

June 23, 2024

Worship | 8:15 and 11 am

Livestream | 11 am



LEXINGTON

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

For God's glory, we are making disciples of Jesus as we worship, love, and serve.

WELCOME

Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. We invite you to experience the meaning of the Gospel through this service, which reflects both ancient and modern elements of Christian worship. When we gather as a worshipping community, we enter into a dialogue with the living God. God calls us into worship, we rejoice in the hope of the Gospel, confess our sins, lament the brokenness of our world, give our offerings, and hear God's Word read and preached. We hope that by worshipping with us, you will experience joy and hope from a community of people who love Jesus.

At Lexington Presbyterian Church, for God's glory, we are making disciples of Jesus as we worship, love, and serve.

Complete our Connect Card at lexpreschurch.com/connect to join us on mission!

General inquiries: hello@lexpreschurch.com

LORD'S DAY WORSHIP

* Congregation, please stand if able

Prelude

PRAISE

Updates | Following Christ Together

* **Call to Worship** | Based on Psalm 93:1-4

Leader: The LORD reigns; He is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed; He has put on strength as His belt. Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved.

All: Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.

*Leader: The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their roaring.
Who is mighty as You are, O LORD,
with Your faithfulness all around You?*

All: Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty!

* Trinity Hymnal #77—Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven



1. Praise, my soul, the King of heav - en, to His feet your
 2. Praise him for his grace and fa - vor to our fa - thers
 3. Fa - ther - like, he tends and spares us; well our fee - ble
 5. An - gels, help us to a - dore him; you be - hold him



trib - ute bring; ran - somed, healed, re - stored, for - giv - en,
 in dis - tress; praise him, still the same for - ev - er,
 frame he knows; in his hands he gent - ly bears us,
 face to face; sun and moon, bow down be - fore him,



who, like me, his praise should sing? Al - le - lu - ia!
 slow to chide and swift to bless. Al - le - lu - ia!
 res - cues us from all our foes. Al - le - lu - ia!
 dwell - ers all in time and space. Al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia! Praise the ev - er - last - ing King.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - rious in his faith - ful - ness.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Wide - ly as his mer - cy goes.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Praise with us the God of grace.

Trinity Hymnal No. 77

Text: From Psalm 103, Henry F. Lyte, 1834; mod.

Tune (ANDREWS): Mark Andrews, 1930

Tune © 1930, G. Schirmer, Inc. All rights reserved.

© 1990, Great Commission Publications, Inc.

Used by Permission. CCLI License #668805

Hymn Story

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

Henry Francis Lyte, who lived from 1793 to 1847, wrote the lyrics to this hymn. As a child, he lived in Scotland, then moved to Dublin, Ireland, to receive higher education. For twenty-four years, he served in Devonshire, England as an Anglican curate. While his soul and faith remained strong, Lyte's physical body grew weak under the effects of tuberculosis and chronic asthma. Lyte attempted to travel to Rome to regain his health in 1847 but sadly died from his ailments in France. Lyte wrote other hymn texts, including the well-known "Abide With Me, Fast Falls the Eventide." In his hymn-writing, Lyte was greatly inspired by David's songs recorded in the Psalms. "Praise, My Soul" is directly linked to Psalm 103. According to the translation in the Book of Common Prayer, the Psalm reads, "Praise the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me praise his holy Name..." Themes in this hymn include God's gifts to His children and the holiness and constancy of His character.

The tune to this hymn was written by Mark Andrews, who lived from 1875 to 1939 in England. He served as organist in a church in Surrey, England, after training at Westminster Abbey in London. Andrews' compositions include arrangements of folk songs and music with vocal parts. Later, Andrews moved to America, where he recorded famous classical works on the organ. For the rest of his life, he directed choirs and worked as the organist at a church in New Jersey.

Sources:

Hawn. "History of Hymns: 'Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven.'" Discipleship Ministries: The United Methodist Church, 25 June 2013, www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-praise-my-soul-the-king-of-heaven. Accessed 19 June 2024.

"Mark Andrews." CPDL, ChoralWiki, last edited 14 September 2023, www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Mark_Andrews. Accessed 19 June 2024.

* Prayer of Invocation

* Scripture Reading | Proverbs 8:1-4, 12-17, 22-31 | Pew Bible p. 532-533

Does not wisdom call?

Does not understanding raise her voice?

