

HOPEWELL ARP CHURCH

(Associate Reformed Presbyterian Synod)
Serving Christ in Maury County Tennessee Since 1820

Lord's Day Morning Worship

December 17, 2023

'+' indicates the congregation standing (as able)
boldface type indicates the congregation speaking in unison.
"ARP" refers to selections from the blue song book, "TPH" the burgundy

Welcome, Announcements

Children's Catechism

Q71. Why do you need Christ as a king? **Because I am weak and helpless.**

Shorter Catechism

Q10. How did God create man? **God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.**

Moment to Prepare Our Hearts

+ The Lord Calls Us to Worship

- ¹ Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
- ² Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy,
- ³ And gathered out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.
- ⁴ They wandered in the wilderness in a desolate way; they found no city to dwell in.
- ⁵ Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.
- ⁶ Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses.
- ⁷ And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city for a dwelling place.
- ⁸ Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!
- ⁹ For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness.
- ¹⁰ Those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, bound in affliction and irons—
- ¹¹ Because they rebelled against the words of God, and despised the counsel of the Most High,
- ¹² Therefore He brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help.
- ¹³ Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses.
- ¹⁴ He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broke their chains in pieces.
- ¹⁵ Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!
- ¹⁶ For He has broken the gates of bronze, and cut the bars of iron in two.
- ¹⁷ Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted.
- ¹⁸ Their soul abhorred all manner of food, and they drew near to the gates of death.
- ¹⁹ Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses.
- ²⁰ He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.
- ²¹ Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!
- ²² Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing.

PSALM 107:1–22

Prayer

(adoring God and asking for His help in thoughts shaped by the call-to-worship scripture)

+ Singing

ARP107A

O Thank the LORD

1 O thank the LORD for He is good, His love en-
4 They wan - dered through the wil - der - ness, No cit - y
7 Then to a cit - y forth they went; He led them
dures e - ter - nal - ly! 2 So let the LORD's re - deemed de -
found in which to dwell. 5 Their hun - ger and their thirst in -
on a path - way straight. 8 So let them to the LORD give
clare, The ones He from their foes set free; 3 He gath - ered
creased, Their souls with - in grew faint as well. 6 So to the
thanks For all His love and won - ders great. 9 The thirst - y
them and brought them forth From east and west, from south and north.
LORD they cried, hard - pressed, He res - cued them from their dis - tress.
soul He sat - is - fies; With good the hun - gry He sup - plies.

+ Reading of the Scriptures

Isaiah 33–35

- 1 Woe to you who plunder, though you have not been plundered;
And you who deal treacherously, though they have not dealt treacherously with you
When you cease plundering, you will be plundered
When you make an end of dealing treacherously, they will deal treacherously with you.
- 2 O LORD, be gracious to us; we have waited for You.
Be their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.
- 3 At the noise of the tumult the people shall flee; when You lift Yourself up, the nations shall be scattered;
- 4 And Your plunder shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar;
As the running to and fro of locusts, He shall run upon them.
- 5 The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.
- 6 Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of salvation;
The fear of the LORD is His treasure.

7 Surely their valiant ones shall cry outside, the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.
 8 The highways lie waste, the traveling man ceases.
 He has broken the covenant, He has despised the cities, He regards no man.
 9 The earth mourns and languishes, Lebanon is shamed and shriveled;
 Sharon is like a wilderness, and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.
 10 "Now I will rise," says the LORD; "Now I will be exalted, now I will lift Myself up.
 11 You shall conceive chaff, you shall bring forth stubble; your breath, as fire, shall devour you.
 12 And the people shall be like the burnings of lime; like thorns cut up they shall be burned in the fire.
 13 Hear, you who are afar off, what I have done; and you who are near, acknowledge My might."
 14 The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has seized the hypocrites:
 "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"
 15 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, he who despises the gain of oppressions,
 Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed,
 And shuts his eyes from seeing evil:
 16 He will dwell on high; his place of defense will be the fortress of rocks;
 Bread will be given him, his water will be sure.
 17 Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will see the land that is very far off.
 18 Your heart will meditate on terror: "Where is the scribe?
 Where is he who weighs? Where is he who counts the towers?"
 19 You will not see a fierce people, a people of obscure speech, beyond perception,
 Of a stammering tongue that you cannot understand.
 20 Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home,
 A tabernacle that will not be taken down;
 Not one of its stakes will ever be removed, nor will any of its cords be broken.
 21 But there the majestic LORD will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams,
 In which no galley with oars will sail, nor majestic ships pass by
 22 (For the LORD is our Judge, the LORD is our Lawgiver, the LORD is our King; He will save us);
 23 Your tackle is loosed, they could not strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail.
 Then the prey of great plunder is divided; the lame take the prey.
 24 And the inhabitant will not say, "I am sick"; the people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity.
 34:1 Come near, you nations, to hear; and heed, you people!
 Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and all things that come forth from it.
 2 For the indignation of the LORD is against all nations, and His fury against all their armies;
 He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to the slaughter. ³Also their slain shall be thrown out;
 Their stench shall rise from their corpses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.
 4 All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll;
 All their host shall fall down as the leaf falls from the vine, and as fruit falling from a fig tree.
 5 "For My sword shall be bathed in heaven;
 Indeed it shall come down on Edom, and on the people of My curse, for judgment.
 6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made overflowing with fatness,
 With the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams.
 For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.
 7 The wild oxen shall come down with them, and the young bulls with the mighty bulls;
 Their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust saturated with fatness."
 8 For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion.
 9 Its streams shall be turned into pitch, and its dust into brimstone; its land shall become burning pitch.
 10 It shall not be quenched night or day; its smoke shall ascend forever.
 From generation to generation it shall lie waste; no one shall pass through it forever and ever.
 11 But the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it, also the owl and the raven shall dwell in it.
 And He shall stretch out over it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness.
 12 They shall call its nobles to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all its princes shall be nothing.

