

## **Sunday Worship on August 17, 2025**

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Anne Neuman)

### **Sunday Order of Worship**

#### **We Gather**

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to Worship
- Praise song BOP 324 Great is thy faithfulness
- Prayer for Worship and the Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song BOP 496 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet

#### **We listen**

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: Jeremiah 23:23-29
- Second reading: Psalm 82 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Hebrews 11:29-12:2
- Sermon: **Keep running, Jesus is worth it!**
- Hymn BOP 477 Your hand, O God, has guided
- Prayer for the people

#### **We Respond**

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 457 Now thank we all our God) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey BOP 712 Arise, your light is come

#### **We Serve**

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

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### **Responsive Call to Worship**

God, our Shepherd,

**gather us together and lead us like a flock.**

God, our Gardener,

**plant us like a vineyard so that we produce good fruit.**

God, our Merciful Judge,

**we call upon your name in prayer and praise.**

We bow before you, O God,

**and offer our worship with glad and humble hearts.**

### **Praise song – BOP 324 Great is thy faithfulness**

#### **Prayer of Adoration**

God of majesty and mystery, You call us together in your presence with that great cloud of witnesses who have worshiped you in song and service for centuries. Our praise joins theirs as we fix our eyes on Jesus and wait for your Holy Spirit to guide us.

We praise you for your great love and mercy, revealed in Christ, at work in us through the Spirit. Holy One, Three in One, we offer you all glory and honour in our worship, seeking to renew our faith and commitment to serve you in the world that belongs to you.

**Prayer of confession (Unison)**

**Attentive God, you care for us like a gardener tending a beautiful vineyard, blessing us with what we need to be fruitful. Yet we confess that, all too often, we fail to live up to your hopes for us. Instead of love and kindness, we produce anger and resentment. Instead of generosity, we produce greed and jealousy. Forgive us, O God. In your mercy, renew in us the fruit of the Spirit through the grace of Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

**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**

Hear the good news! Although we have not always been faithful to God, God remains faithful to us. In Jesus Christ, God offers us forgiveness. Through the gift of the Spirit, God renews us to live faithfully in Jesus' name. Thanks be to God! Amen!

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

**Praise song – BOP 496 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet**

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

- First reading: Jeremiah 23:23-29
- Second reading: Psalm 82 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Hebrews 11:29-12:2

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

**Sermon: Keep running, Jesus is worth it!**

We say, “Life is a marathon, not a sprint.” I’ve tried sprinting and I’ve tried running long distances. In both cases, I can tell you this. I get tired. I sweat. And I want to quit whether it’s sprinting or running a long distance. It is not easy.

The Christian life is the same. We start with excitement and full of energy. Wow! Jesus saved me! His love is amazing!

But, we face our realities. We have bills to pay. In our works, things are not reasonable.

Parenting is energy draining whether our kids are small or big. Also, our body needs more rest

and more sleep. It's like our cell phones or laptops. It needs to be charged regularly. Otherwise, they become useless.

The writer of Hebrews knows that feeling. That's why he tells us, **v1-2, "Let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus."**

So, today, I want to encourage you with these three truths to help you keep running because Jesus is worth it.

### **[1] You are not running alone.**

I've run frequently when I tried to lose weight. I knew it is good, but it was extremely hard to go out. Nowadays, I want to start running again, but it is awfully difficult to start it again. I wish I would have a running mate.

### **Hebrews 12:1, "We are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses."**

This means we are not running alone. There were saints, believers, disciples, and followers of Christ before us. Abraham, Moses, David, Mary, Peter, Billy Graham, Timothy Keller, John Wesley, and countless unnamed believers. They surround us and cheer us on.

Not just people in the Bible and well-known figures. Think of the people in your own life who inspired your faith. Maybe parents, Sunday school teachers, friends who prayed for you, maybe preachers from YouTube nowadays. We are empowered and inspired through various people.

Here's the thing. When we feel alone, our problems seem bigger and our strength feels smaller. But when we remember we are part of God's big family, suddenly, the race feels possible again.

Imagine that **Moses cheering for you, "Keep going! I walked 40 years in the desert!"** <PIC>  
So, remember, we are not alone. We are together in the journey of our faith.

### **[2] You can't run well with extra baggage.**

### **Hebrews 12:1, "Let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up."**

Have you heard the Camino de Santiago? IT is a pilgrimage routes across Europe. The typical route is about 30-40 days. So, when you begin the pilgrimage, you pack up stuff you think you would need. Three jackets. Three T-shirts. 5 pairs of socks. 3 running shoes. 2 pants and 3 shorts. Umbrella, your favorite coffee mug, stuff, stuff, and more stuff. Your backpack is full.

The first 10 minutes you might be okay. But, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, one hour, two hours.. walking, walking, and more walking... you realize your bag is too heavy.

I don't remember where I read, but this author didn't bring anything when she went to the Camino de Santiago because there were too many stuff thrown out on the road. She could find anything she needed.

