

Hear the Good News, CLP Nancy Bostian, Psalm 105:1-11, Romans 8:26-39

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

*Call to Worship (Psalm 128)

L: Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
who walk in obedience to him.

P: You will eat the fruit of your labor;
blessings and prosperity will be yours.

L: Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;

P: your children will be like olive shoots
around your table.

L: Yes, this will be the blessing
for the man who fears the LORD.

P: May the LORD bless you from Zion;
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.

L: May you live to see your children's children—
peace be on Israel. Let us worship God.

*Opening Prayer unison

Heavenly Father, we come to worship you this morning.
Bless each of us as we hear the Word proclaimed and give
us understanding. Send your Holy Spirit to be among us
as we sing your praises. Amen.

Hymn: #100 - My Soul Cries Out

Call to Confession

Just as Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden, so we sin in our daily lives. In order to receive the forgiveness of Jesus, we must confess those sins. Let us confess our sins using the prayer in the bulletin:

Prayer of Confession unison

Forgive us Father, for we have sinned. We do the things we should not do, and leave undone the things we should do. We do not always seek your will, and we do not always put you first. We make excuses for our actions. Help us to see the log in our own eye before we mention the speck in someone else's eye.

Time of Silent Prayer

in Jesus name, Amen

Proclamation of Forgiveness:

L: Friends believe the good news of the Gospel,

P: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven, let us forgive others.

*Gloria Patri

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Prayer of Illumination: Holy Spirit guide us and lead us as the Word is proclaimed today. Amen

First Scripture Lesson: Psalm 105: 1-11

Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name. Make known among the nations what he has done.

Sing to him, sing praise to him; all his wonderful acts.

³ Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

⁴ Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.

⁵ Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,

⁶ you his servants, the descendants of Abraham, his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.

⁷ He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

⁸ He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations,

⁹ the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac.

¹⁰ He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant:

11 "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

P: Praise be to God.

Second Scripture Lesson: Romans 8: 26-39

26 In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. 27 And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will.

28 We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose. 29 Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart to become like his Son, so that the Son would be the first among many believers. 30 And so those whom God set apart, he called; and those he called, he put right with himself, and he shared his glory with them

31 In view of all this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 Certainly not God, who did not even keep back his own Son, but offered him for us all! He gave us his Son—will he not also freely give us all

things? ³³ Who will accuse God's chosen people? God himself declares them not guilty! ³⁴ Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right side of God, pleading with him for us! ³⁵ Who, then, can separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble do it, or hardship or persecution or hunger or poverty or danger or death? ³⁶ As the scripture says,

"For your sake we are in danger of death at all times; we are treated like sheep that are going to be slaughtered."

³⁷ No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! ³⁸ For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, ³⁹ neither the world above nor the world below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

P: Thanks be to God.

The Message: "Hear the Good News"

So let me ask a questions: Have you heard any good news lately. If you watch the news at any time on any news outlet, it all seems bad. They say bad news, sensational news sells. Well someone is getting rich off the news that is out there today for sure.

As we all know 2020 was a very difficult year for most people. There were wildfires, violent storms, protests and riots across the country, and of course Covid 19.

And on and on they go, each day more and more dire headlines. If you are like me, I just stop reading, watching and listening after awhile. It has been proven that a steady diet of bad news is harmful to your health. Depression, anxiety, fear, all these can be a result of all this bad news.

So where do we find Good News? Is there any good news to be heard in these times? These are certainly the times that try our souls to their very core.

In the scripture from Romans, we see nothing but good news.

Verse 26 starts with these words "In the same way the spirit also comes to us, weak as we are.

In the same way as what?? Well we must look at a couple of previous verses in this chapter to understand this.

Paul speaks of creation groaning in pain, because of the sin of man. He says that we who have the spirit also groan and long for the day we will be set free from this world with all its sin and pain.

So the spirit comes to help us in this. God intervenes in this scene with HOPE!! He intervenes because we are weak.

I want to break this portion of scripture down into all the promises that are made in these verses. All the GOOD NEWS

Good news No. 1 - The spirit prays for us.

He not only prays for us he prays in (groans) that words cannot express. The spirit pleads with God on our behalf and in accordance with God's will.

Jesus and the Father are one, our savior has a special way of speaking to the father on our behalf that we ourselves cannot even express. But always in accordance with God's will.

Many times I have found this to be so comforting. Don't we all have times when we are in such pain, such dismay that we really cannot express it in words It might be a death, sickness, loss of a job, financial problems, or just the pressures of everyday life. We

want to pray and take these cares to the father, but we do not have words.

This is when the Spirit takes over. We just have to sit quietly and meditate and because God sees our hearts, he knows what we need even if we don't. He knows us far better than we know ourselves.

This is good news indeed.

Good news No. 2 - God works all things for good for us

All is a big word here. Can he really bring good out of everything that happens to us?

Yes, even when we feel helpless and are concerned about the future, we can be sure that our Father is working in us and for us to bring good from whatever is happening.

Lets look at Covid 19 – is there anything good to be learned here? Well life has slowed down a bit. How many times do we feel like we are on a fast train heading who knows where – the world is just moving too fast. Time is moving too fast.

Covid 19 has slowed things down, we are staying home more, cooking and eating meals as families, parents are getting involved in their children's education, children have more of their parent's time

Is this God? I think so because if it is good, it is GOD. All good things come from the Father.

Good news No. 3 - God knows us personally and he loves us.

We were created in the image of his Son, Jesus Christ. Because of that, God knows us intimately. He calls us by name. He justifies us.