On the heights beside the way,

at the crossroads she takes her stand;

beside the gates in front of the town,

at the entrance of the portals she cries aloud:

“To you, O men, I call,

and my cry is to the children of man.

“I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,

and I find knowledge and discretion.

The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.

Pride and arrogance and the way of evil

and perverted speech I hate.

I have counsel and sound wisdom;

I have insight; I have strength.

By me kings reign,

and rulers decree what is just;

by me princes rule,

and nobles, all who govern justly.

I love those who love me,

and those who seek me diligently find me.

“The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his work,

the first of his acts of old.

Ages ago I was set up,

at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth,

when there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped,

before the hills, I was brought forth,
before he had made the earth with its fields,
or the first of the dust of the world.
When he established the heavens, I was there;
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,
when he made firm the skies above,
when he established the fountains of the deep,
when he assigned to the sea its limit,
so that the waters might not transgress his command,
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
then I was beside him, like a master workman,
and I was daily his delight,
rejoicing before him always,
rejoicing in his inhabited world
and delighting in the children of man.

* Our Great God



1. E - ter - nal God, un - chang - ing, mys - te - ri - ous and un - known; Your
 2. Lord, we are weak and frail, _____ help - less in the storm. Sur -
 3. Let ev - 'ry crea - ture in _____ the sea and ev - 'ry fly - ing bird, let



bound - less love, un - fail - ing, in grace and mer - cy shown. Bright
 round us with Your an - gels, _____ hold us in your arms. Our
 ev - 'ry moun - tain, ev - 'ry field and val - ley of the earth, let



ser - a - phim in cease - less flight a - round Your glo - ri - ous throne; They
 cold and ruth - less en - e - my, his plea - sure is _____ our harm. Rise
 all the moons and all the stars in all the un - i - verse sing



raise their voic - es day and night in praise to You a - lone. Hal - le -
 up, O Lord, and he _____ will flee be - fore our sov - 'reign God.
 prais - es to the liv - ing God who rules them by His _____ word.



lu - jah! Glo - ry _____ be to our great God! _____ Hal - le -



lu - jah! Glo - ry _____ be to our great God!

Words and music: Fernando Ortega and Mac Powell, 2002

CCLI Song # 3493094

© 2002 Word Music, LLC | New Spring | DeJamesolo Music

For use solely with the SongSelect. Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com

CCLI License # 668805

RENEWAL

Call to Confession | Proverbs 5:21-23

*Leader: For a man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD,
and he ponders all his paths.
The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him,
and he is held fast in the cords of his sin.
He dies for lack of discipline,
and because of his great folly he is led astray.*

Corporate Confession of Sin

All: Our God in heaven,
if You should mark iniquities, who could stand?
We know that if we say we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
Not one of us is good, no, not one.
We have stiffened our necks against Your will,
hardened our hearts to Your Word,
refused to hear Your voice,
pulled away from Your loving embrace,
despised correction,
and forgotten You in our thoughts.
Yes, we have sinned against You.
Father, we repent.
We come to Christ, who has promised rest for our souls.
We take His yoke upon us.
We desire to learn from Him.
Grant that we may bring forth the fruit of repentance
from sincere hearts, which are precious in Your sight.
In Jesus' Name, we pray, Amen.

Silent Confession

*** Words of Comfort** | ¹ John 2:1-2

*Leader: My little children,
I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.
But if anyone does sin,
we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
He is the propitiation for our sins,
and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

*** Passing of the Peace** [stand and greet one another]

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

* Oh the Deep, Deep Love



1. Oh, the deep, deep love of Je - sus, vast, un - meas - ured, bound - less, free;
 2. Oh, the deep, deep love of Je - sus, spread His praise from shore to shore;
 3. Oh, the deep, deep love of Je - sus, far sur - pass - ing all the rest;



Roll - ing as a might - y o - cean in its full - ness o - ver me;
 How He came to pay our ran - som through the sav - ing cross He bore;
 It's an o - cean full of bless - ing in the midst of ev - 'ry test;



Un - der - neath me, all a - round me is the cur - rent of Your love;
 How He watch - es o'er His loved ones, those He died to make His own;
 Oh, the deep, deep love of Je - sus, might - y Sav - ior, pre - cious friend;



Lead - ing on - ward, lead - ing home - ward to Your glo - rious rest a - bove.____
 How for them He's in - ter - ced - ing, plead - ing now be - fore the throne.____
 You will bring us home to glo - ry, where Your love will nev - er end.____



Oh, the deep, deep love; All I need _____ and trust is the



deep, deep love _____ of Je - sus.____

Words and Music by Samuel Trevor Francis and Bob Kauflin
 CCLI Song #5171596
 © 2008 Integrity's Praise! Music, Sovereign Grace Praise
 For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
 CCLI License #668805

Friendship Register

Kindly remember to give your neighbor the Friendship Register. Once it reaches the end of the pew, then please pass it back. Making acquaintances with guests and fostering friendships within the larger church family is the goal of this register. Starting from the middle aisle, the register is located at the head of each pew.

