

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for

October 26, 2025



trinityreformedct.org

"For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way." – Romans 14:11-13

“✠” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Isaiah 45:22-25

Leader: Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth;

People: For I am God, and there is no other.

Leader: I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness

People: And will not turn back,

Leader: That to Me every knee will bow,

People: Every tongue will swear allegiance.

Leader: They will say of Me,

People: Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.

Leader: Men will come to Him,

People: And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.

Leader: In the LORD all the offspring of Israel

People: Will be justified and will glory.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Mark 1:40-41

***Hymn #301** – “Join All the Glorious Names”

Scripture Reading – Philippians 2:1-11

Ancient Creedal Proclamation – 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!]

[Gifts labeled “Deacon’s Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

***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 #72B** – “Nomads Will Bow”

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, Q#191.

Leader:	<i>What do we pray for in the second petition (of the Lord's Prayer)?</i>	Matt 6:10
People:	Which is, "Thy Kingdom come"	
Leader:	<i>Acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature</i>	Eph 2:2-3
People:	Under the dominion of sin and Satan,	
Leader:	<i>We pray, that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed,</i>	Ps 68:1,18 Rev 12:10-11
People:	The gospel propagated throughout the world,	2Thes 3:1
Leader:	<i>The Jews called,</i>	Rom 10:1
People:	The fullness of the Gentiles brought in;	John 17:9,20; Rom 11:25-26; Ps 67
Leader:	<i>The church furnished with all gospel-officers and ordinances,</i>	Matt 9:38 2Thes 3:1
People:	Purged from corruption,	Mal 1:11; Zeph 3:9
Leader:	<i>Countenanced and maintained</i>	1Tim 2:1-2
People:	By the civil magistrate:	
Leader:	<i>And the ordinances of Christ may be purely dispensed, and made effectual to the converting of those that are yet in their sins, and the confirming, comforting, and building up of those that are already converted</i>	Acts 4:29-30 Eph 6:18-20 Rom 15:29-30,32 2Thes 1:11; 2:16-17
People:	That Christ would rule in our hearts here,	Eph 3:14-20
Leader:	<i>And hasten the time of His second coming,</i>	Rev 22:20
People:	And our reigning with Him for ever:	
Leader:	<i>And that he would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of His power in all the world,</i>	Is 64:1-2
People:	As may best conduce to these ends.	Rev 4:8-11

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – 1Samuel 5:1-12

***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 – "Every Knee Will Bow"

A Sermon Series on 1Samuel 1-8

***Hymn #296** – "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!"

***Benediction**

Everyone is welcome to Coffee Hour Fellowship downstairs after church today

Announcements

- The **Deacon Fund** (i.e. support for church members in need) is running low, any new donations will be greatly appreciated.
- **Operation Christmas Child** (OCC) gifts are due by Sunday, **Nov 16th**. Please return them to Mason, with a \$10 donation per shoebox, if able. OCC is a mission carried out by the Christian non-profit Samaritan's Purse. Through shoebox gifts, they give Christmas present and include a Gospel message to children in impoverished regions of the world. These shoeboxes can be packed with toys, school supplies, clothes, a personal letter, and more. If you are interested or have any question, please see Mason Goodell (goodellmas@gmail.com or 860-806-6437).
- Dave & Janelle Franceschetti have set up a gofundme page to help with the medical costs for **baby Caleb's** upcoming transplant surgery. You can go to: <https://gofund.me/95103c5b9> Or search for: "Help Caleb and Family During Transplant".

