

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for

December 21, 2025

*"It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that
Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" – 1 Timothy 1:15a*



trinityreformedct.org

“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Matthew 2:1-6

Leader: Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king,

People: **Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying,**

Leader: Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?

People: **For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.**

Leader: When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled,

People: **And all Jerusalem with him.**

Leader: Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people,

People: **He inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.**

Leader: They said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea;

People: **For this is what has been written by the prophet:**

Leader: And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,

People: **Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah;**

Leader: For out of you shall come forth a Ruler

People: **Who will shepherd My people Israel.**

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – John 1:14-18

***Hymn #201** – “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Scripture Reading – Luke 1:26-33; 2:1-14

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**

***Hymn #225** – “Once in Royal David’s City”

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 – Heidelberg Catechism, 16-17.

Leader:	<i>Why must He (the Savior) be very man, and also perfectly righteous?</i>	Ezek 18:4,20 Rom 5:12,15,18
People:	Because the justice of God	1Cor 15:21
Leader:	<i>Requires that the same human nature which has sinned,</i>	Heb 2:14-16 1Pet 3:18
People:	Should likewise make satisfaction for sin;	Is 53:3-5,10-11
Leader:	<i>And one, who is himself a sinner</i>	Heb 7:26-27
People:	Cannot satisfy for others.	Ps 49:7-8; 1Pet 3:18
Leader:	<i>Why must He in one person be also very God?</i>	
People:	That He might, by the power of His Godhead	Is 9:6; 63:3
Leader:	<i>Sustain in His human nature,</i>	Is 53:4,11
People:	The burden of God's wrath;	Deut 4:24; Nah 1:6; Ps 130:3
Leader:	<i>And might obtain for, and restore to us,</i>	Is 53:5,11; Acts 2:24; 1Pet 3:18
People:	Righteousness and life.	John 3:16; Acts 20:28; John 1:4

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – 1Samuel 8:21-22

***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 Man to His City”

A Sermon Series on 1Samuel 1-8

***Hymn #195** – “Joy to the World! The Lord is Come”

***Benediction**

Everyone is welcome to Coffee Hour Fellowship downstairs after church today

Announcements

- There will be **no Sunday School** for the next two Sundays (December 28th & January 4th). Thus church will start with worship at 10:30 AM, followed by fellowship time.
- **Studies will return** on the following dates:
Sunday School = January 11th
Tuesday Study = January 13th
Wednesday Study = January 14th
YADG = January 16th
- Pastor Doug is on vacation from December 22 through January 5th.
- TRC needs volunteers for two **support ministries**:
1) Those willing to provide meals for temporary needs, such as emergencies or a funeral reception.
2) Those willing to do casual/friendly visitations of shut-ins.
If you are interested in volunteering for either, or both, please contact: Kim Simmons
(860-309-9975; kimsimmons7@optonline.net)

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@arthurgrossell.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	Music Coordinator:	Cindy Rines
Clerk:	Sheryl Gabelmann	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 8:21-22

“Every Man to His City”

A Christmas Sermon

A Sermon Series on 1Samuel 1-8

December 21, 2025

Introduction

- 1) If I said at the end of today’s gathering “*go everyone to your city*” what would be your reaction?
 - a) Maybe you would think of the town where your home is located?
 - b) Or maybe the town where you grew up?
 - c) I would guess many of you thought: “I don’t live in a city, I don’t like cities.”
 - d) After all most of us chose to live in rural northwest Connecticut.
- 2) Cities are often associated with degeneracy, secularism, crime, violence, crudeness, pollution, etc.
 - a) The French philosopher Jacques Ellul (1912-1994) argued the great fear of modern man is to be dehumanized into but a number.
 - b) As Bob Seger (b.1945) sang in his 1978 song “Feel Like a Number.”
 - c) The suburbs, however, or even living in the “country” as the best place for the middle class, is a rather new concept.
- 3) Historically, cities are associated with many positive things.
 - a) Culture, education, youth, wealth, being forward thinking (in the good sense) are usually associated with cities.
 - i) The Christian faith came from cities: Capernaum, Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, and especially Jerusalem.
 - ii) The Reformation came from the cities: Wittenberg, Zurich, Geneva, Paris, London, Oxford, Edinburgh, Boston, New Haven, etc.
 - b) Ellul argued the great fear of ancient man was to be dehumanized into a beast.
 - i) Nebuchadnezzar was driven mad to live like an animal as a judgment from God. Dan 4:30-34
 - ii) Or the ancient pagan stories where men get turned into beasts. (e.g. Homer’s Odyssey, Epic of Gilgamesh)
 - iii) Or the great philosopher Socrates would rather drink poison than be exiled from the great Greek city of Athens.
 - iv) Just think in a time without electricity, any social services such as the police, and the wilderness is full of dangerous animals, bandits, and maybe monsters, would you rather live in a city or the wilderness?
- 4) Scripture speaks of both concepts.
- 5) For this Christmas Sunday, let’s ponder: What city should we go to?

