

**Welcome to
Crestholme Presbyterian Church
7th Sunday of Pentecost
July 11, 2021**

At the *, please stand, if you are able.
Large Print Hymnals, Bibles, and Hearing Assist Devices are available upon request.

Gather for Worship

PRELUDE

"Trio"

Rheinberger

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gwn7_-b7zKw

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP "Bless His Holy Name"

Choir

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2VjT-YsLd4

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Across the plains and the prairies,

All: Through gorges and valleys,

Leader: Over mountain peaks and through sunlit skies:

All: God's Spirit is at work in the world.

Leader: In our hearts,

All: In our minds,

Leader: In our hands and feet,

All: God's Spirit is at work in us, too.

Leader: So let us worship God.

OPENING PRAYER

God of mystery, open our eyes to look for you in unfamiliar places;

open our ears to hear you speak in the sound of sheer silence;

open our hearts to feel the depth of your love.

When we wander in the wilderness of fear and death, revive us with your care, that we may find strength for our journey back to the land of hope and life. Amen.

*** OPENING HYMN "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty" Blue Hymnal #482**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUM-cNuvMOI>

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Forgive us, O God—

cleansing our hearts and minds of all that prevents us from loving you and loving our

neighbor. May our lives be marked by faith active in love as we watch and wait for your breaking into our world once more. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Sisters and brothers in Christ, God's Spirit did not leave us after that first Pentecost. The Spirit is still with us, empowering us to know mercy and grace, forgiveness and service. In this Spirit, and through Christ, we proclaim the Good News:

All: We are forgiven Alleluia! Amen.

*** GLORIA PATRI**

Blue Hymnal #579

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

*** SHARE THE PEACE OF CHRIST (From your seats, please)**

Leader: Peace be with you!

All: And also with you!

Leader: As God's forgiven people, share the peace of Christ with each other.

CHILDREN'S TIME

God's Story: John the Baptist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NMHOLPWeTM>

Hear the word of God

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, we are grateful that you communicate your wisdom and truth to us. Prepare us now to receive with eagerness your living and active Word. Blow your Holy Spirit through these pages that they might penetrate deeply into our lives, directing us how to live. Enable us to participate in this marvel of communication as we explore and experience the good news made known in Jesus Christ. Amen.

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Samuel+6%3A1-5%2C+12-19&version=NIV>

PSALTER READING

Psalms 24

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+24&version=NIV>

CHORAL ANTHEM

"Sweet Hour of Prayer"

Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yz5pD6C9h-w>

NEW TESTAMENT READING**Ephesians 1:3-14**<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+1%3A3-14&version=NIV>**GOSPEL READING****Mark 6:14-29**<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6%3A14-29&version=NIV>**SERMON****“New Narratives”****Fred Archer****Written by The Rev. D. Rebecca Dinovo**

Fairytales and happy endings play a significant role in shaping us and our expectations about life. We are inundated from birth by themes and images of the way life “should” play out by the storylines provided us in fictional accounts – in books and in film, in everything from Disney movies to Hollywood blockbusters to popular television and online series. We love keeping up with the weddings, vacations, births, and highlights of the lives of celebrities and the famous – not to mention Britain’s royal family. We’re enchanted by tales of the underdog and the anti-heroes who get their happy endings. And somewhere in all of this, we formulate a vision for what our own lives should look like.

But real life rarely resembles fairytales and there is never any guarantee of a happy ending. The Bible isn’t much for fairytales either, and the story in the sixth chapter of Mark’s Gospel is about a royal family that no one envies. King Herod’s second wife, Queen Herodias, is portrayed as a conniving and vengeful woman, filled with hatred and the desire for revenge. She ultimately ropes her young daughter into a murder plot against God’s chosen, John the Baptist. This story reads more like a horror story than a fairytale, as we read about the presentation of John’s head on a platter at her request. We see that King Herod would rather commit murder than appear to be a fool in front of his guests. And John the Baptist’s life itself seems rather tragic; John lived a challenging life, was imprisoned unjustly, and then killed horribly and unexpectedly. And yet, Jesus said of him, “Among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist.” There are no fairytale endings in the Bible, even for God’s chosen servants.

Still, we humans cling so strongly to images of what we think life should be and look like. We still expect happy, fairytale endings and are often perplexed when our lives hand us something very different. And we are, in fact, so committed to these fairytales and to projecting images of success and happiness, that many of us intentionally project images of our lives to others that are not only highly edited, but sometimes completely false.