Upcoming Events

- **New Ladies Fellowship:** The Ladies of the Church are invited to the Aldrich home on Saturday, **November 1st**, from **12:00 – 2 PM** for a TULIP Party. It will be a casual time of fellowship with a short study. A lunch of soup and sandwiches will be provided.
(*Could you please sign-up so Verna can have a rough-count.*)
- **Caleb Goodell's** last Sunday, before he goes into the Army, is **November 2nd**.
- Cindy Rines will be presenting a **piano recital** at her home (in West Hartland) on Saturday, **Nov 22 at 2:00 PM**. Space is limited so you are asked to please sign up on the sheet in the fellowship hall. There will be a time for snacks and fellowship following the recital. Pieces by Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin and various contemporary composers are included in the program.
- The **3rd Annual Calvinist-Christmas Party** is Friday, **December 5th**, at 6:30 PM, at the Grange.
- The **Annual Meeting** will be after church on **December 14th**.
- *Regular Studies & Gatherings:*
 - Sunday School** for all ages (9:00 AM).
 - Tuesday Study** (10:30 AM – noon) – Augustine's Sermons.
 - Wednesday Study** (6:30 – 8:00 PM) – Book of Hebrews.
 - Gen-Alpha Club** will return on the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays.
 - Friday YADG** (6:30 PM) still meets on 1st & 3rd Friday.
 - Saturday Morning Prayer Group** at the Gabelmann's. (Please call Sheryl to confirm if the group is meeting that day, 860-309-7250.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

TRC's Webpage:	TrinityReformedCT.org
TRC's Facebook Page:	facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/
TRC's Youtube Channel:	youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT
Pastor Doug's	youtube.com/simplyreformed
Youtube Channels:	youtube.com/@PilgrimsofPlunder

INTERNET PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer requests for our prayer chain, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

LEADERSHIP

Elders:	Rev. Douglas Aldrich, pastor	860-379-1147	douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net
	Bob Ensminger	860-485-8738	robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com
	Rich Gabelmann	860-605-7852	rgabelmann0415@gmail.com
	Rev. Jonathan Haulenbeek	203-709-0784	jhaulenbeek@icloud.com

Deacons: David Mattson (chair), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell, Mason Goodell, Dean Winters
Sunday School: Verna Aldrich
Clerk: Sheryl Gabelmann

Music Coordinator: Cindy Rines
Treasurer: Cindy Rines

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut
Worship Starts At: 10:30 AM (9:30 AM in the summer)
Sunday Worship At: Winchester Grange (100 Newfield Rd; Winchester Center, CT 06098)
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065 – Phone: (860) 238-7399
Webpage: trinityreformedct.org – Email: trinityreformedct@gmail.com

Sermon Notes

1Samuel 5:1-12
“Every Knee Will Bow”
Sermon Series on 1Samuel 1-8
October 26, 2025

Introduction

- 1) We read three times in Scripture that “*every knee will bow*” before God.
 - a) Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10 quoting Isaiah 45:23.
 - b) This concept, not surprisingly, is found throughout Scripture.¹
 - c) But, what does this exactly mean?
- 2) Let’s ponder this as we continue to go through 1Samuel.
- 3) We are in the time of the Judges – A time of moral decline in Israel. Judg 2:10-19; 17:6; 21:25
 - a) Israel fought the Philistines at Ebenezer, 1Sam 4:2ff
and Israel was routed.
 - b) The corrupt priests, Hophni & Phinehas, the sons of 1Sam 2:12-17,22-25,27-36
the High Priest Eli, are killed in battle. 1Sam 4:4,10-11
 - c) Eli dies of shock. 1Sam 4:12-18
 - d) Thus, God’s judgment, as per prophecy, came 1Sam 2:27-36; 3:11-14
against Eli and his house. 1Sam 4:10-18
 - e) Even worse, the Ark of the Covenant, God’s 1Sam 4:3-11,17,21-22
throne on earth, is captured. Ex 25:21-22; Num 7:89
- 4) Today’s text, chapter 5, continues the story of what happens to the Ark and the Philistines who now have it in their possession.

1Samuel 5:1-12

- 1) The Philistines have five principal cities: Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath & Ekron. 1Sam 6:17
- 2) First they take the Ark to Ashdod. 1Sam 5:2
 - a) And put it in the “house of Dagon.” Judg 19:27; 1Sam 5:2-7; 1Chr 10:10
 - b) Dagon was the Philistines god of grain, fertility and their chief god.
 - i) His most famous temples were at Gaza and Ashdod.

¹ Ps 22:27-29; 66:4; 86:9; Is 2:2-4; 45:23; 49:6; 60:1-3; 66:18,23; Dan 7:13-14; Zech 14:16-17; Mal 1:11; Matt 28:18-19; John 12:32; Rom 8:19-22; 15:9-12; 1Cor 15:24-28; Heb 1:6; Rev 5:9-13; 7:9-10; 15:4; 19:16; 21:24-26.