- ¹³ And thorns shall come up in its palaces, nettles and brambles in its fortresses;
It shall be a habitation of jackals, a courtyard for ostriches.
- ¹⁴ The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the jackals, and the wild goat shall bleat to its companion;
Also the night creature shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.
- ¹⁵ There the arrow snake shall make her nest and lay eggs and hatch, and gather them under her shadow;
There also shall the hawks be gathered, every one with her mate.
- ¹⁶ "Search from the book of the LORD, and read: not one of these shall fail; not one shall lack her mate.
For My mouth has commanded it, and His Spirit has gathered them.
- ¹⁷ He has cast the lot for them, and His hand has divided it among them with a measuring line.
They shall possess it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell in it."
- ^{35:1} The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them,
And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;
- ² It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
The excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the excellency of our God.
- ³ Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.
- ⁴ Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance,
With the recompense of God; He will come and save you."
- ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
- ⁶ Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing.
For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.
- ⁷ The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water;
In the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes.
- ⁸ A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness.
The unclean shall not pass over it, But it shall be for others.
Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray.
- ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it;
It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there,
- ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads.
They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Philemon v8–25

⁸ Therefore, though I might be very bold in Christ to command you what is fitting, ⁹ yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you—being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ—¹⁰ I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, ¹¹ who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me.

¹² I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, ¹³ whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. ¹⁴ But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary.

¹⁵ For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave—a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ If then you count me as a partner, receive him as you would me. ¹⁸ But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. I will repay—not to mention to you that you owe me even your own self besides. ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have joy from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord. ²¹ Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say. ²² But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you.

²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, ²⁴ as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. ²⁵ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Prayer

(confessing sin and asking for help in Scripture-reading-shaped thoughts such as the following:)

Lord, we thank You for telling us of the certainty of Your vengeance. Please forgive us for how, despite this certainty, we have been unmindful of Your justice—so that we have despaired over what we see done by those who seem to have power.

Thank You for telling us of the certainty of our blessedness in holiness. Please forgive us for how little we have employed our troubles as opportunities in the pursuit of holiness.

And thank You, most of all, for presenting to us Yourself as our great reward in the beholding of Your beauty and glory. But, O Lord, please forgive us for how often we have been content to set our hearts upon lesser things, apart from You.

Lord, forgive us for how small is our love for one another. We have not loved to refresh one another like we ought to. And often we have had to have been ruled by the commands of authority rather than appeals to our affections.

Please make us to be more like Paul and Philemon; indeed, make us to be more like Christ, from Whom true Christian love comes, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

+ Singing

ARP40A

I Waited for the LORD

1 I wait-ed for the LORD; He stooped and heard my cry.
Man - y will see with awe, And so will trust the LORD.

6 You seek no of - fer - ing, De - sire no sac - ri - fice;
8 To do Your will, O God, Is sure - ly my de - light;

2 He brought me from a pit, Out of the dun - geon mire,
4 Blessed he who trusts the LORD, And turns not to false men.
But You have giv - en me An o - pened, read - y ear.
Your law is part of me, Set deep with - in my heart."

My feet set on a rock, My foot - steps made se - cure.
5 LORD, none com - pares to You, Your thoughts and works, my God!
You seek no of - f'nings burnt, Nor sac - ri - fice for sin.
9 Good news I have pro - claimed, De - clared Your righ - teous - ness

3 My lips He gave a song, A song to praise our God.
Should I de - clare each one, Their num - ber is too great.
7 I said, "Be - hold I come, As in the book fore - told.
In the as - sem - bly great; You know, LORD, I spoke out.

Preaching of the Word

+ Sermon text: Matthew 5:9

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Sermon title: The Revealing of the Sons of God

+ Assenting to the Word preached

Confession of Faith 12; TPH p939

All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth, in and for His only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, have His name put upon them, receive the Spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry, Abba, Father, are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by Him, as by a father: yet never cast off, but sealed to the day of redemption; and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.

