

November 21, 2021

Reflection

My grief lies all within,
And these external manners of lament
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
That swells with silence in the tortured soul.
— William Shakespeare

Prayerful lament is better than silence. However, I've found that many people are afraid of lament. They find it too honest, too open, or too risky. But there's something far worse: silent despair. Giving God the silent treatment is the ultimate manifestation of unbelief. Despair lives under the hopeless resignation that God doesn't care, he doesn't hear, and nothing is ever going to change. People who believe this stop praying, they give up. This silence is a soul killer.
— Mark Vroegop

I shall look at the world through tears. Perhaps I shall see things that dry-eyed I could not see.
— Nicholas Wolterstorff

Use the time before the service as an opportunity to prepare for worship, quiet your heart, and meet with Christ. Feel free to read the reflection quotes to the left. As a courtesy, please silence all mobile phones and electronic devices for the duration of the service.

Why liturgy?

'Liturgy' simply means the elements and sequence of the worship. Every church has a liturgy, whether or not it's stated or talked about. It's a way of telling a story. Our liturgy tells the true story of God making all things good, the world and humanity turning against him, and his persistent forgiving love rescuing his people through Jesus Christ, who is making all things new in himself. Every week our liturgy tells us the good news that God saves sinners and shapes them into a new people for the good of the world.

While some of the ways we worship might be foreign to you, we encourage you to try them on for a while and see if you can't benefit from them. Written prayers read in unison are meant to work the same way songs do—they give a common voice to our personal devotion as we each meditate on their meaning. Learning liturgy, C.S. Lewis said, is like learning to dance. It's awkward at first, but after a while you focus not on the individual steps, but on the One you are worshiping.

Our worship begins each week with a **call to worship**. We are gathered here today because God, our Creator, desires to have a relationship with us and has made a way possible for it through his son, Jesus Christ. Whether we realize it or not, he is the one calling us to himself—today and every day.

Text in **bold** is read together by the entire congregation. Plain text is read by one of the worship service leaders.

Call to Worship | From Psalm 103

Praise the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

**Who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;
who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion.**

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Let all that I am praise the Lord.

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty | Song of Praise

Praise to the Lord
The Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul praise him for he is thy health and salvation
All ye who hear now to his temple draw near
Join me in glad adoration

Praise to the Lord
Who ov'r all things so wondrously reigneth
Shelters thee under his wings; yea, so gently sustaineth
Hast thou not seen how all thy longings have been
Granted in what he ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord
Who doth prosper thy work and defend thee
Surely his goodness and mercy here daily attend thee
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do
If with his love he befriend thee

Praise to the Lord
O let all that is in me adore him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him
Let the 'Amen' sound from his people again
Gladly fore'er we adore him

Words: Joachim Neander (1620)

Music: Lobe den Herren (1665)

Prayer of Approach

Song of Moses | Song of Deliverance

Oh the Lord, our strength and song
Highest praise to him belongs
Christ the Lord, our Conquering King
Your name we raise, your triumphs sing

*Praise the Lord, our Mighty Warrior
Praise the Lord, the Glorious One
By his hand we stand in victory
By his name we overcome*

Though the storms of hell pursue
In darkest night we worship you
You divide the raging sea
From death to life you safely lead

All the saints and angels bow
Hosts of heaven crying out
'Glory, glory to the King
You reign for all eternity'

The Lord shall reign forever and ever
The Lord shall reign forever and ever
The Lord shall reign forever and ever
The Lord shall reign forever and ever

Words and Music: Aaron Keyes, Ben Smith, Chris Moerman,
Graham Kendrick, Joseph Barrett (2011)

Why do we sing?

As God's people gather for worship, we focus our attention on God and away from ourselves by singing together. We sing praises to God for who he is and what he has done. We sing because it is the best and most complete response that we can utter.

Confession happens within the context of relationship, both with God and each other. Because sin is so pervasive in our lives, we are called to come before the Father with honesty and transparency, confessing our brokenness and asking for forgiveness and healing through Jesus Christ. **Renewal** is experienced as we acknowledge our need for mercy and celebrate the abundance of God's grace toward us.

