

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
March 24, 2024

Palm Sunday



"You made men ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water, yet You brought us out into a place of abundance." - Psalm 66:12

"*" = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – John 12:12-16

Leader: On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast,

People: When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

Leader: Took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout,

People: Hosanna!

Leader: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord,

People: Even the King of Israel.

Leader: Jesus, finding a young donkey,

People: Sat on it; as it is written,

Leader: Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold,

People: Your King is coming,

Leader: Seated on a donkey's colt. These things His disciples did not understand at the first;

People: But when Jesus was glorified,

Leader: Then they remembered that these things were written of Him,

People: And that they had done these things to Him.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Ephesians 5:25b-27

***Hymn #235** (red hymnal) – *"All Glory, Laud and Honor"*

Scripture Reading – Luke 3:15-18; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:1-4; 2Peter 3:7-9

Ancient Creedal Reading – Apostles' Creed (pg#845 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]

***Doxology #731** (red hymnal)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Sung Psalm #51A** (see insert below) – *"God, Be Merciful to Me"*

Prayers of the Church & Lord's Prayer (sins)

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Reformation Creedal Reading – Westminster Larger Catechism (1647 AD), Q165

Leader: What is Baptism?

People: Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament,

Leader: Wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water in the name of the Father,

People: And of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Matt 28:19

Leader: To be a sign and seal of ingrafting into Himself, Gal 3:27

People: Of remission of sins by his blood, Mark 1:4; Rev 1:5

Leader: And regeneration by his Spirit; of adoption, Titus 3:5; Eph 5:26; Gal 3:26-27

People: And resurrection unto everlasting life; 1Cor 15:29; Rom 6:5

Leader: And whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted

People: Into the visible church, 1Cor 12:13

Leader: And enter into an open and professed engagement

People: To be wholly and only the Lord's. Rom 6:4

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Luke 12:49-50

***Gloria Patri #735** (red hymnal)

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.

Sermon – “Of Fire, Water and Baptism”

A Psalm Sunday Sermon

***Hymn #237** (red hymnal) – “Ride On, Ride On in Majesty”

***Benediction** – Numbers 6:24-26

[After service, until 12:30 PM, there is coffee hour fellowship downstairs – Everyone is welcome!]

Announcements

- The elders have decided to create a “**Deacons’ Fund**” to aid those in need within the church.
 - The Pastor will guide the fund with the blessings of the Deacons.
(Unless it is a very sensitive issue in which the Elders will give their blessings.)
 - The Elders will be informed of all giving to keep the matter in prayer.
 - A special collection plate for the Deacons’ Fund will be put out on the 1st Sunday of the month.
 - You can donate to the Fund at anytime, just label it “Deacons’ Fund.”
 - The leaders will practice strict confidentiality.
- The church is organizing an **Internet Prayer Chain** for public prayer requests and is looking for volunteers who promise to pray for the requests sent out by email by the Prayer Chain facilitator Donna Ensminger. If you are interested please email Pastor Doug.

- The church is planning a few **Workdays** to help parishioners in need. They will probably be on a Saturday sometime in April or May. Besides labors of charity for our brothers and sisters they will also be a time of fellowship.
- The Elders have begun to review and update the **bylaws**. If you have any suggestions please contact one of the Elders. Copies of the bylaws can be found up front or on the webpage. trinityreformedct.org/by-laws-policies
- *Favor to ask:* Please do not put any **liquids** in the garage bags in the grange, especially during coffee hour.
- **Summer worship hours** will be at 9:30 AM for July and August. Sunday School for All Ages will end sometime in June.

Schedule & Upcoming Events

- On **Easter** (March 31st) there will be baptisms & new members joining the church!
 - We will be taking a *picture* of the whole congregation after service.
 - There will be *no Coffee Hour* on Easter.
- Pastor Doug will be starting a **new Adult Sunday School Study** on April 7th going through the great creeds of the ancient church (Apostles, Nicene, Athanasian and Chalcedon Creeds). We will read through the Westminster Larger Catechism in September.
- On Saturday, July 20th (with a rain date of July 27th), there will be a **pool party and picnic** for the church at the Gabelmann house. (Time & details to be announced.)