+ Singing

TPH461

Blessed Are the Sons of God

1. Bless-ed are the sons of God, they are bought with Christ's own blood;
2. They are jus-ti-fied by grace, they en-joy the Sav-ior's peace;
3. They are lights up-on the earth, chil-dren of a heav'n-ly birth;

they are ran-somed from the grave, life e-ter-nal they shall have:
all their sins are washed a-way, they shall stand in God's great day:
one with God, with Je-sus one, glo-ry is in them be-gun:

Refrain
With them num-bered may we be, here and in e-ter-ni-ty.

The musical score consists of four systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The first system contains the first three verses. The second system contains the continuation of the lyrics. The third system contains the refrain, which is marked with a 'Refrain' bracket above the first few notes.

Prayer

(pastoral prayer, for supplication and intercession)

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The Preparation

ARP191

I Love the Lord, stanzas 1 and 2

1. I love the Lord, for He did hear My voice and sup - pli - cations all;
2. O Lord, the high and ho - ly One, I am a ser - vant un - to Thee,
3. With sac - ri - fice of thanks I'll go And on Je - ho - vah's Name will call:
Be - cause He hath inclined His ear, I while I live will on Him call.
Thy ser - vant and Thy handmaid's son; Thou hast from bonds de - liv - ered me.
Will pay to God the vows I owe In pres - ence of His peo - ple all.
What fit re - turn, Lord, can I make For all Thy gifts on me bestowed?
The cup of bless - ing I will take, And call up - on the Name of God.

+The Supper

ARP191

I Love the Lord, stanza 3

+ Prayer

(committing ourselves into God's care and devoting ourselves unto God's glory)

Lord, thank You for gathering us to Yourself as Your children, in Your Son, by Your Spirit.
Now, grant unto us to live this week, we pray, in Your Son, by the ministry of Your Spirit, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

+ Proclamation of God's Blessing upon His People

Departing Song

They are lights upon the earth, children of a heav'nly birth;
One with God, with Jesus one, glory is in them begun:
With them numbered may we be, here and in eternity.

Please proceed to the Fellowship Hall. For children (and adults who wish), a ~15-minute catechism lesson will begin shortly in the Auxiliary Room. Others, please do enjoy the provided refreshments with your fellowship time— and, if you're able, we'd love for you to stay for lunch.

Hopewell at Home

Devotional helps for connecting Lord's Day worship to every-day growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ

Children's Catechism for next Lord's Day, December 24

Q72. How many commandments did God give on Mount Sinai? **Ten commandments.**

Shorter Catechism for next Lord's Day, December 24

Q11. What are God's works of providence? **God's works of providence are His most holy, wise and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures, and all their actions.**

Memory Verse for next Lord's Day, December 24

Matthew 5:11 **Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.**

Monday, December 18, 2023 • Read Romans 10:1–4

Questions from the Scripture text: What does Paul call the believers in Rome (v1, cf. 9:3)? What sort of desire does he describe? To whom does he pray? For whom? What does he pray for them? What does he bear for them (v2)? For Whom do they think they have a zeal? But why isn't it truly a zeal for Him? Of what else were they ignorant (v3)? So what did they seek to establish? And to what did they not submit? To what/Whom did the law require them to submit for righteousness (v4)? How does one come into the righteousness of Christ that God requires (end of v4)?

How can we be righteous before God? Romans 10:1–4 prepares us for the sermon in the midweek prayer meeting. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **we can only be righteous before God in Christ Himself, and what He has done.**

Imitating God. "Brethren" in v1 reminds us not only that we are brothers in Christ but that we are children of the Father. He desires all men to be saved (cf. 1Tim 2:4). And so our own heart's desire and prayer to Him is for the same (v1).

Zeal for the true God. The apostle bears the Jews witness about their zeal for God. He himself had a zeal for God once, that was not a zeal for the true God but for a God of his own ignorant imaginings. He knew about the Scriptures as much as anyone; but, when he finally met the true God, he had no idea who He was (cf. Ac 9:5). So also the Jews, because their pursuit of righteousness is as if it were by works (cf. 9:32), their zeal for God (v2a) is not according to knowing Him (v2b).

Our zeal must be according to knowledge of God Himself. How we need to learn that sincerity and intensity of religion does not make our religion true! We must know God Himself. We must not only know about the Bible, but we must interpret the Bible according to the Bible itself, so that we may know God Himself in the Bible.

Righteousness from God alone. Because the Jews didn't know God, they didn't know His righteousness (v3a). They didn't see God as the One Who gives us His own righteousness (cf. 1:17), so they tried to establish their own (v3b). This is the quickest way to put ourselves in a position where instead of resting upon Christ for righteousness, we stumble over Him (cf. 9:32–33).

The language of v3 teaches us something about what it looks like to come to saving faith: "submitted to the righteousness of God." God's righteousness, counted for us, is something that we must submit to. We must give up all other hope of righteousness. We must yield to God's provision in Christ! O, dear reader, do not fall into the delusion that anything that you do or feel or think can contribute to your right standing with God.