We confess **corporately** to show our unity even in our brokenness.

We confess **individually** in order to own our failings toward God and toward humankind in thought, word and deed.

During **private confession**, ask God to simply lead you to rest in his goodness. What has taken on "saving" power for you? Bring this to God. Offer what rules your heart to God, and resting in Jesus say goodbye to it.

Confession of Sin

Almighty God,
you are generous in abundance;
you have given us grace that we do not deserve.

**You have called us from death to life,
granted us forgiveness through your Son,
given us the Holy Spirit,
and made us your children.**

**You have provided for us,
both spiritually and materially.**

Yet we have failed to be thankful
and to rejoice in your goodness.
We have ignored you and neglected
to give you the praise that is due your name.
Forgive us for our ingratitude.

**Grant us eyes that see your hand
at work in all areas of our life.**

**Enable us to realize that every good thing comes from you.
And deepen our gratitude, that we might serve you
with undivided and joyful hearts.**

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Private Confession

Assurance of Pardon | Ephesians 1:3-8

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

The Love of God | Songs of Assurance

The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell
It goes beyond the highest star
And reaches to the lowest hell
The guilty pair, bowed down with care
God gave his Son to win
His erring child he reconciled
And pardoned from his sin

*O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure
The saints' and angels' song*

Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the skies of parchment made
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Tho stretched from sky to sky

Words and Music: Frederick Lehman (1917)

O Love that Will Not Let Me Go

O Love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee
I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be

O Light that follow'st all my way, I yield my flick'ring torch to thee
My heart restores its borrowed ray, that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be

O Joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee
I trace the rainbow through the rain, and feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be

O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee
I lay in dust life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be

Words: George Matheson (1882)
Music: Christopher Miner (1997)

When we **affirm our faith** together it reminds us that we are part of an ancient and global faith. We join with believers throughout the ages and across the continents in declaring the truth of the gospel and the Christian faith.

God speaks to us through the reading of his Word.

Affirmation of Faith | Based on Romans 8

**We are convinced that nothing
can ever separate us from God's love.
Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,
neither our fears for today
nor our worries about tomorrow –
not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.
Indeed, nothing in all creation
will ever be able to separate us
from the love of God
that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Missions Emphasis

Scripture | Psalm 88

**A Song. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah. To the choirmaster:
according to Mahalath Leannoth. A Maskil of Heman
the Ezrahite.**

- ¹ O LORD, God of my salvation,
I cry out day and night before you.
- ² Let my prayer come before you;
incline your ear to my cry!
- ³ For my soul is full of troubles,
and my life draws near to Sheol.
- ⁴ I am counted among those who go down to the pit;
I am a man who has no strength,
- ⁵ like one set loose among the dead,
like the slain that lie in the grave,
like those whom you remember no more,
for they are cut off from your hand.
- ⁶ You have put me in the depths of the pit,
in the regions dark and deep.
- ⁷ Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
and you overwhelm me with all your waves. *Selah*
- ⁸ You have caused my companions to shun me;
you have made me a horror to them.
I am shut in so that I cannot escape;
- ⁹ my eye grows dim through sorrow.

- Every day I call upon you, O LORD;
I spread out my hands to you.
- ¹⁰ Do you work wonders for the dead?
Do the departed rise up to praise you? *Selah*
- ¹¹ Is your steadfast love declared in the grave,
or your faithfulness in Abaddon?
- ¹² Are your wonders known in the darkness,
or your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?
- ¹³ But I, O LORD, cry to you;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.
- ¹⁴ O LORD, why do you cast my soul away?
Why do you hide your face from me?
- ¹⁵ Afflicted and close to death from my youth up,
I suffer your terrors; I am helpless.
- ¹⁶ Your wrath has swept over me;
your dreadful assaults destroy me.
- ¹⁷ They surround me like a flood all day long;
they close in on me together.
- ¹⁸ You have caused my beloved and my friend to shun me;
my companions have become darkness.

Sermon | Learning to Lament

Rev. Darrell Brooker

God speaks to us through the preaching of his Word.