There is now a paid service called “Fake a Vacation” in which people can actually send snapshots of themselves to a company that will edit the photos into fake (but fabulous) vacation spots so the client can share the images on social media sites. This may sound extreme, but it’s not too far off from the way our lives are edited on social media and the outside world to fit happy narratives.

In 2013, The Onion ran an article satirizing this phenomenon, with the headline "Facebook Version of Marriage Going Great". With tongue in cheek, they reported on a couple whose Facebook friends react to their happy lives as featured on social media; they claim that the entire vacation was "evidently spent relaxing happily" and was "not once tarnished by short tempers or strained periods of silence."

We've likely all seen these kinds of images and storylines online, and many of us engage in similar behaviors. We know intellectually that what is projected doesn't tell the whole story, and yet research shows that spending time on social media often causes or increases depression in people because we inevitably compare our lives to what we are seeing portrayed publicly and then end up feeling that our lives fall short.

Life doesn't have to be less than a fairytale to disappoint us, either. If your life is not going the way you expected or hoped it would or even if it has veered far from the way you'd imagined it, you're not alone. Perhaps you've been sidelined by an injury or illness, a death, a loss, a divorce or broken relationship, or maybe something distressing has happened to your children or someone you love. You may be filled with a sense of disillusionment, anger, grief, heartache, sorrow, or confusion. You may wonder, "Why?" "What went wrong?" You may even despair of life itself.

There are people who can teach us a different way to approach life, however – people whose lives look nothing like a fairytale – people whose lives are not in any way conventional, but who find deep joy and purpose. You probably know someone who has suffered great loss and whose life did not play out as they had hoped, but still, they find joy and a deeper purpose despite it all. Often, these people have found meaning beyond the expected storylines of their culture and are people of faith. John the Baptist is just one example among many from the Bible, along with the many saints and faithful who offer different scripts - alternatives to the lives prescribed by Hollywood, Disney, social media, or even our cultural traditions. This script is God's script, and it follows God's purpose and calling on our lives instead.

As people of faith who follow Jesus, this is exactly where our deepest hopes and dreams are to be rooted, in what St. Paul describes in our epistle today as the "glorious grace that [God] freely bestowed on us." Scripture reminds us that no matter what twists and turns we face in life, no matter what trials or disappointments we suffer, they do not compare to the "inheritance" that God has for us. Paul writes, "having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will," we are "blessed... with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places," and "marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit... the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people."

When our lives find their meanings and purposes – not in human storylines, but in God's storyline – the God who called John the Baptist, the prophets, the saints, and each of us to a life of faith, then we can start to see our lives very differently and adjust to new expectations. We can throw away the scripts and storylines someone handed to us or that we embraced long

ago and realize that our lives find their deepest meaning and purpose in something much bigger and greater than ourselves and our individual storylines. And as we root ourselves more deeply in God and God's Word, we begin to see that our lives have the potential to impact others with the love of God in a much deeper way than we ever imagined.

John the Baptist's life was, one could say, rather tragic, and yet, this is not how we usually think of John. We remember that he was a hero of the faith who paved the way for Jesus and helped bring salvation and the Good News of God to countless generations after him and whose witness still inspires us. Like all the saints, we have been blessed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, we have been called and redeemed by God, and we have been given God's glorious grace to live lives full of meaning and purpose, imbued by none other than our Creator.

Maya Angelou once said, "You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them." Few of us will live fairytale lives. But we have a choice about how we will ultimately define our lives when we follow God's storyline, and the grace, joy, and purpose it brings. Thanks be to God.

*** HYMN**

"There's a Wideness In God's Mercy"

Blue Hymnal #298

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5LN1ZvwWfs>

Respond in Love and Service

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Leader: We say together in faith

All Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.

Leader: We believe in God the Father, who created all things:

All for by his will they were created and have their being.

Leader: We believe in God the Son, who was slain:

All for with his blood, he purchased us for God, from every tribe and language, from every people and nation.

Leader: We believe in God the Holy Spirit:

All the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!' Even so come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

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. Thank you!
Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice.

*** DOXOLOGY**

Blue Hymnal #592

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uyg6-htOtHU>

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

We make our offerings, small and large, with the hope and confidence that all we do, all we offer all we say, all we think, and all we hope will take root in this world and be the source of new expressions of God's love, of God's justice, of God's character, of God's mission, and of God's reign. May God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven through us, alongside us, despite us, and for us. Amen.

*** HYMN FOR OUR NATION**

"Heal our Land"

Red Hymnal #800

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTm_rA54EGw

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Confident of God's care for us in the midst of the world's sufferings, we join together in the power of the Spirit to pray for the church, the earth, the world, and all who are in need, responding to the words "Teach us your way" with the phrase **"you are full of compassion."**

A brief silence.