Cities Before Samuel

- 1) The first city ever built was “Enoch”. Gen 4:17
 - a) It was built by the cursed murderer Cain, who named it after his son Enoch. Gen 4:1ff
 - b) Remember, this Enoch is different from the more famous Enoch Heb 11:5
in Genesis 5:18ff who “*walked with God; and he was not, for* Jude 14-15
God took him.” – Genesis 5:24b
- 2) Thus you start getting “great” (in the worldly sense) earthly cities of men.
 - a) As we see in Israel’s desire to have a king, like the other nations.
 - b) In Genesis 10:8-10 Nimrod founds four cities on the Plain of Shinar.
 - i) The most famous is Babylon.
 - ii) It is in the land of Shinar that the Tower of Babel, where we get Gen 11:1ff
the name “Babylon, was built, out of human arrogance which
causes the confusion of human language.
 - iii) Babylon will be the capitol city of several 2Kgs 20:17-18; 24-25
empires that will plague God’s people. Dan 1:1-2; 2:37-38; 7:4-8
 - Including under Nebuchadnezzar.
 - Who will conquer Judah, destroy 2Kgs 24:10-16; 25:8-21
the Temple and take the people 2Chr 36:15-21; Jer 25:8-11
back as slaves to Babylon. Ezek 17:11-21; Dan 1:1-7
 - iv) Thus “Babylon” will become the symbolic name Is 13; Jer 50-51; Dan 4:30
of all that is evil from this fallen world. Rev 14:8; 16:19; 17-18; 19:2
 - c) The city of Nineveh is mentioned in Genesis 10:12 Jonah 1:2; 3:2
which is called “the great city.”
 - i) It is also called a wicked and bloody city Jonah 1:2
of the violent Assyrians. Nah 3:1; 5:5-6
 - ii) There is a whole book in the Bible that is an oracle against Nineveh,
and the wicked Assyrian Empire: The Book of Nahum.
- 3) But there is another city: Not an earthly one.
 - a) As we discussed a few weeks ago, about the “War of the Kings” in Genesis 14:1ff
 - b) Then Abram fights and defeats Chedorlaomer and his allies.
 - c) Then Melchizedek the “King of Salem” arrives.
 - i) The city of Salem means “peace” thus Melchizedek is the “King of Peace.”
 - ii) This is the first reference to Jerusalem in the Bible, though it is rather mystical.
 - iii) After which, King Melchizedek (whose name means “king of Gen 14:18-20
righteousness”) who is “King of Salem”, literally “King of Ps 110:4
Peace”, who neither has “beginning of days nor end of life”, Heb 5:6,10
is “like the Son of God”, is of a superior priesthood to that of Heb 6:20-7:17
the Levites, from whom the Messiah will come, and brings
bread and wine to Abram, who then worships Melchizedek.