Righteousness only in Christ, only by faith. The law always taught it was God Who made His people righteous (v4a, cf. Ex 20:2; Lev 18:1, 4). With the life and death of Christ, we know that it is He in Whom this has always been the case. Righteousness is only from God, and therefore only in Christ. And if it is only in Christ, then it is also only by faith. Everyone who trusts in Christ receives the righteousness of God (v4b). Zeal isn't enough to save us. Only Christ is enough to save us.

What thinking are you tempted to trust in for righteousness? What feelings are you tempted to trust in for righteousness? What doing are you tempted to trust in for righteousness? What (Whom) must you trust in, instead?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for making yourself to be our Savior, our righteousness. Forgive us for how we have hoped in ourselves so much that we thought our zeal, our sincerity, our effort could be true righteousness or become true righteousness. But You, Lord, have provided Your own righteousness in Christ! Grant unto us not only to know Your word, but to submit ourselves to Your word's interpretation of itself. Grant unto us to submit to the righteousness that You provide, the righteousness that is only in Christ, only by who Christ is, only by what Christ has done. Let us see that it is only resting in Him that can make righteous, because it is only He that can make righteous. So, give us to know this and to embrace and rest upon Him alone for righteousness, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "Lord, From the Depths to You I Cried" or TPH435 "Not What My Hands have Done"

Tuesday, December 19, 2023 • Read Psalm 107:23–43

Questions from the Scripture text: To whom does v23 refer? What do they see (v24)? How do wind and waves happen (v25)? How impressive are these (v26a–b)? With what effects upon mere men (v26c–27)? To Whom do they cry (v28a)? What does He do (v28b)? What new command (cf. v25) does He give (v29, cf. Mt 8:26; Lk 8:24)? What effect does this now have upon those men (v30a)? How do they see their trip home (v30b)? How should men respond to His goodness (v31a)? To His wonderful works to the sons of men (v31b)? Where should they give Him this thanks (v32a)? Among whom (v32b)? What are the wonderful works in vv33–34a? Why does He do this (v34b)? What kind and tender wonderful works does He do (v35–38)? Especially for whom (v39)? What does He do with their oppressors (v40)? What does He do with the oppressed (v41)? How do the righteous respond (v42a)? What must iniquity do (v42b)? Who observe the personal working of God in the events of providence (v43a)? What does this enable them to understand (v43b)?

What does the Lord display in times of great terror and deliverance? Psalm 107:23–43 prepares us for the opening portion of public worship on the Lord's Day. In these twenty-one verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God is the Redeemer and Deliverer, Who is always acting according to His covenanted love in every moment of history.**

The first half of the Psalm had focused upon God's wonderful works to the children of men in the context of His delivering Israel. The wisdom of His providence can be seen in how helpless and sinful a people they were. And yet, He powerfully and mercifully delivered them over and over again. God's wonderful works are seen in all His creation, and all His providence, but particularly in that most special of all providence: His redemption.

The Lord Who commands the storm. Now, in the second half of the Psalm, He turns to another instance that displays His wondrous works in His general providence, and especially in His providential acts of deliverance. On the sea (v23), men see (v24) a hint of His almighty power. And this is especially so when He commands a storm. Notice that the language of command is here in v25 but not in v29.

The men see not just wind (v25a) and waves (v25b) but YHWH's works (v24a) YHWH's wonders (v24b). As much as the wind and waves dwarf us, they themselves are dwarfed by the God Who commands them. Truly, if we thought plainly and clearly enough to see His divine nature and power behind every part of creation and every moment of providence, our souls would always "melt" (v26c), and we would always cry out as those undone (v27–28a). When Isaiah was given, by faith and vision, to understand that it is not just the heavens but particularly whole earth (!) that is full of God's glory (cf. Isa 6:3c), he too responded by the realization that he is undone and always before YHWH of hosts (cf. Isa 6:5).

The Lord Who is continually in command. So when the Lord gives us to see the greatness that is behind all of His providence in a specific providence like a storm at sea, He opens our eyes to bring us to an end of ourselves. This is why the disciples were more terrified after the calm (cf. Mk 4:41) than they had been in the storm. Christ is YHWH the Creator, the God of providence. He commands not only the stillness (v29) but the storm (v25). And it is the Creator Himself Who has given Himself to be our righteousness and our atonement!

Providence as a call to worship. All men should give thanks to God for all of His goodness. Israel were not generally a seafaring people. Even Solomon's sea trade required a joint effort with a nation who had that expertise. But it is God Who is being good to all men, all the time. The Great Commission is not just a duty upon the church, seeking to make disciples from all nations. The Great Commission is a duty on every last man, woman, and child on earth. They have been shown goodness by God. Let them come into His assembly and praise Him in the company of His elders (v32).

