

WILLOW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 27TH, 2024 | 23RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST | 10:00AM



OUR APPROACH TO GOD

Come, celebrate the love of God in Jesus Christ with us! All are invited to sing and pray and participate in liturgy.

IF YOU ARE ABLE, WE INVITE YOU TO HONOR GOD BY STANDING.

PRELUDE

O GOD OUR HELP IN AGES PAST

ISAAC WATTS, 1674

Elizabeth O'Leary, Piano

WELCOME AND SHARING

REV. LAUREN PATRUS-BETZEL

CALL TO WORSHIP

HYMN #108

OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN

PRUDENTIUS, NEALE, BAKER & DOUGLAS

PSALTER READING

PSALM 46:1 - 3 & 10

MAREN REID

Holy wisdom, **holy Word.**

PAGE 885

REFLECTIONS & THE NICENE CREED

ED ROTTMAN

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

REFLECTIONS ON THE REFORMATION & CALL TO CONFESSION

PASTOR TANYA MUZZARELLI

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy and gracious God, we confess today to the same sins that have always plagued your church: we are too stuck in our ways, too resistant to your Spirit, too attracted to power and privilege, too quick to build walls and too slow to build bridges. Send more reformation our way until we are formed perfectly by you.

A PERIOD OF SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, hear the good news! Sin has always been at work in the world, and yet, God's grace has been at work even longer than sin.

We believe that when the story is over, it is forgiveness that will have the last word. In Christ we are forgiven, now and as often as we come before the throne of grace and mercy. **Alleluia! Amen.**

I GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

I PASSING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST

May the Peace of Christ be with you; **And also with you.**

REFLECTIONS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE SCOTS CONFESSION

As we believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, so we firmly believe that from the beginning there has been, now is, and to the end of the world shall be, one Kirk, that is to say:

One company and multitude of people chosen by God, who rightly worship and embrace him by true faith in Christ Jesus, who is the only Head of the Kirk, even as it is the body and spouse of Christ Jesus. This Kirk is catholic, that is, universal, because it contains the chosen of all ages, of all realms, nations, and tongues, be they of the Jews or be they of the Gentiles, who have communion and society with God the Father, and with his Son, Christ Jesus, through the sanctification of his Holy Spirit.

It is therefore called the communion, not of profane persons, but of saints, who, as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, have the fruit of inestimable benefits, one God, one Lord Jesus, one faith, and one baptism.

REFLECTIONS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

What is your only comfort in life and in death?

That I am not my own, but belong – body and soul, in life and in death – to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of evil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact, all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

I HYMN #275

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

LUTHER, 1529 & HEDGE, 1852

At this time, children are invited to go downstairs for Sunday School.

REFLECTIONS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE SECOND HELVETIC CONFESSION

Christian faith is not an opinion or human conviction, but a most firm trust and a clear and steadfast assent of the mind, and then a most certain apprehension of the truth of God presented in the Scriptures and in the Apostles' Creed, and thus also of God himself, the greatest good, and especially of God's promise and of Christ who is the fulfillment of all promises. But this faith is a pure gift of God, which God alone of his grace gives to his elect according to his measure when, to whom and to the degree he wills. And he does this by the Holy Spirit by means of the preaching of the Gospel and steadfast prayer.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

I NEED THEE EVERY HOUR

ROBERT LOWRY, 1872

I DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessing flow; Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

I PRAYER OF DEDICATION

REFLECTIONS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE SHORTER WESTMINSTER CATECHISM

What is the chief and highest end of humanity? **Humanity's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy God forever.**

What is justification? **Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and by faith alone.**

What is sanctification? **Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole person after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness.**

What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification? **Assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.**

REFLECTIONS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE THEOLOGICAL DECLARATION OF BARMEN

The Christian Church is the congregation of the people in which Jesus Christ acts presently as the Lord in Word and Sacrament through the Holy Spirit. As the Church of pardoned sinners, it has to testify in the midst of a sinful world, with its faith as with its obedience, with its message as with its order, that it is solely his property, and that it lives and wants to live solely from his comfort and from his direction in the expectation of his appearance. We reject the false doctrine, as though the church were permitted to abandon the form of its message and order to its own pleasure or to changes in prevailing ideological and political convictions.

I HYMN #321

THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION

STONE, 1866 & WESLEY, 1864

REFLECTIONS & AN EXCERPT FROM THE CONFESSION OF 1967

God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ embraces the whole of humanity's life: social and cultural, economic and political, scientific and technological, individual and corporate.

It includes humanity's natural environment as exploited and despoiled by sin. It is the will of God that his purpose for human life shall be fulfilled under the rule of Christ and all evil be banished from his creation. Biblical visions and images of the rule of Christ, such as a heavenly city, a father's house, a new heaven and earth, a marriage feast, and an unending day culminate in the image of the kingdom. The kingdom represents the triumph of God over all that resists his will and disrupts his creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption. With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and glory forever. Amen.

REFLECTIONS ON THE BELHAR CONFESSION

AN EXCERPT FROM THE BELHAR CONFESSION

We believe:

that God has revealed himself as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;
that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;
that God calls the church to follow him in this, for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;
that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;
that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;
that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;
that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;
that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;
that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged;
that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others

I CHARGE & BENEDICTION: REFLECTIONS & AN EXCERPT FROM A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

POSTLUDE

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD

JOHANN CRUGER, 1647

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THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SERVED TODAY! LITURGISTS: MAREN REID AND ED ROTTMAN

USHERS: BRENDA BENNING, JACK GREENLEE, MIKE LANDI AND APRIL ROTTMAN

Today's service is an adaptation of "Reformation Lessons and Carols" by Rev. Carol Holbrook Prickett © 2021

Yale History Professor Jaroslav Pelikan once said: *My faith life, like that of everyone else, fluctuates. There are ups and downs and hot spots and cold spots and boredom and ennui and all the rest...And so I'm not asked on a Sunday morning: 'What do you believe?' I'm not asked to sit down and write what I happen to believe today. Instead, with a common confession, we answer the question "What do you believe" as a member of a community which now for more than two millennia has said:*

We believe in One God.

On this Reformation Sunday we celebrate the Spirit of God who has inspired answers to that question throughout history and honor the Reformed tradition of confessing together what we believe.

ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY is November 3rd, 2024 *We will ring a bell for those who have died since last All Saints' (Nov. 5th, 2023). If there is a name you would like to have honored, please let Pastor Lauren know.*