Now, what extra baggage are we carrying? What unnecessary weight do you have in your daily life? What's slowing you down in following Jesus?

It could be physical materials, but emotion baggage too. Bitterness? Anger? Blaming? Addiction? Or comparing with others?

Jesus doesn't say, "Run harder with all the weight!" He said, "Lay it down and follow me."

[3] Keep your eyes on the prize – that is Jesus.

**V2, "looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame."**

Why did he endure the cross?

Because he saw the finish line. A redeemed people, forgiven and free, with him forever.

We are his reward. Jesus saw YOUR restoration and your salvation.

When you drive, if you focus on the lane on the road, you cannot drive straight. You need to focus on where you are going. Then you can go straight. If you run a marathon, you do not look at the scenery. You do not focus on a beautiful flower. If you lose focus, you lose the purpose too. When Jesus took the cross to Golgotha, he did not greet each person. He did not give instructions to his disciples. He focused on finishing his race. Our journey of faith has a purpose. It is not just taking a walk in the cool of the day. It is a journey or even a business trip. We have a purpose from God in our life.

Therefore, in our faith journey, let us daily fix our eyes on Jesus Christ.

This is the Bible. It teaches us what God has in his mind. Read it for 5 minutes a day.

Every successful people who achieve something whether it's rich, attitude, or personal fulfillment has their own routine. Exercise routine, intellectual training routine, or the order of taking care of daily responsibilities.

It takes a long time to build a routine. But, it's very fast to lose it.

In order to fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, we need a guide. Some people call this Bible their life manual. God's love letter. The contract of God's promises. It contains God's wisdom. Try to read the word of God even for 5 minutes a day.

The Christian life is not easy because we have a mission. We want to fulfill our mission. It is to glorify God and enjoy him. It's not just satisfying our personal desires. We might not be able to see the finish line, but we know it's there. How do we want to finish our race?

Let us imagine the life to the fullest.

We are not alone in this Christian life. We are surrounded by many witnesses of the fulfillment of life. Imagine Jesus is cheering for us. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, Esther, Ruth, Peter, and Apostle Paul from the Bible are rooting for us. Not only them, those who taught our faith, those who encouraged when we are discouraged in our Christian journey... They are supporting us. “Don’t give up. Remember the promise of God. You have a sure hope!”

Therefore, we need to keep running and we need to make ourselves light. Identify one extra “weight” in your life this week and take a step to set it down. It might feel awkward without it at first, but you will be able to be free from burden, unnecessary extra burden.

Life has a direction. Why? Because we were sent with a mission from God.

And we all know which direction is the right way. It’s toward Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus.

Let us keep running this race because Jesus ran this race too to teach us how to do and what to do. Have Jesus Christ our Lord in your heart and cherish him and love him. He’s worth of our life.

This is the message of the Lord

### **Praise song – BOP 477 You hand, O God, has guided**

#### **Prayer for the people:**

Lord Jesus you are the goal of our race and the joy of our hearts. We confess that sometimes we slow down, get distracted, or even want to give up. But today, you remind us that you are worth every step, every breath, every sacrifice. Help us fix our eyes on you, throw off everything that hinders, and run with endurance until the day we see you face to face.

Thank you for running before us, for enduring the cross, and for winning our salvation. We run because you have already run for us.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your Word that strengthens weary hearts. Thank you for calling us to run this race, not alone, but together, surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. We lift our church family to you.

Those who are strong, may they encourage the weak. Those who are struggling, may they find fresh strength in your promises. We pray for the sick among. Bring healing and comfort. We pray for the lonely, surround them with your presence. We pray for the discouraged, remind them that the finish line is certain and the crown is sure.

Lord, help us to keep running faithfully in our races namely, in our marriage, in our parenting, in our workplaces, and in our witness to the world.

Keep our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith.

And as we leave this place, fill us with your Holy Spirit so that we may run with joy until the day we hear you say, “Well done! Good and faithful servant.”

We praise and love you. In Jesus' precious and beautiful name, we pray. Amen.

**Invitation to the offering:**

Thankful for the good gifts God gives us in Christ and in creation, let us present to God the fruit of our labour for God's work in the church and the world.

As we give our offerings, let us glorify him.

*(BOP #457, Now thank we all our God Vs. 1)*

**Offering prayer:**

Faithful God, bless the gifts we offer to you today. Use them to plant seeds of faith, hope and love in the world, so that your goodness will grow among your people, and your name be honoured for Christ's sake. Amen.

**Song for the Journey – BOP 712 Arise, your light is come**

Now, it is our time to be sent to the world where God called us to be.

Jesus is our role model. Jesus is beautiful, so are you. Let's bless people around you. "Jesus is beautiful, so are you." Our beauty does not come from what we do, but our beauty and worth comes from our inner identity. Jesus is our Lord. Jesus is our Saviour. May Jesus fills you through and through.

**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.