Let men learn to take providence personally. And when they come into events like vv33–34, let them at least ask whether such troubles have been occasioned by specific wickedness. Let us take all painful providence as an opportunity to humiliate themselves before God in repentance. But let us also see all pleasant occurrences, such as in vv35–38, as personal (!) and merciful providence from our God.

History as a whole as a call to worship. Those who domineer over others forget that they are before the face of the God Who will pour contempt upon them (v39–40). Let not those who are afflicted forget the final mercy and full mercy that comes upon all who are righteous in Christ (v41–42). This is what wisdom observes in the occurrences of history (v43a): continual expressions ("lovingkindness" is plural in the original) of the covenant, steadfast love of YHWH!

The Lord give you such wisdom, dear reader. The Lord give you to see His personal acts in all of history. The Lord give you to see His covenanted love, continually doing everything to secure its object. And the Lord give you to respond with thanks for His goodness and praise for His wonderful works to the children of Adam (singular in the original, throughout the Psalm)!

What difficulties has the Lord brought you through that were so great that you couldn't see any hope or help and were made to cry out to Him most urgently and most completely? What was He displaying about all His providence? What was He displaying about every deliverance and every providence? How will you respond to more impressive providence, in order to condition your heart to respond this way to every providence?

Sample prayer: We praise You, O God of storms and of calm, for displaying to us Your works and Your wonders—and, most of all, for displaying Yourself to us in Your Son, our Lord Jesus. We have cried out to You in the distress of our soul, and You have delivered us, and brought us into the quiet of gladness toward You. You are guiding us home to Yourself. We give thanks to You, Lord, for Your goodness, and for Your wonderful works to the children of men! We come now to exalt You in the assembly of the people, and to praise You in the company of the elders. Truly, we see Your justice and rejoice. Let all sinfulness stop its mouth. Give us the wisdom to observe and understand Your covenanted love in Christ, we ask through Him, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP107DE "To Those Who Sail the Sea" and "He Changes Streams" or TPH107A "O Thank the Lord for He Is Good"

Wednesday, December 20, 2023 ◦ Read Isaiah 36–37

Questions from the Scripture text: To what sort of writing does Isaiah now (from prophetic prophecy) transition (v1)? To what date does he refer? Who came up? Against whom? And did what? Then whom did he send (v2)? With what/whom? From where? To whom/where? Where did the Rabshekah stand? Who came out to him (v3)? With what question does the Rabshekah begin (v4–5)? What hope does he attack first (v6)? And what hope in v7? What does he suggest has offended YHWH? What does he urge in v8? What does he say is the only deterrent from Assyria arming them? What would this condition do to the “Egypt” plan (v9)? What has he heard, and does he now repeat, about why the rest of Judah has fallen (v10)? What do Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah request in v11? Why? But why does the Rabshekah say that the people need to understand what is being said (v12)? In Whom does he tell the people not to let Hezekiah get them to trust (v13–15)? In whom does he urge them to trust instead (v16–17)? To whom does he compare YHWH (v18–20)? How do the three men answer (v21)? Why? What do they do instead (v22)? How does Hezekiah respond in 37:1? Where does he go? Whom does he send to whom (v2)? How do they introduce the king’s message (v3)? What does he hope YHWH has heard (v4)? What does he ask Isaiah to do? When they arrive (v5), what does Isaiah already have to say (v6)? How, specifically, will this happen (v7, cf. 31:8–9, 37:36–38)? When the Rabshekah returns, what does he find (v8–9)? As he runs to deal with this, what challenge does he attempt to re-make (v10–13)? But why would this renewed threat sound weak and hollow (cf. v7)? What does Hezekiah do with this most recent threat/message (v14)? How does he praise (v15–16), in contradiction to what (v12–13)? How does He pray that the Lord would respond—in order to show what (v17–20)? How does the answer to the prayer come (v21)? Whom does YHWH choose to scorn Sennacherib (v22)? For, against Whom has he blasphemed (v23)? With what great prospective works has Sennacherib flattered himself through the Rabshekah (v24–25)? Of what greater works is he ignorant (v26a–c)? What should he have actually known/believed (v26d–27, cf. 36:10)? How will YHWH not only defeat but humiliate him (v28–29)? After the invasion, what are they currently able to eat (v30a–c)? But how much peace and safety is the Lord now promising them (v30d–e)? What will those who currently remain be permitted to do (v31, and why cf. 1Ki 21:27–29)? What else will the Lord do in the future (v32)? What does the Lord say that He will not permit (v33–35)? How does He end up doing this (v36–38)?

####? Isaiah 36–37 prepares us for the first serial reading in public worship on the Lord’s Day. In these sixty verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that ####.

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Sample prayer: ###

Suggested songs: ARP73C “Yet Constantly, I Am with You” or TPH471 “The Sands of Time Are Sinknig”

Thursday, December 21, 2023 ◦ Read James 1:1–15

Questions from the Scripture text: ###

####? James 1:1–15 prepares us for the second serial reading in public worship on the Lord’s Day. In these fifteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that ####.