God of the Church, we praise you for sowing the good seed of the Gospel throughout the world, and we mourn that at this time many Christians cannot assemble to nurture one another for growth in the faith. Tend your people; support bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders; give us strength through your word. Lead seminaries to plan appropriately for the fall semester.

A brief silence.

O God, teach us your way:
you are full of compassion.

God of the earth, we praise you for a wondrous creation, and we mourn that many lands and seas are groaning for rebirth. Nurture our green spaces and national parks; send rain where there is drought; protect engendered animals from poachers. Show us how to care for your earth and its creatures.

A brief silence.

O God, teach us your way:
you are full of compassion.

God of the nations, we praise you for the good that has been given us in this country, and we mourn that many people here are poor and dispossessed, that we have allowed racism to distort our society, that violence breaks out in our land. Lead us to form communities in which all people are equal and where disputes are settled without violence. Save us from preserving a past that has been harmful to many. Bring an end to warfare around the world, and mend the torn fabric of humankind with your truth and mercy.

A brief silence.

O God, teach us your way:
you are full of compassion.

God of humankind, we praise you for wherever health and happiness prevail, and we mourn that many people suffer. Each day thousands more contract the virus; renters are facing eviction; medical workers are exhausted; some of the sick have no access to health care; countless people are broken by sorrows. Open our hearts to your children who suffer in any way, and show us how to serve them.

A brief silence.

O God, teach us your way:
you are full of compassion.

God of the seasons, we praise you for summertime, and we mourn that this year many hopes and expectations are denied. Give relief to those who suffer from the heat. Protect travelers from infection. Guard our children. Give rest to those with no vacation time, hope to those who are unemployed, and patience to all who must endure this difficult time.

A brief silence.

O God, teach us your way:
you are full of compassion.

God, you are Abba, our loving Father. You are our Sovereign of our lives, our Redeemer, the Rock on which we build. Hear us as we offer the petitions of our hearts.

A longer time of silence.

O God, teach us your way:
you are full of compassion.

God of eternity, we praise you for all who have died in the faith, especially this week the apostles, Mary Magdalene, and James. We mourn our own beloved dead. At the end, bring us all into the shining light of your presence.

A brief silence.

O God, teach us your way:
you are full of compassion.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

* **CLOSING HYMN**

"Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord"

Blue Hymnal #392

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRfzx7Xc1tA>

*** BENEDICTION**

Leader: It is time to go out and share God's secret purpose which has been disclosed in Jesus Christ.

All: With God's help, Amen!

Leader: Share that secret with others by the way you live:
with the words on your lips,
by the deeds of your hands,
with the prayers in your minds,
and through the love in your hearts.

All: With God's help, Amen!

Leader: The grace of Christ will redeem you
the enduring love of God will support you,
the friendship of the Holy Spirit will accompany you,
this day and ever more.

All: Amen!

The End of Today's Worship Service – The Beginning of Service

Announcements

Welcome to worship with us this morning! We're glad that you're here! If you do not have a church home, we invite you to become a part of our compassionate church family... ask Carlos, Larry or an Elder about meaningful participation and membership!

Next Sunday CP Larry Sears will lead the service.

See weekly calendar below

Weekly Calendar

TBD	TBD	Food Pantry
TBD	TBD	Clothes Closet
Sunday	10:00 AM	Sunday School
Sunday	11:00 Am	Worship Service

Holy Communion is observed the First Sunday of each month.

Crestholme Presbyterian Church Officers

Session

<u>Class of 2021</u>	<u>Class of 2022</u>	<u>Class of 2023</u>
Cathie Owen	Irene Thomas	Katie Lamb
Netsy Williamson	Steve Tovar	

Clerk of the Session: Dick Crist
Church Treasurer: Fred Archer

Trustees

<u>Class of 2021</u>	<u>Class of 2022</u>	<u>Class of 2023</u>
Penny Christoff	Fred Archer	Tommy Rudwick

Crestholme Presbyterian Church Staff

Stated Supply Minister	Vacant
Pulpit Supply Preachers	Dr. Carlos Baladez
	CP Larry Sears
	Fred Archer
Choir Director	Robin Bernhard
Organist	Cathie Owen
Secretary/Coordinator	Vacant

Membership in the Presbyterian Church is open to those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Every member and officer will be more than happy to visit with you about salvation by faith in Jesus and membership at Crestholme.

Telephone: 210-333-1301 FAX: 210-333-1301

Email: crestholmepc@satx.rr.com Web Site: www.crestholmepc.com