Justified: The dictionary says this means having been made righteous in the sight of God. Being defensible and legitimate.

Mankind is sinful, we know that. But He makes us whole, we are broken by sin, but he makes us whole. Sometimes even we think we are hard to love, but he loves us and makes us whole.

And if he justifies us, he also glorifies us. Why would a Holy, Sovereign God glorify you and me? For no

other reason than he loves us. THAT IS CERTAINLY GOOD NEWS

Good news No. 4 – God is on our side

If God is for us, who can be against us. In other words, If God is for us, why do we care who is against us.

Nothing matters but our relationship with God. If he comes first all else will be added. And if he loves us, calls us by name, prays for us, justifies us and glorifies us, who or what can bring us harm. No one and nothing.

We belong to him. Sometimes circumstances make us feel inadequate, stupid, helpless. But God is on our side in all things. Remember that you are saved by grace and nothing you or I do can earn that grace nor can we lose our salvation. We are pitiful at times, but God is on our side.

Hebrews 13: 6 and 8

6 So we say with confidence, "*The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?*"

8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

This is good news.

Good news No. 5 – Jesus Christ intercedes for us. He intercedes for us with the Father. He defends us and we need that. Sometimes we get so far off the mark, that only Jesus can explain our actions to the Father.

Think about what he said while on the cross. “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.”

We live in a pressure cooker of a society. There is a lot of pressure to be this or that, to be politically correct, to be all things to all people.

This is when Jesus intercedes for us with the Father. He knows what is happening in the world and how it affects us. He knows that we are weak and in need of help. He explains who we are to the Father. That is indeed good news.

Good news No. 6 – Nothing can separate us from the Love of God.

I think these verses are some of the most beautiful words in scripture.

What can separate us from our loving father?

Can trouble, hardship, persecution, hunger, danger or even death? The first word in verse 37 answers this **NO** in all these things we have complete victory through him who loves us.

Paul says that he is certain that nothing in all creation, not death or life, angels or other heavenly rulers, neither the present or the future, neither the world above nor the world below. **NOTHING** can separate us from the love of God who sent his son to die for us.

If he would send his son for our salvation, why would he hold back anything else. We can be sure that he won't.

Good news #7 we are redeemed!!

We have been bought by the shed blood of Jesus. We owe our very existence to him. He created us, loved us and saved us.

A story printed in the Moody press in 1990 said this:

A gathering of friends at an English estate nearly turned to tragedy when one of the children strayed into deep water. The gardener heard the cries for help, plunged in, and rescued the drowning child. That youngster's name was Winston Churchill. His grateful parents asked the gardener what they could do to reward him. He hesitated, then said, "I wish my son could go to college someday and become a doctor." "We'll see to it," Churchill's parents promised.

Years later, while Sir Winston was prime minister of England, he was stricken with pneumonia. The country's best physician was summoned. His name was Dr. Alexander Fleming, the man who discovered and developed penicillin. He was also the son of that gardener who had saved young Winston from drowning. Later Churchill remarked, "Rarely has one man owed his life twice to the same person."

Ron Hutchcraft, Wake Up Calls, Moody, 1990, p. 22.

This is the ultimate good news. Christ Jesus entered the world to rescue sinners. We are redeemed. We owe our lives to him twice; through creation and salvation.

Hallelujah Praise God.

So this is where the good news is. When all the bad news gets to be too much, open your Bible, turn to the Gospels, read the words of Jesus, turn to the writings of Paul and see what he says about our relationship with the Father. You will feel comforted, safe, and loved beyond your imagination.

What is our response for all of this. In psalm 105 which we read this morning it says:

Give thanks to the Lord, make known among the nations what he has done. Look to the Lord and his strength, seek his face always. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

To God be the glory, Amen.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

***Affirmation of Faith** "The Apostles Creed"

Hymn: #726 Will You Come and Follow Me

Prayer Requests Read/Shared with the Community

Prayers of the People

Heavenly Father, as we come to the throne of grace may all that we say bring honor and glory to your name.

We pray for those in harms way wherever they may be. We pray for the people being displaced by the fires and floods here in this country. We pray for the first responders who put their lives in danger for others. Keep them safe.

We pray for our country at this time in its history. We pray especially for our leaders. May they turn to you for wisdom and knowledge which you give liberally. We ask that you would heal our country from the divisions that we see all around us. We pray for your peace which passes all understanding.

We pray for the folks who are in need of food, clothing and shelter. There are so many right here in our area who are not sure if they will ever get back to work or how they will heat their homes this winter. Show us how we can spread your love to them and help the least of these.

We pray for all those we listed on our prayer list this morning. You know the need better than we do. We ask that you touch them with your healing hand and hold them in your everlasting arms. Protect them and bless them father.

Silent Prayers

And now we pray silently the things we cannot say out loud:

**Lord we pray the prayer that Jesus taught saying
Our Father, who art in heaven,**

Call to Offering

The offering plates are in the back and on the communion table.

Offering with Offertory

***Doxology:**

***Prayer of Dedication**

L: All that we have belongs to you Oh God. Accept these gifts as a small token of our love.

P: Bless the gift and the giver. Amen

**BEARING AND FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO
GOD'S WORLD**

Hymn: #817 We Walk by Faith

***Charge and Benediction**

Leave this place today with a renewed sense of who you belong to. Jesus paid the price for our salvation and we are the children of God. This is the good news

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the holy spirit be with you all.

Amen

***Choral Response #601**