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Sample prayer: ###

Suggested songs: ARP197 “Christian Unity” or TPH409 “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

Friday, December 22, 2023 ◦ Read Leviticus 21

Questions from the Scripture text: ###

####? Leviticus 21 prepares us for the evening sermon on the Lord’s Day. In these twenty-four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that ####.

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Sample prayer: ###

Suggested songs: ARP32AB “What Blessedness” or TPH426 “How Vast the Benefits Divine”

Saturday, December 16, 2023 ◦ Read Matthew 5:10–16

Questions from the Scripture text: ###

####? Matthew 5:10–16 prepares us for the morning sermon on the Lord’s Day. In these seven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that ####.

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Sample prayer: ###

Suggested songs: ARP23B "The Lord's My Shepherd" or TPH464 "The Beatitudes"

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Lord's Day worship/study, Daily worship/ discipleship/evangelism in homes and community
- Repentance of the Church and Nations (especially our own) for rejection of the Kingship of Christ
- For an end to PP in Nashville and repentance of everyone involved.
- KR's Bible Study at the Pregnancy Center, especially Claire and Alonya—that all would hunger and thirst for Christ and His Word
- Early Rain Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church (Pastor Wang Yi in prison), Christians in Nigeria, and other persecuted churches like them
- R&C H for Bible translating work; for "K" language translators, and Pastor EM, working on the New Testament and under threat from jihadis
- AM and his family, ministry, and injury
- JB and his ministry at Ft. Detrick
- KC's acquaintance Linda and friend Nancy, who need Christ; for her dear friend to join a sound church and walk healthily with the Lord
- J&M C for recovery and thriving of mom, baby Liam, and the whole family
- Pray with J&T B for her, her mother, and sisters Selena and Loretta, and their entire family in the recent losses of her father and her nephew Jared; and for his new walking tours venture; and for Jonathan's recovery, effectiveness of treatment
- Pray with S&D B for Andrew to keep improving
- Pray with S&D B and D&D R for Doug and Dianne's oldest son Dave
- Pray with D&V F for transplant rejection to stay low; for recovery from recent foot pain
- Pray with D&M G for her father's health, her 82yo mother's aneurism, **and PRAISE for a good, safe trip to help them**; and for Jordan and Atlanta w/baby #8 due in March
- Praise with C&P G for giving them a son and sustaining P through a few months of morning sickness and physical weakness. For C, to labor diligently in his responsibilities as unto the Lord and to fight against the flesh by the Spirit. For P, for Col 1:9-12 especially in the areas of marriage and motherhood. For both, for wisdom in the midst of difficulties with extended family
- Pray with J&H H for his father's cancer; for sweetness in his parents' remaining time together; for his youngest brother's salvation, and that brother's son and daughter; for Juan and Mosheh
- Pray with R&M J for Claire's continued thriving; for her father's liver cancer, that he would progress to the top of the transplant list, for her mother's comfort and peace through it, even as she recovers from recent fall, and for M's physical and spiritual endurance and wellness through it all
- Pray with O&A L for her unbelieving mother w/heart condition and breast cancer, and her family's grieving over her brother; for A's persistently severe headaches; for their many family in Cali who need to be walking by faith in Christ; for O (and A, O, E,

and R, and his entire extended family) in the loss of his father, but especially for his mom who still misses him so dearly; and for significant family challenges.

- Pray with M&S M that her treatment would be successful and rapid; for baby Eloise and the whole family to thrive; and for her sister Savannah's adjustment to being a mother; and for friend Becky E, with 8 children from 13yo down to 7mo, and stage 4 small cell neuroendocrine carcinoma
- Pray with C&L M for his brother Lee; **and for his travel and time with his mom as they care for his father in the hospital**
- Pray with SM for the Lord's strengthening her under her illness, healing her from it however He wills, sanctifying it to her, and making it useful to His glory and others' good
- Pray with C&T P for him to find favor with new employer and to serve the Lord faithfully at work and home
- Pray with J&D P for her sister Frankie
- Pray with H&K P for her various health issues, especially her feet
- Pray with JuR for God-glorifying employment; for friend Jace, that perfect love would cast out fear
- Pray with D&K R for their family's growth in godliness, especially dying to self, godly speech, and Lord's Day keeping; **for the process of selling their land and moving to the Athens area**; and for Andrew and Gabrielle, expecting in June
- Pray with JeR for coworker Josh, electrocuted and lost both legs, married 29yo
- Pray with J&S R For her family, especially mom, to find their hope in Christ; for Chloe's family honor Christ; for coworker Cyndy and husband Dave to be saved; for spreading Christ's love to neighbors; for friend Rachel and her mother-in-law Mary Lou, as they continue to grieve the loss of their husbands, and for Rachel's brother Aaron in alcohol rehab; for boss Scott's family's salvation; for LDS coworker Trent; with IR as he battles against remaining sin; for S and baby due mid-Feb
- Pray with B&E R for their callings in the home; for employment for Ben with a courageously Christian company; for newly converted friend Ashlee, her unbelieving husband Adam, and Bayhaven OPC's ministry to them; for conversion of family (his dad; his brothers Joshua, Zachary, Kaleb); for reformation of relatives and of neighbors Elijah and Heather; for neighbors Bereket and Beka who are expecting (especially for Bereket's spiritual leadership); and for him and them in the loss of his grandfather
- SU's biblical wisdom and courage; for Emma's wellbeing and her believing roommate Tasha's desire to be reunited with sister Penny
- Pray with P&D W for niece Emilyn to have much-needed spiritual metabolic changes; and for both of their health, especially his many health challenges
- Please pray with the Lincoln Memorial ARP church in Fayetteville, TN, throughout December
- Please pray for all ARP presbyteries, churches, and agencies
- Please pray for our nation, state, community and all the officials thereof