A **sermon** is not just teaching for living, it is mainly a time when Christ encounters his people through his Word. The sermon is only one aspect of the total worship experience. A question to ask yourself as you leave the service is not “Did I enjoy the sermon?” but rather “Did it lead me into deeper, heartfelt worship?”—for every sermon should show us Jesus and lead us to worship him.

The Spirit takes the common elements of bread and wine and feeds us spiritually with the body and blood of Jesus, for our nourishment and growth in grace, and so strengthens us to be sent out into the world as God's agents of his generous hospitality.

The Eucharist is the definitive action practiced in the Christian community that keeps Jesus Christ before us as the Savior of the world and our Savior, and ourselves as sinners in need of being saved. The Eucharist is the sacramental act that pulls us into actual material participation with Christ (eating and drinking bread and wine) as he gives his very life "for us and for our salvation" . . . The Eucharist puts Jesus in his place: dying on the cross and giving us that sacrificed life. And it puts us in our place: opening our hands and receiving the remission of our sins, which is our salvation.
—Eugene Peterson

The Lord's Supper

Welcome to the Table | Based on Luke 13:29, Romans 8:32

From east and west, north and south, people will come and take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Come then to the joyful feast of the Lord and be transformed.

Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of the faith:

**All: Christ has died!
Christ is risen!
Christ will come again!**

Leader: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All: Therefore let us keep the feast.

Leader: These are the gifts of God for the people of God.
Feed on them in your hearts by faith and with thanksgiving.

Distribution of the Bread and Cup

Who is invited to take part?

Communion, also called the Lord's Supper, is the family meal of Christians. We invite all baptized followers of Jesus who acknowledge their sins against God and their neighbors and confess their need for the grace of Christ to partake of this meal. If you are a Christian and haven't yet been baptized, please talk with one of our pastors; we would be honored to baptize you. We also ask that children wait to partake in the Lord's Supper until they have met with the Elders and professed faith.

What if I am not ready?

If you or your children are not ready to partake in the Lord's Supper, you are invited to come forward and ask for prayer. You may also remain in your seat and use the prayers provided below as you meet with God at this time.

What is the process?

After those who remain seated are served, come forward by rows using the center aisle and return to your seat using the outside aisles. We will wait until all are served to partake of the elements together. Please note we serve wine in communion. If you cannot receive wine, white grape juice is available on the outer rim of the communion trays. A gluten-free option is available on the small plate on the communion table.

Prayer for those taking communion

Lord Jesus, your perfect life, your death and resurrection are the source of all blessing in this life and the life to come. As I eat this bread and drink this cup, renew me in the joy and glory of knowing and serving you. I come to this table on the basis of your merit only and not my own. As you have completely and fully offered yourself for me, I now completely and fully offer myself to you as a living sacrifice. Amen.

Prayer for those searching for truth

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer for those struggling with sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

Prayer of belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Lord, from Sorrows Deep I Call (Psalm 42) | Song of Communion

Lord, from sorrows deep I call
When my hope is shaken
Torn and ruined from the fall
Hear my desperation
For so long I've pled and prayed
God, come to my rescue
Even so the thorn remains
Still my heart will praise you

Storms within my troubled soul
Questions without answers
On my faith these billows roll
God, be now my shelter
Why are you cast down my soul?
Hope in him who saves you
When the fires have all grown cold
Cause this heart to praise you

Should my life be torn from me
Every worldly pleasure
When all I possess is grief
God, be then my treasure
Be my vision in the night
Be my hope and refuge
Till my faith is turned to sight
Lord, my heart will praise you

O my soul, put your hope in God
My Help, my Rock, I will praise him
Sing, O sing, through the raging storm
You're still my God, my salvation

Words and Music: Matt Papa and Matt Boswell (2018)

Christ Is Mine Forevermore | Song of Sending

Mine are days that God has numbered
I was made to walk with him
Yet I look for worldly treasure
And forsake the King of kings
But mine is hope in my Redeemer
Though I fall, his love is sure
For Christ has paid for every failing
I am his forevermore

Mine are tears in times of sorrow
Darkness not yet understood
Through the valley I must travel
Where I see no earthly good
But mine is peace that flows from heaven
And the strength in times of need
I know my pain will not be wasted
Christ completes his work in me

Mine are days here as a stranger
Pilgrim on a narrow way
One with Christ I will encounter
Harm and hatred for his name
But mine is armor for this battle
Strong enough to last the war
And he has said he will deliver
Safely to the golden shore

And mine are keys to Zion city
Where beside the King I walk
For there my heart has found its treasure
Christ is mine forevermore

Come rejoice now, O my soul
For his love is my reward
Fear is gone and hope is sure
Christ is mine forevermore!

