

**Welcome to
Crestholme Presbyterian Church
8th Sunday after Pentecost
July 26, 2020**



**Worship... Together, from Home!
Alone or with Family — Right Now, or at 11 on Sunday
Read (all the parts, out loud), Sing, Pray...**

Worship is a response to the Word of God. It is not something we initiate on our own. Therefore, hear the Word of the Lord, “This IS the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

PRELUDE “Blessed Assurance”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3MbeE66MXU> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

WELCOME, BODY OF CHRIST!

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP “Here I am to Worship”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dRc0up7Sck> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

CALL TO WORSHIP: Read out loud by yourself or with a loved one.

YOU: O Lord our God, you have performed many wonders for us.

LOVED ONE: Your plans for us are too numerous to list.

YOU: You have no equal.

LOVED ONE: If we tried to recite all your wonderful deeds,

ALL: We would never come to the end of them. (Ps. 40:5 NLT)

OPENING PRAYER: Read out loud

We waited patiently for the LORD to help us, and he turned to us and heard our cry. He lifted us out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set our feet on solid ground and steadied us as we walked along. He has given us a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the LORD. Amen (Ps. 40:1-3 NLT)

Opening Hymn “The Church’s One Foundation”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ECY2IleRg8> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

Prayer of Confession:

LORD, don’t hold back your tender mercies from us. Let your unfailing love and faithfulness always protect us. For troubles surround us—too many to count! Our sins pile up so high we can’t see our way out. They outnumber the hairs on our head. We have lost all courage. Please, LORD, rescue us! Come quickly, LORD, and help us. Amen. (Ps. 40:11-13 NLT)

Assurance of God’s Forgiveness:

Hear the GOOD NEWS!

For the Lord will remove his hand of judgment and will disperse the armies of your enemy. And the Lord himself, the King of Israel, will live among you! At last your troubles will be over, and you will never again fear disaster. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Alleluia. Amen. (Zeph. 3:15 NLT)

GLORIA PATRI

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zyVhCz5XzXI> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Holy and Everlasting God, your word is a lamp to guide our feet and a light for our path. Let your ever glorious light shine in our hearts as you open our eyes and our ears to see and hear your Word in humble adoration. In the only name given among people through which we might be saved, Jesus. Amen.

BOOK OF PSALMS

Psalm 105:1-11

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm+105.1-11&version=NIV>

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Matt. 13:31-33

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matt+13.31-33&version=NIV>

Matt. 13:44-52

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matt+13.44-52&version=NIV>

Children's Time You Raise Me Up

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Waitmz6C100> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

SERMON

“From Unseen to Seen”
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Carlos Baladez

Sometimes things grow right underneath the surface without us knowing what is going on. Take a seed that is planted. It is placed in a dark place. Covered up. Watered. Left alone, yet lovingly taken care of by the farmer. And then one day it suddenly sprouts and eventually the fruit is harvested and we rejoice at the bounty.

When a couple is wanting to have a baby, the woman is usually the first to know she has conceived. The baby is birthed deep within the recesses of her body. The child grows in the dark surrounded by water. Nine months later, what was not seen is revealed for the whole world to see. Jubilation and celebration break out. Love expressed between a couple takes on form.

God's word has also been compared to a seed. It comes to us in a form of a word heard planted deep within the recesses of our hearts. God then cultivates the soil and the seed within our souls. He knows all about gardens. He planted the very first one. He knows all about weeds too. The weeds of our life expressed in our denials, defense mechanisms, and the like. Yet, his landscaping skills discern our heart's needs and with his vast resources at his disposal he meets them. He lets us in on a little secret. He is working on the inside, in the darkness of our being to reclaim his first love-- us.

How does he do this? Let's take a look.

Jesus uses parables, earthly stories, to get a heavenly message across. He compares the known with the unknown in an effort to bring about an experience with the unfamiliar and the unseen. This literary device brings us the "aha" moment. The moment the Holy Spirit opens our ears, eyes, and hearts to hear, see, and believe. This "aha" gift is the moment we believe. It is not merely a cognitive response but a heartfelt trust, and opening up, a surrendering up of the self, a responding to God with an "I love you too, God" reciprocating God's initial, "I love you!"

Looking at Matthew 13:31-33 and 44-52 we can see that the Kingdom of God, the unseen development within us is like:

1. A mustard seed.
2. Yeast.
3. Treasure hidden in a field.
4. A merchant looking for fine pearls.
5. A net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish.

This deep and behind the scenes work that God is doing in us starts out small but then grows into the largest comfort space. A place of refuge and rest for others to come and find solace. This deep behind the scenes work of God influences who we are and what we do. God fulfills his "very good," which he proclaimed in Genesis one. He buys back the field which he cursed and redeems us.

God seeks those who worship him in spirit and truth. He, like the merchant "sails the seven seas" and invests all he has to find one pearl of great value, the man Christ Jesus. We, humanity, are found IN him.

Finally, God trawls our hearts and removes the bad, the wicked, and the sin consequently cleansing us for his righteousness.

Yes, God the cosmic gardener loves us, cultivates us through his great love to us-- Jesus. At the right time the Sons of God are revealed and harvested. The Great Celebration for the ultimate harvest begins and the unseen will be seen.

To God alone be all the glory. Amen.

Close your eyes. Listen to our choir sing:

HYMN “This Is My Father’s World” #1
<http://www.crestholme.pc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/01-This-is-My-Fathers-World.mp3> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

THIS WE BELIEVE:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. Jesus Christ died. Jesus Christ has risen. Jesus Christ will come again. Amen (Gen. 1:1-3 NLT)

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Please, continue to support the life and work of Crestholme. You can mail your tithes pledges and offerings to...

CPC
PO Box 23919.
SA TX 78223-0901

Or you can save them and gather them until we meet again.
Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice.

DOXOLOGY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Q5ojehA78c> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Father God, we humbly ask for you to accept us and this offering we present to you. We pray that from your glorious, unlimited resources you will empower your church with inner strength through your Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in our hearts as we trust in him. Our roots will grow down into Your love and keep us strong. And may we have the power to understand, as all Your people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep your love is. May we experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then we will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from You and give witness to your loving Word, your all-encompassing Power, and your Righteous Kingdom. In the all-powerful name of Jesus we pray, amen. (Eph. 3:16-19 NLT)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Here, in your own words, pray and intercede for the body of Christ, the governments of this world, the poor, the marginalized, the lost, and others. Pray also for your family and for yourself. Follow this with the Lord's Prayer.

CLOSING HYMN "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kgQ9ER-fdWQ> (place your cursor over the link. Right click, and then choose Open Hyperlink)

BENEDICTION:

[With our hands lifted unto the Lord and a heart full of grace and love, receive this blessing in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ!]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gpoJNv5dlQ>

Praise be to God. Amen

We have temporarily closed our congregation's campus — no group activities, no church programs, no shared-space partners' programs, no Food Pantry or Clothes Closet... to honor the White House's Guidelines and the City's Emergency Directives and to protect our vulnerable volunteers and members and neighbors during these perilous COVID-19 days.

But that does not mean that we've... gone away.

How can we support you? Your prayer life? Your every-day needs and cares?

Yes, “Social distance!” But, NO, not “Emotional distance!” Help us connect and care!

There’s an active “hug train” — our phone tree. Would you make a call or two? Would you like to be called? Chat with Carlos at: crbaladez@yahoo.com or 210 324 5665.

There are lots of “little things” that are quite important for us — for someone — to continue to do. Got an hour? Some of our members could use a hand with... shopping, “essential errands,” every-day little things. Got a hand?

Shalom!