Normal Weekly Schedule

Sunday

9:00-10:15 AM

Sunday School for All Ages

- Younger Children's Class (Vika Winters)
- Older Children's Class (Mason Goodell)
- Women's Study (Verna Aldrich)
Taking Hold of God: Reformed & Puritan Perspectives
on Prayer edited by Joel R. Beeke & Brian G. Najapfour
- Adult Study (Pastor Doug)
Study on the Ancient Creeds

10:30 AM

LORD'S DAY WORSHIP

(Lord's Supper on the 1st Sunday)

c.11:40 AM

Coffee Hour

Tuesday

10:30 AM – Noon

Christian Classic Study (Pastor Doug's house)
Augustine's City of God

Wednesday

6:30 – 8:00 PM

Wednesday Bible Study (Pastor Doug's house)
Book of Genesis

Friday

6:30 PM

YADG – Young Adult Discussion Group (Pastor Doug's house)
1st & 3rd Fridays

Saturday

[*morning*]

Prayer Group – Meets at the Decker-Gabelmann house.
If you are interested, please contact Sheryl Gabelmann.

Contact Information

Worship: Every Sunday at 10:30 AM (9:30 AM for July & August) at the Winchester
Grange: 100 Newfield Rd, Winchester Center, CT 06098

Church's Mailing Address: Trinity Reformed Church; P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065

Pastor Doug: (860) 379-1147; douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net

Online Resources

Church's Facebook Page: facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/

Church's Webpage: TrinityReformedCT.org

Church Youtube Channel: youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT

Pastor Doug's Youtube Channels:

Simply Reformed: youtube.com/simplyreformed

Pilgrims of Plunder: youtube.com/@PilgrimsofPlunder

*Liking, Commenting, Sharing
facebook posts and Subscribing,
Liking, Commenting on youtube
helps boost TRC's online
outreach.*

Leadership

Teaching & Preaching Elder: Pastor Doug Aldrich
(860-379-1147; douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net)

Ruling Elders: Bob Ensminger
(860-485-8738; robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com)
Rich Gabelmann
(860-605-7852; rgabelmann0415@gmail.com)

Deacons: David Mattson (*chair*), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell,
Mason Goodell, Dean Winters

Music Coordinator & Treasurer: Cindy Rines

Clerk: Sheryl Gabelmann

Sunday School: Verna Aldrich, Mason Goodell

Sermon Notes

Luke 12:49-50

“Of Fire, Water and Baptism”

A Palm Sunday Sermon

March 24, 2024

Introduction – Holidays

- 1) When you think of holidays, which Christian holiday first comes to mind?
 - a) Probably Christmas, though that wasn't always the most important.
 - b) Christmas only became extremely popular in the 19th & 20th centuries and in many cases for marketing reasons. (See Dickens & Coca-Cola.)
- 2) Throughout church history various holidays have come and gone. For example, Michaelmas was hugely popular in the Middle Ages.
- 3) Our puritan Congregational forefathers rejected all holidays as too Roman Catholic and not being commanded in the Bible.
 - a) They thought the Bible teaches only one holiday: Ex 20:8; Acts 20:
1Cor 16:2; Rev 1:10
The Christian Sabbath, on Sunday, the Lord's Day.
 - b) The Puritans were right, that the New Testament doesn't command Rom 14:5
Gal 4:10-11
Col 2:16-17
holidays and warns about over focusing on any holiday, though freedom is allowed on the issue.
 - c) Thus the elders decided there will be no Maundy Thursday, Good Friday or Sunrise services for this year.
 - i) Mostly for logistical reasons (no building) and a general lack of interest.
 - ii) They are not evil, just optional.
 - iii) If you would like to see special services in the future (e.g. Christmas Eve), do speak to the elders.
- 4) The major Christian holidays have their origins in the earliest times of the ancient church. [i.e. between the time of the New Testament (NT) and the medieval ages, cir. 100-500 AD].
 - a) The most important and ancient Christian holiday, was Easter, going back to the 2nd century AD.
 - b) All the major Christian holidays center around the Lord Jesus and His work:
 - i) **Christmas** = Christ's incarnation (taking on human flesh).
 - ii) **Palm Sunday** = Christ's entry into the royal capitol of Jerusalem.
 - iii) **Good Friday** = Christ's death on the cross for the sins of the world.
 - iv) **Easter** = Christ's resurrection and triumph over death.
 - v) **Pentecost** = Christ sending His Spirit onto His church.
 - c) If you decide to focus on the holidays, remember they all fit together.
- 5) In the ancient church, one tradition that was created, was to have baptisms and new members join on Easter.
 - a) We are blessed to do both for TRC's first Easter!
 - b) So, for today, let's prepare for Easter by pondering Palm Sunday, and by looking at Christ's thoughts and feelings before Jerusalem as described in Luke 12:49-50

Background to Luke 12:49-50

- 1) In Luke 12, the Lord Jesus is heading towards the great city of Jerusalem, the capitol of King David, whose kingdom was prophesied to last forever, and where God dwelt in a special way in OT times in the Temple. Luke 9:51-19:27
2Sam 7:16
1Kgs 8:10-11
- 2) Palm Sunday, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, is recorded in Luke 19:35-38, though it's bittersweet.
 - a) The true King has enter David's Royal City, as per prophecy. Is 9:6-7
 - b) However, the King's mission is to die for the sins of the world. Is 52:13-13:12
- 3) In today's text the Lord describes His mission: "*I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!*" - Luke 12:49

What is This Fire?