Words and Music: Jonny Robinson and Rich Thompson (2016)

Benediction | 1 Peter 5:10-11

May the grace of God, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be dominion forever and ever! Amen.

Let us go forth to serve the world as those who love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God!

Questions or Prayer

If you have questions concerning the sermon or any part of the service this morning, or would like someone to pray for you, please come to the front immediately after the service today and speak with one of the pastors.

Refreshments

We have coffee and refreshments every Sunday following the service. Please stick around and meet new people, and even learn how our church can become your home.

How Do I Connect at Redeemer?

Give Us Seven | Worship is the heartbeat of our life together. To get to know us better, we ask that you “give us seven.” Join us for seven Sundays over the course of a couple of months. In doing so, you’ll come to learn who we are and what we believe, and experience the mission to which God has called us.

Meet With Us | If you’re interested in meeting with a pastor, we’d love to buy you coffee and get to know you. Getting to know long-time members is another great way to know about us, and to be known.

Join the Community | While worship is the heartbeat of our community, we know that to grow in the Christian faith we must experience the gospel in the context of life with others. To that end, we encourage everyone to join a Community Group where we come together to eat, study, pray, and encourage each other throughout the week.

Serve | God builds his kingdom through his people. Your gifts, talents, and resources are needed at Redeemer, not only to support what God is doing in our midst, but also to ensure that the good news of the gospel is taking shape throughout our community.

Community Groups

Community Groups are places of care and community where we live the Christian life together. Belonging to a Community Group is the best way to truly belong to our church. Contact mike@redeemersr.org.

Online

WiFi Network: Redeemer Guest
Password: redeemer

Children

We value safety, fun, and learning about Jesus for all of our children. We currently provide a nursery (age 0-2) in Charter Hall and preschool (age 3-5) in the Red Cottage. Contact mike@redeemersr.org.

Do You Need Care?

We are seeking to be a church where people feel known and cared for. We’d love to know how we might serve you. Can we pray for you? Do you need spiritual counsel? Do you need financial or physical assistance? Would you like to talk to a pastor? Contact darrell@redeemersr.org.

Giving

Offering Basket: Located in the foyer on the Welcome Table

Mail: Redeemer Presbyterian Church
4930 Newanga Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95405

Online: Visit redeemersr.org or connect directly to our online giving portal using the QR code to the right



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Calendar | November 21-27

Sunday	10:45AM	Worship
Tuesday	10:00AM	Women's Bible Study
Wednesday	12:00PM	Prayer for Missions (Zoom)
	12:00PM	Great Thanksgiving Banquet
	6:00PM	Central Community Group
	6:30PM	Windsor Community Group
Thursday		Thanksgiving Day
Saturday	7:30AM	Men's Group
	10:00AM	Women's Book Group

Announcements

A Daily Advent Devotional

Copies of the daily Advent devotional, *The Weary World Rejoices*, are available for purchase for \$3 in the lobby.

Advent Wreaths

Celebrate the first Sunday of Advent by making your own Advent wreath to use in your home during the season. Please register online beforehand or with the church office and join us next Sunday following our worship service in Hummon Hall. A suggested donation of \$5 will help offset the cost of the candles and supplies.

Caroling Sing-along Party

All are invited to Dick Noble's home (3301 Thorn Rd, Sebastopol) on December 11 at 4:30PM for a festive Christmas carol sing-along! If you play an instrument, feel free to bring it (sheet music will be provided). Please RSVP to Dick (707-326-1541) or Jake Aharonian (707-494-9418)

Christmas Eve Service

Our Lessons & Carols Christmas Eve Service at 5:00PM is the culminating event of our season of celebration. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors. We will reflect on the story of Christmas through Scripture, readings, poems, and carols.