- 4) More than any other city, Jerusalem will represent two very different cities:
 - a) A heavenly city, a “City of God”, where God reigns from.
 - b) And an earthly city, of man, based on the fallen things of this world try to reign.
- 5) The Heavenly Jerusalem is represented by Christ’s righteousness and peace. Ps 85:10; Is 32:17; 54:11-14
Heb 12:22-24; Rev 21:2-4
- 6) The earthly Jerusalem, like all things of fallen man, represents sin and worldliness. Is 1:21-23; 3:8; 5:7; Jer 6:6-8; 7:4-11; Matt 23:37
Luke 13:34; 19:41-44; Gal 4:25; Rev 11:8
 - a) During the time of Joshua and the Judges Salem would be inhabited by the Jebusites. Josh 15:63
Judg 1:21
 - b) The Jebusites were Canaanites who resisted Israel’s conquest of the Promised Land. Josh 10:1-3,16-27
 - c) They called Salem “Jebus”. Judg 19:10-11; 1Chr 11:4-9
 - i) During the time of the Judges Israel tried to secure Jebus but it was not fully conquered at this time. Judg 1:8; 19:10-13
 - Jebus mostly remained under Jebusite control.
 - So, Jerusalem wasn’t that important during this time, religiously or politically.
 - ii) At this time there is a Jebusite fortress on the southeast hill of Jebus (Jerusalem). Josh 15:63; Judg 19:10-11
1Chr 11:4-6
 - At the junction of the Kidron and the Tyropoeon Valleys.
 - It was simply called “Zion.”
 - That name would later be associated with the whole city of Jerusalem. 1Kgs 8:1; 2Kgs 19:21,31
1Chr 11:5; 2Chr 5:2
Ps 87:2; 149:2; Is 33:14; Joel 2:1
 - And then the land of Judah and the entire nation of Israel Is 40:9; Jer 31:12
Zech 9:13
 - And then take on a far greater meaning: The Heavenly Jerusalem. Ps 132:13-14; Is 2:2-3; 60:14
Gal 4:26; Heb 12:22; Rev 21:2
 - 7) Jerusalem will become important in the Book of 2Samuel.

1Samuel 8:21-22

- 1) Over the last few months, we have been going through 1Samuel.
 - a) It is about the time when Israel transitions from the rule of Judges to the rule of earthly kings.
 - b) The godly Samuel is the last judge.
 - c) The first king of the united Israel will be Saul.
 - i) Followed by David and then Solomon.
 - ii) The capitol will become Jerusalem.
 - iii) It is from the line of David that the Messiah will come.
 - iv) Solomon will build the Temple: A permanent home for the Ark of the Covenant.

- 2) The center of Israel's religious and political life, from the entrance into the Promised Land to the time of Samuel, is up north.
 - a) Shechem – the early covenant center. Josh 8:30-35; 24:1-26
 - b) Shiloh – the primary religious center. Josh 18:1,31; 1Sam 1-4
 - c) Bethel – where Israel inquired of the Lord. Judg 20:18,26-28
 - d) Ramah – a prophetic and judicial center. 1Sam 7:15-17; 8:4
 - e) Gilgal – an early military and covenant site. Josh 4-5; 10
 - f) Mizpah – where national assemblies were held. Judg 20:1-3; 1Sam 7:5-6
- 3) Note what is not included: Jerusalem.
 - a) That unimportant city down south.
 - b) Ruled by the Jebusites.
- 4) Arguably, 1Samuel 8 is one of the most important chapters in the Bible.
 - a) It describes how Israel gets her king.
 - b) Shockingly, it is brought about by rebellion.
 - i) The people want to be like the other nations, who have kings.
 - ii) They want to be like the world.
 - iii) They do not want God ruling over them.
 - c) God allows this!
 - d) Even though God has Samuel warn Israel how bad it will be under an earthly king, the people double down and demand an earthly king. 1Sam 8:9-20
 - e) As we read last week: *"Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, 'No, but there shall be a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.'"*
– 1Samuel 8:19-20
- 5) Samuel goes and tells God *"all the words of the people."* – 1Samuel 8:21b
 - a) It is not like the Almighty didn't know.
 - i) But Samuel is functioning as a godly priest.
 - ii) Technically Samuel is a prophet-judge who also performs priestly functions by divine authorization. 1Sam 2:18; 3:1-21; 7:5-9,15-17; 9:6-9; 10:1
 - b) A priest is an intercessor, a go-between, between God and His people. Ex 28:1,29-30; Lev 16 Heb 4:14-16; 5:1-10; 7:23-28; 9:11-15
- 6) The Almighty tells Samuel, *"Listen to their voice and appoint them a king."* – 1Samuel 8:22b
- 7) Our sermon section concludes - *"So Samuel said to the men of Israel, 'Go every man to his city.'"*
– 1Samuel 8:23c
 - a) The people are dismissed back to their home cities.
(The word here for "city" can also mean "town" or "village".)
 - b) It implies a sense of drama: What will happen?

