect this focus. We do gather not to impress each other or now to have emotional experiences. We gather to lift up Jesus, the Lamb who was slain for us.

John continues in **Revelation 5:13-14, "13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, "To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" 14 And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped."**

What starts with the angels grows into an unstoppable chorus involving every creature! The worship of heaven is contagious. It cannot be contained. It is limitless.

**When we truly behold the beauty of Jesus, worship overflows.** Before coming to worship, I pray with the choir members. Most of the time, I pray for overflowing. The choir is leading

worship. When the choir members lead worship with joy and love and awe and honour and grace and glory in their hearts, all of us would feel their overflowing God-experience. Then, our souls and spirits would move too because our spirits are connected and the experience of God is contagious to our spirits. Psalm 30 echoes this heart, v4 **"Sing praises of the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name."** David urges all God's people to join the song. Worship should never stay locked inside the church walls. When our hearts are gripped by the Lamb's love, worship pours out, into our homes, our workplaces, our conversations.

One of the happiest moment of my week is immediate before the benediction. When I say **"Now is the time to be sent by God to where God wants us to be."** This is the image of overflow. In worship, heaven cannot stay silent. Can we stay silent when we have the Lamb of God in our lives?

But worship is not just singing, not just having good feelings. **True worship leads to a transformed life.** Worship is life. In Acts 9, we see Saul, a man against Jesus, persecuting his followers. Yet on the road to Damascus, Saul encounters the risen Lord. **Acts 9:4, "He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"** That encounter changes Saul forever. He becomes Paul, the greatest missionary the world has ever known.

**When we see Jesus for who he really is as the risen Lord, the Messiah, the Saviour and the slain Lamb, OUR LIVES CANNOT STAY THE SAME.**

Saul didn't just sing a new song. He lived a new life of worship and mission. Worship is surrender. Worship is saying, **"Jesus, you are worthy of all my life."** True heavenly worship compels us to live differently, to love boldly, and to speak of Christ freely.

Right now, even as we sit here, heaven is roaring with worship. The angels, the saints, and all creation are praising the Lamb. And one day, by the grace of Jesus Christ, we will join them face to face. **But** we don't have to wait until we get to heaven. We are invited NOW to worship like heaven. Let us center our hearts on the Lamb, let our worship overflow into the world, and let us allow Jesus to transform our lives into living acts of praise.

**The focus of heavenly worship is the Lamb.  
Let him be the focus of our worship and our life, today and every day.**

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

**Praise song – BOP 356 You, Lord, are both lamb and Shepherd**

### **Communion At The Lord's Table**

Friends, this is the table of our risen Lord Jesus Christ. He invites all who trust in him to come and be nourished. Come with faith, with longing, even with questions. You are welcome here.

At this table, we remember the Lamb who was slain, who now lives and reigns forever. Here we glimpse the worship of heaven, where angels and saints cry out, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!"

Come, not because you are worthy, but because the Lamb is worthy. Come, and behold Jesus Christ, who gave his life and now gives us his presence.

(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say BOLD print together)

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: It is truly right and good to give you thanks, O God. You are holy and glorious, dwelling in unapproachable light. Yet in your love, you sent your Son, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. By his death, he conquered sin. By his resurrection, he conquered death. And now, in heaven, he is worshiped by angels, elders, and every creature, crying out: “Worthy is the Lamb!” Therefore, with the company of heaven and the communion of saints, we join in the unending hymn:

**(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

L: Jesus Christ, Lamb of God, we remember your perfect life, your sacrificial death, and your glorious resurrection. You humbled yourself, took on flesh, and walked among us. You healed the broken, forgave the guilty, and lifted the lowly. You gave yourself fully, your body and blood, for the life of the world. On the third day, you rose again. The stone was rolled away, and the song of heaven broke open: “Worthy is the Lamb!” We give you thanks, Lord Jesus, and we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

**P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

L: Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these gifts of bread and wine. May they be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we might share in the life of the Lamb. Strengthen us in faith, unite us in love, and send us out with joy, to live lives of worship, until we join the heavenly song forever. Through Christ, by Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour are yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

### **Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE**

(The minister breaks bread in the presence of the people, saying:)

On the night before he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it and said, “This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

(The minister may pour wine into the cup, lifting it while saying:)

In the same way, he took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.”

### **(Distribution of the elements)**

Every time you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. *(Pause for quiet reflection or prayer)*

**Prayer after Communion:**

Risen Lord Jesus, we come before you today with thankful hearts. We praise you, the Lamb who was slain, and who now lives and reigns forever. Just like the countless angels and saints around your throne, we want to lift our voices in worship. You are worthy to receive all blessing, honour, glory, and power. You gave everything so that we might live, and now we want to live in a way that honours you.

God of mercy, you know our world. There is brokenness and pain. So we bring our prayers for those who are hurting. For those dealing with physical illness, we ask for your healing hand. For those walking through emotional darkness or mental distress, bring light and peace. Help family members and caregivers. Give them strength, patience, and hope. We pray for those struggling in quiet ways—worries about finances, relationships that feel broken, children we don't know how to parent, or decisions that seem too heavy. God, meet each person where they are. Bring clarity, comfort, and courage.

We also lift up our country, Canada. This past week, our nation elected Mark Carney in leadership position of Prime Minister. Lord, we bring him before you with faith and hope. We ask that you would guide him with humility, courage, and wisdom that comes from above. Surround him with godly counsel. And we pray for all elected officials that they would lead with justice, compassion, and a desire for the common good. Be in the centre of their hearts.

Lord Jesus, help us keep our eyes on you. We want to focus on the true subject of heavenly worship. Lamb of God, be glorified. In the busyness of our lives, remind us of your greatness and grace. Shape us to be a people who reflect your light wherever we go. We worship you, O Lamb of God. Be glorified in your church and in our lives. In Jesus precious name, we pray. Amen.

**Invitation to the offering:**

Our lives overflow with God's blessings in Christ and in creation. With gratitude for all that we have received, let us present our offering to God, trusting that God can do a new thing with our gifts – and with our lives! As we give our offerings, let us glorify him. (*BOP #830, Praise God from whom all blessings flow.*)

**Offering prayer:**

Gracious God, you have given us life and furnished it with much beauty and blessing. In Christ you have given yourself to us. So we offer to you a portion of what we have received to share in the work of your kingdom. Use our energy and ability for your purposes for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord. Amen.

**Song for the Journey – BOP 757 Come, sing, O church, in joy**

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world where God called us to be. Jesus, the lion came as a Lamb. Jesus willingly gave his life for us. He became the sacrificial Lamb for us taking our place of eternal death. Let us focus on Jesus Christ the Lamb who was slain as we worship and live our daily lives as the saved.

**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.