Birth Announcement

We rejoice with Nathan and Betsy Braly on the birth of their daughter, Mary Louise, on November 12.

Mark and Megumi Bocanegra Mission to the World (PCA)

Mark and Megumi met in Chiba, Japan at church. Mark is Filipino and had spent 10 years of his childhood in Tokyo. After working in Japan's largest internet mall confirming his call to Japan, he attended Westminster Seminary. Megumi grew up in a Christian home and developed a heart for youth in Japan. After ordination, Mark and Megumi returned to Japan and served in the Kaihin Makukari Grace Church (KMGC). They are now serving as MTW missionaries partnering with KMGC with the goal of planting daughter churches.

Churches in Japan are struggling to grow and actually their decline is outpacing the growth of new church plants. One third of the 90 pastors in the Presbyterian Church Japan are over 65 years old, highlighting the need to raise up younger pastors. The neighborhood that is the first place they desire to see a new church planted is a 35,000 person neighborhood. The 60-person Kaihin Makuhari Grace Church is currently the only church serving this population.

A year ago, after support raising with MTW, the Bocanegas returned to Japan ready to serve at KMGC and begin reaching out to neighbors and facilitating a church-based campus ministry to evangelize and train the younger generation. It has been a busy year, but not necessarily as they had planned due to on and off Covid restrictions. One of the adjustments is a delay in holding afternoon services as the beginning of a new church plant moved to April 2022 instead of December 2021. Additional team members arrival—a group of Westminster Seminary students exploration trip and a short-term team coming to help with outreach—is all dependent on Japan being open.

In the midst of this “abnormal” year, Kate, Nina, and Sarah welcomed their baby brother Luca. Not only did they share their love with him, but also RS Virus—necessitating one month old Luca's hospitalization to facilitate his breathing with a ventilator.

Mark says that this has been the most difficult year they have ever experienced—spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally. But he and the family are left with gratefulness for God's faithfulness in hearing prayers and sustaining the family and ministry during this year.

Khen and Rith Tombing Presbyterian Mission International

Khen came to the United States from India to attend Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis. As the seminary encouraged foreign students to return to their home countries to minister rather than remaining in the US, the staff realized that being a conduit for funds from the US would provide much needed prayer and financial support. So PMI was born to facilitate laboring in the students' countries of origin in evangelism, church planting, leadership training, holistic ministries, and connecting churches internationally. India is just one of 15 countries where Covenant Seminary students are serving under PMI.

Khen completed his M.Div. in 1986 and a Th.M. degree three years later. Khen, PMI's first missionary, has been serving in Manipur, in northeast India, since his graduation. Amidst persecution, poverty, health setbacks, family deaths, and enormous need, Khen has participated in planting of over 36 churches in India and 12 churches in Myanmar. He has begun more than 10 Christian primary schools for the poor in rural villages. Also, he has

helped start high schools, a college, theological education, babies and children's homes, and women's empowerment program. In the midst of this gospel fruitfulness, arrest of pastors and deaths from Covid have taken an emotional toll on the Christian community, although they have also experienced God's comfort and strength to persevere.

Khen is the Chief Coordinator of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in India. Rith serves as Secretary of Women in the church denomination where she is actively participating in the church's ministry of empowering women with care and support for developing their own businesses.

Their adult daughter, Nemy, has been joined by a number of children Khen and Rith have taken in due to the death of family members and others outside their family. The number of people in their yearly family photos has grown by leaps and bounds.

It seems that Khen has contracted Covid twice. The first time he opted to remain in his local village, because everyone who traveled to the nearest hospital never returned alive. The second bout seem to be not as problematic. The latest challenge was the arrest of one of their pastors for preaching the gospel, though he was not breaking the law by forcing conversion to Christianity.

Front cover photograph by Megan Collins, Riverfront Regional Park, Windsor, CA.

Redeemer Presbyterian Church is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). If you would like to know more about our denomination, or are moving and need recommendations for churches, please speak to one of our pastors.

Unless otherwise noted, scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version 2001 Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

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