- ii) The Bible is very clear, the pagan gods do not exist and are demonic. Deut 32:17; Ps 106:36-38
1Cor 8:4-6; 10:19-21; Gal 4:8
- c) After the first night the Philistines find their idol of Dagon prostrate before the Ark, the throne of God. 1Sam 5:3
 - i) This is a sign of submission, of worship. 1Sam 20:41; Josh 5:14
 - ii) The Philistines are spiritually blind, missing this meaning. Ps 115:4-8
 - iii) So, they simply return Dagon to his place again.
- d) The next morning Dagon has again fallen on his face again. 1Sam 5:4
 - i) But this time his head, and the palms of his hands, were cut off on the threshold.
 - ii) Only the trunk of Dagon was left to him.
 - iii) Cutting off the head and hands was an ancient way of showing victory over an enemy. 1Sam 17:54; 31:9
2Sam 4:12
- e) Thus, we read *"Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor all who enter Dagon's house tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day."* – 1Samuel 5:5
 - i) A "threshold" is an "entrance platform or doorstep of a building."
 - ii) In ancient temples it symbolized the boundary between the sacred place and the profane world.
 - iii) There were many superstitions about thresholds. Zeph 1:9
 - iv) This shows God has completely denigrated this false demonic god.
- f) God brings judgment against the people of Ashdod. 1Sam 5:6
 - i) They are struck with tumors.
 - ii) We read, *"When the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, 'The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for His hand is severe on us and on Dagon our god.'" – 1Samuel 5:7*
 - iii) They recognize it is the God of Israel doing this, though they don't repent.
 - iv) Note how close a people are associated with their god.
- g) The lords of Philistines, because of the people's cries, send the Ark to Gath.
- 3) The same thing happens in Gath: The men of the city, both young and old, are struck with tumors.
- 4) So, the Ark is taken to the city of Ekron. 1Sam 5:10-12
 - a) By this time the Philistines know of the power of God.
 - b) *"And as the ark of God came to Ekron the Ekronites cried out, saying, 'They have brought the ark of the God of Israel around to us, to kill us and our people.'" – 1Samuel 5:10b*
 - c) The Ekronites beg to have the Ark sent away, lest they die.
 - i) They want the Ark returned, so it will not kill the Philistines.
 - ii) Again, the men are killed and smitten with tumors.
 - iii) *"And the cry of the city went up to heaven."* – 1Samuel 5:12

Worship is Bowing

- 1) What are we to make of this?
- 2) Worship is about bowing, prostrating, giving obeisance.

3) There are several Hebrew and Greek words for worship.

a) The most common are about bowing down.

b) To give two examples:

i) Luke 4:8 – “Jesus answered him (Satan), ‘It is written, you shall worship (proskyneō) the Lord your God and serve Him only.’”

ii) “Proskyneō” means to “to worship, to bow as an act of allegiance or regard, to prostrate oneself before, to kneel down before as an act of reverence” depending on the context.

iii) In Matthew 18:26 – “So the slave fell to the ground and prostrated (proskyneō) himself before him (a king), saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.’”

c) In Matthew 18:26 the clear context is a human inferior bowing to a superior.

i) Which was common to almost all cultures throughout history.

ii) Though it is not clearly worship, in the religious sense.

d) While Luke 4:8 is clearly worship.

Ex 20:5; Deut 6:13; 10:20

4) For the ancients, including the church in the Old Covenant, one is supposed to bow before God.

a) We have numerous examples of the saints bowing before God – which is a good and godly thing!

Gen 24:26,52; 2Chr 7:3; Neh 8:6

Ex 4:31; 12:27; 34:8-14

Ezra 8:6 – “Then Ezra blessed the Lord the great God. And all the people answered, ‘Amen, Amen!’ while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.”

b) There are very few verses, however, about bowing being commanded, especially in a formalized ritual.

Psalm 95:6, comes the closest, “Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.”

c) Of course there are numerous warnings about never to bow down, in the sense of worship, to any created thing.