- 1) First and foremost, from the context, the fire is the coming judgment.
 - a) As it is used in Luke's writing (Luke & Acts) and the rest of Scripture. Luke 3:9,17; 17:29; Acts 2:19; Gen 19:24; Ex 9:24; Ps 11:6; Is 66:15; 2Pet 3:7; Rev 8:5,7; 20:9-10
 - b) The surrounding context of Luke 12:49-50 is one of judgment.
 - i) The verse before (Luke 12:48) is about how much is demanded from those who have.
 - ii) While the verses that follow (Luke 12:51-53) are about how following Christ will bring division, even among families.
- 2) This judgment is about this present time (i.e. the time between Christ's first and second advent).
 - a) The division is between those who have been redeemed and put into Christ's Kingdom by the work of the Triune God. Eph 1:3ff
 - b) And those who love this fading world, its evil ways and whose father is the devil. John 8:44; Gal 1:4
Eph 2:1-3; 1John 2:17
 - c) Remember, there is no neutrality, you are either in/with/by/for Christ or not. Matt 12:25-26; Luke 4:5-6; 11:18; John 12:31; Acts 26:18; 2Cor 4:4; Gal 1:4; Eph 2:2; Rev 12:9
 - d) Again, you see this in the proceeding verses in Luke 12:51-53, where our Lord speaks that He, and belief in Him, will cause division, even in families.
 - e) This theme of division is also found throughout Luke. Luke 1:52-53; 2:34; 3:5,16-17; 6:20-26; Luke 8:4-15,26-39; 14:26; 21:16-17
- 3) The judgment is also about the final judgment at the end of this age.
 - a) Which is discussed earlier on in the chapter, in Luke 12:35-48.
 - b) As Peter writes, "*But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*" - 2Peter 3:7
- 4) This is both terrifying (in the good sense of learning to fear God, which is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge). Prov 1:7
Ps 111:10
 - a) And encouraging (that evil will lose and the saints vindicated and brought into safety). Ps 66:12
 - b) However, we should remember the Lord Jesus' rebuke of His disciples when they were eager to see judgment come quickly on the earth.

Luke 9:53-56 – “*But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem. When His disciples James and John saw this, they said, ‘Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?’ But He turned and rebuked them, and said, ‘You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.’ And they went on to another village.*”

5) In both these judgments there is hope.

a) Clearly, a future hope in Christ.

b) But, also a present hope of salvation and life in the Spirit.

c) In Luke 3:16-18 we hear both.

Acts 2:19

i) “*John answered and said to them all, ‘As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.’ So with many other exhortations he preached the gospel to the people.*”

ii) Obviously, the “*burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire*” is terrifying judgment.

iii) While, the promise of the Holy Spirit is a great blessing.

d) Pentecost, the Father and the Son sending the Holy Spirit in a special way to be with Christ’s church, happens because it follows Palm Sunday.

Acts 2:3-4

6) Thus, the Lord Jesus earns for this to happen, as He said “*and how I wish it were already kindled!*” - Luke 12:49b

a) For justice against the wicked.

b) And for love of His people

c) However, the Lord Jesus has “*a baptism to undergo*” first.

Luke 12:50a

What is This Baptism?

1) Meanings of “***baptism***”:

a) In the broad sense, it means to wash/dip/sprinkle/clean, usually with water.

Mark 7:4

b) It also can refer to ceremonially clean something with water.

Matt 3:6; Luke 11:38

c) Or, the special internal indwelling and spiritual cleansing of the Holy Spirit.

Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16;
John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16

d) Or, it can mean to be given a time of challenge/suffering.
(Like going through a “baptism of fire.”)

Mark 10:38-39;
Luke 12:50

2) The “baptism” the Lord Jesus has to undergo is clearly His death.

Mark 10:38-39

a) Isaiah prophesied this some 700 years before Christ’s birth.

Is 53:3-12

b) It is the purpose of the incarnation.