The King's City in Old Testament

- 1) If you keep on reading in 1Samuel you will hear how this works out.
 - a) God appoints Saul to be king; Samuel anoints him; Saul is later rejected by God because of his foolishness, and he is killed by the Philistines.
 - b) Just as God appoints Saul's replacement, David, who is anointed by Samuel as the future king, refuses to harm Saul, and is installed as king only after Saul's death.
 - i) It is King David who will conquer Jerusalem and make it his capitol.
 - ii) Note, God always acts first as per His sovereign decree.
 - c) From David will come Solomon.
 - i) He will build God's "permanent" house, in the earthly sense, the Temple.
 - ii) And He will be the last united king of Israel.
 - d) The kingdom will divide into north and south.
 - i) The northern kingdom, called Samaria or Israel, will be conquered by the Assyrians in 722 BC.
 - ii) The southern kingdom, called Judah, will be conquered by the Babylonians in 586 BC.
 - e) Israel will be allowed to return and rebuild under the Persians.
 - i) Rome will conquer Israel, and Jerusalem in 63 BC.
 - ii) So at the time of the New Testament, Israel is occupied.

- 2) However, from the earthly Jerusalem, the true Zion will be revealed.
 - a) The Almighty Himself dwells and reigns in Zion. Ps 48:1-2; 87:1-3; 132:13-14; Is 2:2-3; Mic 4:1-2
Gal 4:25-26; Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1; 21:2-3,10
 - b) God Himself will speak from Zion. Ps 9:11; 50:2; 74:2; 76:2; 99:2; 135:21
Is 8:18; 24:23; Jer 31:6; Joel 3:17,21; Mic 4:7
 - c) For God will save Zion. Is 2:3; Mic 4:2
Ps 69:35; 102:13; 126:1; 132:13; Is 1:27; 14:32
Is 30:19; 60:14; 62:1; Obad 17; Zech 1:17; 8:3
 - d) Zion will praise and worship the Lord. Ps 65:1; 102:16,21; 137:3; 147:12; 149:2
 - e) Salvation will come from Zion. Ps 14:7; 20:2; 53:6; Is 46:13; 51:3
 - f) The Messiah will come from Zion. Ps 2; Is 28:16; 59:20-21; 62:11-12
Zech 9:9; Matt 21:5; John 12:15

The Messiah

- 1) The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem, David's hometown, which is near Jerusalem. 1Sam 16:1; Is 11:1; Mic 5:2
Matt 2:1-6; Luke 2:4-7; John 7:42
- 2) The Messiah will come from the region of Galilee. Is 9:1-2; Matt 4:12-16; John 7:41
- 3) The city of Nazareth is in Galilee. Matt 2:22-23; 4:13-16; Mark 1:9; Luke 1:26; 4:16; John 1:45-46
 - a) The Messiah will be unimpressive by worldly standards. Ps 22:6; Is 53:2-3

c) Yet the Messiah is the "Branch."

- i) He is the humble yet divinely appointed shoot who springs from the cut-down house of David, preserving God's covenant and bringing new life and righteous rule. Is 11:1
Jer 23:5
Zech 3:8
- ii) The Hebrew word for "branch" (nēšer) sounds similar to the name Nazareth, suggesting a possible theological wordplay based on their shared consonantal root. Matt 2:23

4) What a blessing to be in the new covenant – to have such clarity.

- a) Luke 1:26-27 – *"Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary."*
- b) Luke 1:32-33 – *"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."*
- c) Luke 2:3-4 – *"And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,"*
- d) Luke 2:10-11 – *"But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."*

5) But above all the Messiah is connected with Jerusalem/Zion.

- a) The Messiah will come to Zion and redeem. Is 59:20
- b) The Messiah will enter Jerusalem humbly on a donkey. Zech 9:9
- c) The Messiah will be installed as King on Zion. Ps 2:6
- d) The Messiah's royal rule goes forth from Zion. Ps 110:2
- e) The Messiah's word will go forth from Jerusalem. Is 2:2-4
As will His reward. Is 62:11
- f) Yet, the Messiah will be pierced because of the people's sins. Zech 12:10
- g) Yet the Messiah will rule from Zion. Ps 110:2

6) The earthly Jerusalem represents slavery under the law—seeking righteousness through works, *"but the Jerusalem above is free (justified by Christ); she is our mother."* - Galatians 4:26

Conclusion

1) So, *"go everyone to your city"*.

2) Where is your city?

- a) God has called you to your home, town, state, country.
 - i) Praise God for such blessings.
 - ii) And be salt and light to where God has called you. Matt 5:13-16; Eph 5:8-10; Phil 2:15
- b) But your citizenship is not here.

- 3) Hebrews 12:22-24 – *“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.”*
- 4) Philippians 3:20-22 – *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.”*
- 5) Merry Christmas.