Ex 20:4-5; Lev 26:1; Rom 1:25

Deut 4:15-19; 5:8-9; 6:14-15

i) It is Commandment #2 of the Ten.

Ex 20:4-6; Deut 5:8-10

ii) Exodus 20:4-5a – “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God . . .”

iii) The Hebrew word here for “worship” is literally “to bow down.”

4) In the New Covenant there is less of a focus on direct rituals about bowing down.

a) The focus is more internal, more spiritual, about truly bowing one’s inner being to God, and less about external ritual.

i) John 4:23-25 – “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship (proskyneō) the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship (proskyneō) Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

ii) Romans 12:1 – “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship (latreia - “worship, ministry, service to God”).”

- b) The body is important. Your posture can affect worship.
- i) You can pray in bed but there is an increased chance you will fall asleep.
 - ii) Or, just like standing is better for singing than sitting.
 - iii) And certainly, bowing in worship is not forbidden.
 - iv) And the New Testament does have physical rituals that are commanded:
Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- c) However, the clear focus of New Covenant worship is much more on the inner state, on faithfulness, hope and love, then external ritual. John 4:23-24; Rom 12:1-2
1Cor 13:1-13; Gal 5:6
Heb 8:10; 10:22; 12:28
- d) That is why we Protestants do not, officially, have rituals that require bowing.
- i) Think of the Roman Catholic bowing to where the bread & wine is kept, in church, which is blasphemous.²
 - ii) Though some Presbyterian churches have kneelers, giving the option to kneel during prayer, which is fine and has some biblical precedents. 1Kgs 8:54; 2Chr 6:13
Dan 6:10; Luke 22:41
Acts 20:36; Eph 3:14
- 5) Don't take this freedom about not bowing too far, however.
- a) You shouldn't bow in a Roman Catholic church because you fear God, know His commandments and understand the Gospel.
 - i) If you do it out of pride of being a Protestant, you are doing it wrong.
 - ii) Doing the right thing for the wrong reason is still sin. Prov 16:2; Matt 6:1-5; 15:7-9
Is 1:11-15; Rom 14:23
 - b) We must bow our inner person (i.e. mind, will, soul, emotions, etc.) to God. Deut 6:5; Ps 51:17; Prov 3:5-6
Rom 6:13; Rom 12:1-2; Eph 3:16-17
- 6) Our secular culture likes to think it worships nothing, which is simply delusion, the work of Satan. Matt 6:24; 13:19; John 8:44
Rom 1:21-25; 2Cor 4:4; Eph 2:2
- a) Our secular culture is extremely religious and it is pagan, it has several gods.
 - b) To name a few gods it worships, in my opinion:
 - i) **The Self:** That core belief of secularism that the autonomous individual is supreme and the greatest good is individual choice.
 - ii) **Scientism:** The belief that science can solve all problems even non-scientific ones, such as "What is good? What is just?".
 - Just think of all the evil Communism has caused.
 - With this is the "Myth of Neutrality."
 - The false belief that truth, morality, and reason can be pursued apart from any dogmatic, religious or theological commitments.
 - Of course, this is a dogmatic religious belief that simply adds delusion to it.
 - iii) **Government:** That government, not the church, nor the family, can provide all things for us.

² It is blasphemous because it constitutes bodily worship directed toward a created object—specifically, toward the bread and wine which Rome believes is the real, physical body of Christ and kept in a piece of furniture called "a tabernacle." Which is tied to their anti-Gospel idea that works are required to be justified.

- iv) There are others that come to mind: Materialism (the belief the supernatural doesn't exist), Wealth / Consumerism, Sensuality / Pleasure, Technology / Progress, Nature / Environmentalism, Humanism, etc.
 - c) Please note, nothing created is 100% evil. Gen 1:31; Ps 104:24; Rom 8:20-22; 1Tim 4:4
 - d) Individuality, free will, science, government, worldly goods, pleasure, technology, nature, etc. are all good gifts from God. Gen 1:26-31; Acts 17:24-28
1Tim 4:4; James 1:17
 - e) What makes them dangerous is when they become an idol. 1Cor 10:14; Col 3:5; 1John 5:21
 - i) When we worship them.
 - ii) Bow down to them, either externally with our body, or internally with our heart.
 - iii) If we love them more than God, then we truly have an idol.
- 7) Our text, however, is not about God's people bowing before Him, but pagans and even their idols.