John 1:15,14,18; Gal 4:4

c) It is the purpose for all history and creation itself.¹

¹ Ps 2:8; 110:1; Is 52:13-53:12; Matt 22:44; 25:34; 28:18; Mark 1:15; John 17:24; Rom 5:6; 8:20,28,32; 1Cor 15:25; Gal 4:4; Eph 1:2,10; 1Tim 2:6; 6:15; Titus 1:3; Heb 1:1-2; 2:8; 9:26; 1Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8; 17:8

- 3) The only way God can save fallen man is through the death of His Son.
- a) This is such a critical thing.
 - i) It makes Christianity unique among all the world's religions and philosophies.
 - ii) That only God can save, not man "pulling himself up by his bootstraps."
 - iii) It makes all the other ideologies of the world ridiculous to the Christian.
 - iv) And it is the source of great power when believed. Rom 1:16; 1Cor 1:18-24
 - b) God cannot simply ignore sin, because He is just and good, so there has to be justice. Ex 34:7; Ezek 18:4,20; Nah 1:2-3; Hab 1:13; Rom 5:12; 2Thes 1:6-8
 - c) The Savior must be fully man Luke 1:42; 2:6-7; John 1:18; Rom 1:3; 9:5; Phil 2:7-8; Heb 2:14-17; 4:15
 - i) Because "that human nature, which has sinned, must pay for sin." Is 53:3-5,10-11; Rom 5:15,18; 1Cor 15:21; Heb 2:14-16; 1Pet 3:18
 - ii) Thus the Savior represents mankind who will be redeemed. Rom 5:12-18; Heb 7:8-10; 1Cor 15:22,45
 - d) The Savior must be without sin, Is 53:9,11; Jer 23:5; 33:16; Luke 1:35; John 8:46; 1Cor 15:21; 2Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; 7:16,26; 1Pet 1:19; 2:22; 3:18 because "a sinful man could never pay for others." Ps 49:7-8; Heb 7:26-27; 1Pet 3:18
 - e) The Savior must be fully God Is 7:14; 9:6; Jer 23:5-6; Mal 3:1; Luke 11:22; Rom 8:3; 9:5; Gal 4:4-5; Col 2:9-12; 1John 5:20 because only God can withstand God's full and just wrath, conquer death, and redeem Deut 4:24; Ps 76:7; 130:3; Nah 1:6; Is 53:4-11; Matt 19:25-26; John 1:4,18; 3:16; Acts 2:24; 1Pet 3:18 and restore to new perfect life. John 1:4,18; 3:16; Acts 2:24; 1Pet 3:18
- 4) The fact that Jesus is fully man, means that torture, death, let alone experiencing the full wrath of God, is no small thing.
- a) This is such an intense calling the Lord Jesus even prayed to "*remove this cup from Me*" though "*yet not what I will, but what You will.*" - Mark 14:36 Luke 22:42-44
 - b) Thus, in our sermon text our Lord said, "*and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!*" - Luke 12:50b

Conclusion

- 1) Christ's horrific death shows forth justice.
 - a) It's bad enough to reject God and His Law. Rev 21:6-8; 22:14-16
 - b) But to reject Christ's mercy and the Gospel shows how fallen man is. Heb 10:29-31
- 2) Remember, the Word of God is a two edge sword. Is 49:2; Heb 4:12; Rev 1:16; 2:12,16; 19:15
 - a) It always works; It cuts deep.
 - b) It brings both God's righteous wrath when rejected and His gracious mercy when received by faith.
- 3) Thus, His death also shows God's great mercy and love. John 3:16; Rom 5:8; Eph 2:4-9; 2Thes 2:16; 1John 4:10; Rev 1:5
 - a) The Father loves us by decreeing our salvation.
 - b) The Son loves us by becoming human and dying on the cross.

- c) The Spirit loves us by indwelling in us and giving us new life to trust in Christ and walk in His ways.
- 4) Praise God, the true High-King had entered into David's royal city on that first Palm Sunday!
- a) Praise God, He died for our sins! 1Cor 15:3; Rom 5:8
 - b) Praise God, He rose again from the dead! Matt 28:5-6; 2Tim 2:8
(More about that next week.)
 - c) Praise God, He ascended into heaven and now rules and reigns at the right hand of the Father! Acts 1:9; Rom 8:34
 - d) Praise God, He sends His Spirit into us, giving us new life. John 16:7; Rom 6:4
(More about that next week.)
 - e) Praise God, He will return at the end of this age to bring His people into His glorious perfect Kingdom. Matt 24:30-31; 1Thes 4:15-17
- 3) Praise God that we have been baptized into Christ.
(More about that next week.)
- a) Praise God the sacrament of baptism will be given, and new new members will be joining, next week.
 - b) Because of His baptism of fire, we go through a much more gracious and gentle baptism of washing (with water) and new life (the fire of the Spirit given in us). Praise God!
- 4) *"Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire."* - Hebrews 12:28-20