“Do This in Remembrance of Me”
Biblical instruction for taking the Lord’s Supper

Dear guests, we are taking the Lord’s Supper in worship this morning. So that you can take it (or refrain from taking it) in good conscience and maximize your benefit in receiving it (or observing it), it is important that you know:

1. Who should take the Lord’s Supper...

The Lord Jesus Christ’s table is for those who are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. So we invite to this table, the Lord’s table, all those who trust in Jesus Christ alone for their salvation as He is offered in the Gospel and who have been joined to the body of Christ, His Church. Membership is important, because it means both that you publicly identify yourself with Christ in an accountable way (cf. Rom 10:9-10; Mat 10:32-33) and that you recognize that this is a covenantal meal that is taken as a church, rather than a private ritual.

If you are not an active member of an evangelical church, you should not come to the table. Rather: wait, think, pray, repent, and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ—and publicly identify yourself with Him in His church. No one will think less of you for refraining to take the Supper on this occasion; in fact, all will respect and admire the seriousness with which you approach this holy ordinance. Also, if it seems agreeable to you, it would be a great privilege for one of our elders to assist you in understanding and accepting the Gospel so that you would not need to refrain on the next occasion. **Members of other congregations should complete the guest card** so that we can let your church leadership know that you partook with us as part of their shepherding care over you.

If you hope in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, but you are not currently a member of a church that teaches this, it still may be possible for you to take the Supper. The Session (the elders of the church) may admit you in a special circumstance after having interviewed you to determine that you have made a credible profession to believe in Jesus Christ as He is offered in the Gospel. Of course, that would also mean that you are actively seeking to join an evangelical church.

2. How to prepare for the Lord’s Supper (this should be done before you come to worship) ...

The 17th answer of the *Westminster Larger Catechism* says,

They that receive the sacrament of the Lord’s supper are, before they come, to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves of their being in Christ, of their sins and wants; of the truth and measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance; love to God and the brethren, charity to all men, forgiving those that have done them wrong; of their desires after Christ, and of their new obedience; and by renewing the exercise of these graces, by serious meditation, and fervent prayer.

This means that you are to prepare for the Supper in the following by doing these things:

- Ask yourself if you are really and truly hoping in Christ alone for salvation
- Take an honest inventory of your growth in righteousness, whether God is producing in you the evidence that you have believed by asking questions such as:
 - Do I obey and worship Him more now than I did in the past, and am I growing in these things?
 - Do I love God, and is this love increasing?
 - Do I love others, especially other Christians, and is this love increasing?
 - Do I forgive those who have done me wrong?
 - Do I long for Christ such that if I do not spend time reading, praying, and praising Him each day, I feel that something vital is missing from the day?
- Having considered these things, you are likely to fall short in many or all of them. Do not become discouraged and decide that you mustn’t take the Supper. It’s for sinners! This is actually one of the benefits of preparing for the Supper. You can take this as an opportunity to recommit yourself to obedience, worship, love of God, love of others, forgiveness, daily devotions, etc. Confess and repent before God, renewing the exercise of these things. Then you can be helped in them by taking it and feasting on the truth of the marvelous grace of what Jesus did for you on the cross!

3. In what manner to take the Lord's Supper...

The 174th answer of the *Westminster Larger Catechism* says,

It is required of them that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper, that, during the time of the administration of it, with all holy reverence and attention they wait upon God in that ordinance, diligently observe the sacramental elements and actions, heedfully discern the Lord's body, and affectionately meditate on his death and sufferings, and thereby stir up themselves to a vigorous exercise of their graces; in judging themselves, and sorrowing for sin; in earnest hungering and thirsting after Christ, feeding on him by faith, receiving of his fullness, trusting in his merits, rejoicing in his love, giving thanks for his grace; in renewing of their covenant with God, and love to all the saints.