Every Knee Will Bow

- 1) Since God created all that there is, everything and everyone one, will bow before Him. Is 45:23-24; Dan 7:13-14; Rom 14:11
2Cor 5:10-11; Phil 2:9-11; Heb 10:31
Rev 5:13; 6:15-17; 11:18; 20:11-15
 - a) Either in adoration, reverence and holy (good) fear. Ps 22:27; Is 45:23-24; Phil 2:9-11
Heb 12:28; Rev 5:13
 - b) Or, in subjection and terror. Is 45:23-24; Matt 25:41; Phil 2:10-11; Heb 10:27,31; Rev 6:15-17
 - c) Either for honorable or dishonorable use. Rom 9:21
 - d) To show either His mercy or His sovereign all consuming justice.
- 2) In our sermon text God makes the Philistines, and even their idols, bow before Him.
 - a) Showing His glory and power.
 - b) And the wickedness of fallen man.
 - c) As Calvin noted, man's nature "*is a perpetual factory of idols.*"
 - d) The Bible is clear: All will bow before God.
- 3) We read in one of the great chapters of the Bible, **Isaiah 45**, about the sovereignty of God.
 - a) Isaiah 45 is a poetic prophetic oracle declaring God alone is the Creator, Savior, and righteous Lord of all nations, before whom every knee must bow and every tongue confess.
 - b) To quote one verse: Isaiah 45:6-7 – "*That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other, the One forming light and creating darkness, causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these.*"
 - c) Isaiah 45 ends with an extraordinary prophecy: "*Turn to Me and be saved, word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. They will say of Me, 'Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.' Men will come to Him, and all who were angry at Him will be put to shame. In the LORD all the offspring of Israel will be justified and will glory.*" (v.22-25)
 - i) This is one of the clearest OT prophecies that the Word of God is not just for one nation (ancient Israel) but all the nations.
 - ii) That in the end, all will bow the knee before God.

- iii) This is not universal redemption: Those angry with God will be put to shame.
(They will bow, and swear, but in judgment.)
- 4) Paul quotes this verse in Isaiah 45:23 twice.
- 5) In **Romans 14:11** Paul is concerned that Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians should not be divided over the use of the Old Testament Ceremonial Law for sanctification.
 - Rom 3:28-30; 6:14
 - Rom 7:4-6; 8:1-4
 - Rom 10:4; 14:1-6
 - a) That they have freedom in how one approaches sanctification about secondary issues.
 - b) Such as food laws and what holidays (like the Sabbath) one keeps.
 - c) Christians are not to judge other Christians over these matters.
 - d) Because we are to remember God will judge and every knee will bow to Him.
 - e) Our focus should be on how we will give account of how we used the freedom God has given us.
 - f) And not put stumbling blocks in the way of fellow believers.
- 6) Similarly in **Philippians 2:10** Paul wants Christians not to be arrogant but to humble themselves to each other.
 - Phil 2:3-5
 - a) He then gives the supreme example of Jesus Christ.
 - Phil 2:6-10
 - i) Who, though God, humbled Himself to do the Father's will to save His people.
 - ii) Thus, the Father highly exalted Him.
 - b) What is this exultation?
 - i) Philippians 2:9-11 – *"For this reason (Christ going to the cross) also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*
 - ii) All will bow before Christ.
 - Those saints and angels now in heaven. Ps 148:1-2; Rev 5:11-12
 - All humans on the earth now, even rulers, will ultimately bow before Christ, either in joy or terror. Ps 22:27 Rev 1:7
 - All those in hell (under the earth) are defeated and forced to acknowledge Christ as sovereign lord. Eph 1:20-22 Rev 5:13

Conclusion

- 1) The question is not whether we will bow before Christ, but how.
 - a) In forced acknowledgment, in terror and defeat?
 - b) Or in joyful, thankful, and hopeful faith?
- 2) As 1John ends, *"We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, guard yourselves from idols."* – 1John 5:19-21
- 3) Cast down your idols; trust in Christ, and rest in Him alone.