Notice the transition from sorrowing and thirsting and hungering to receiving and trusting and rejoicing and giving thanks. Though a table is a place to *bring hunger*, the essence of the experience at the table is *to be filled!*

When we come to the table:

- Look up to Christ, not inward into yourself
- Be filled, be satisfied, rejoice, and give thanks
- Renew your loving and glad and thankful commitments to Him
- Rejoice at the rest of the congregation's enjoyment of Him as well

4. What to do after you take the Lord's Supper ...

The 175th answer of the *Westminster Larger Catechism* says,

The duty of Christians, after they have received the sacrament of the Lord's supper, is seriously to consider how they have behaved themselves therein, and with what success; if they find quickening and comfort, to bless God for it, beg the continuance of it, watch against relapses, fulfill their vows, and encourage themselves to a frequent attendance on that ordinance: but if they find no present benefit, more exactly to review their preparation to, and carriage at, the sacrament; in both which, if they can approve themselves to God and their own consciences, they are to wait for the fruit of it in due time: but, if they see they have failed in either, they are to be humbled, and to attend upon it afterwards with more care and diligence.

If it is appropriate to reflect upon our conduct in less significant actions, then how much more in this!

- *Give thanks to God.* He has given us the Supper to stir us up to our duty, to increase our comfort and joy in Christ, to bless us in our fellowship with Himself. If we find that it has been used by Him for these results in our lives, let us not be rude beasts but give hearty thanks to our Redeemer.
- *Keep your promises.* As you renew your commitment to the Lord, undoubtedly there will be vows that you make to Him in your heart. Keep those promises! You may even wish to keep a record of it. When you come back to the table again, it may help you to review how He used it this time to produce in and for you that new obedience.
- *Resolve to be as frequent in your attendance upon it as possible.* As you enjoy the benefits of the Supper, and consider God's good purposes in it, let that stir up your commitment.
- *Repent of where you have fallen short.* Whenever we find that we are not benefitting from the means of grace like we should, let us presume that the fault is in ourselves. And so, let us make review of how we can better honor the Lord and seek His benefits at His table!

Still have questions? One of our pastor's particular interests is in seeing believers come to the Lord's Table frequently, honor Him there greatly, and benefit from it immensely. Please give him the pleasure of getting together with you and discussing it from Scripture!

Announcements

- **Welcome to Hopewell!** The Lord has mercifully preserved His gospel in this place for 203 years. We rejoice to worship Him, and are glad for you to do so with us today!
- We plan to celebrate the **LORD'S SUPPER** together in morning worship. On the inside-back cover of this booklet, there is a **guide for those who wish to partake**. Members of other congregations should fill out a **Lord's Supper Guest Card** so we may communicate to your congregation that you partook with us.
- If you wish to support the ministries of the congregation, you may make use of collection boxes on the wall, on either side of the Chapel, as you leave. **The 3rd Lord's Day each month, gifts in cash are received for the deacons' fund (not the general fund).**
- To **RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENT INFORMATION** and worship-preparation helps a couple times per week via email, please **visit hopewellarp.org and click the red link** in the upper-left- corner
- **Please STAY FOR LUNCH!** We make extra, hoping that you will stay and fellowship with us.
- Keep it going! This week's worship booklet includes **"HOPEWELL @HOME"** daily devotionals that prepare you for the Scriptures from next week's service; to follow up on this week's Scriptures, look up last week's devotionals at **hpwl.org/hah**

Lord's Day Schedule

- **Breakfast** (free, 9:50a) and **Study Class** (10a), every Lord's Day morning. We are studying *God's Battle Plan for the Mind* — how to meditate upon Scripture, according to Scripture.
- **PUBLIC WORSHIP**, 11a
- **Children's Catechism Class, Coffee, and Fellowship Time**, IMMEDIATELY after worship. Children are invited to come to the Fellowship Hall auxiliary room where next week's catechism question will be introduced and explained from Scripture. During that time, all others are encouraged to **GO TO THE FELLOWSHIP HALL** for refreshments/edification
- **Fellowship Meal** (free), immediately after Catechism/Coffee. During our weekly church-family meals, we have an open-mic sharing time.
- **CHURCH FAMILY WORSHIP, 3p.m.** 45 minutes of singing Psalms and hymns, followed by a brief sermon, currently in the book of Leviticus

Upcoming Events

- Wednesday, December 20, **Midweek Prayer Meeting**. 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel. We will hear a **sermon from Romans 10:1–4** then pray until just before 8 p.m.
- Saturday, December 23, **Men's (and future men) breakfast**, 7a in the Fellowship Hall
- Thursday, January 11, **Session Meeting**, 6p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

HOPEWELL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3886 Hopewell Road, Culleoka, TN 38451

Pastor James Hakim • (415) 952-6374 • pastor@hopewellarp.org

Elders

Charlie Mangum (615) 406-4971
Jim Patterson (931) 446-0604
David Rentschler (931) 209-5720

Provisional Diaconate

Elders Charlie Mangum, Jim Patterson,
and David Rentschler

<http://hopewellarp.org>