Worship Through Giving

The offering is a way for members and friends of Lexington Presbyterian to present the substance of their whole lives to God. Please feel no pressure to give.

Ways to give:

- You may use the offering plates located in the back of the sanctuary as you exit.
- Go to “Giving” on your Church Center mobile app or lexpres.churchcenter.com.
- Text2Give: text any dollar amount to 84321.

Jesus Strong and Kind

1. Je - sus said that if I thirst, I should come to him.
 2. Je - sus said if I am weak, I should come to him.
 3. Je - sus said that if I fear, I should come to him.
 4. Je - sus said if I am lost, he will come to me.

5. No one else can sat - is - fy, I should come to him. *[verse 2]*
 No one else can be my strength, I should come to him. } For the
 And he showed me on that cross, he will come to me. }

9. Lord is good and faith - ful. He will keep us day and night. We can

13. al - ways run to Je - sus. Je - sus, strong and kind.

Words and Music by Colin Buchanan, Michael Farren, Jonny Robinson, and Rich Thompson
 CCLI Song # 7139992
 © 2019 CityAlight Music; Farren Love and War Publishing; Integrity's Alleluia! Music; Wanaaring Road Music
 For use solely with the SongSelect Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
 CCLI License # 668805

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Corporate Prayer

Children's Sermon | "Let's Start at the Very Beginning."

* Scripture Reading | Colossians 1:13-20 | p. 983

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Sermon | **Our Sufficiency in Christ**

An Exposition of the Letter to the Colossians

8. Our Sufficiency in Christ's Supremacy (Part 3, vv. 13-20)

Rev. Dr. Curt McDaniel

Sermon Notes

In our study and exposition of this letter, we are approximately halfway through our examination of one of the great, early hymns used by some of the founding believers in the Faith, some likely eyewitnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ's ministry. This particular passage and hymn has been categorized as a "Christological" hymn (with Hebrews 1:3, 1 Timothy 3:16, John 1:1-14, 1 Peter 1:18-21, 2:21-25, 3:18-25, and Philippians 2:6-11). Other types include "sacramental" (Ephesians 5:14, Titus 3:4-7, Romans 6:1-11, Ephesians 2:19-22), "meditative" (Ephesians 1:3-14, Romans 8:31-39, 1 Corinthians 13), and "confessional" (1 Timothy 6:11-16, 2 Timothy 2:11-13). Why are we devoting so much attention to this passage of Scripture and to this hymn?

- We can see how important doctrine and faith formation played in the practice of the early church by looking at their hymnody. We learn that their understanding of Christ's identity was formative and strong.
- When we look at these characteristics attributed to the identity of Christ, we see how it was used to show Christ's superiority to any other system of belief at that time, and even today.
- Perhaps most importantly, it should lead us to a greater love, devotion, and worship of our crucified, risen Lord. Remember, these words made up a hymn that was used in worship. This helps us see the ardent passion these believers had for Christ, as seen in this early 2nd century letter:

"Meanwhile, in the case of those who were denounced to me as Christians, I have observed the following procedure: I interrogated these as to whether they were Christians; those who confessed I interrogated a second and a third time, threatening them with punishment; those who persisted I ordered executed. For I had no doubt that, whatever the nature of their creed, stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy surely deserve to be punished. There were others possessed of the same folly; but because they were Roman citizens, I signed an order for them to be transferred to Rome...

They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that *they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god*, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to

commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food--but ordinary and innocent food.”²

Review:

1. Jesus is supreme because of God the Father’s plan (1:12-14).
2. Jesus is supreme because of God the Father’s pleasure (1:19).
 - a. It was a pleasurable fullness.
 - b. It was an indwelling fullness.
3. **Today: Jesus is supreme because of His properties.** When we speak of properties, we refer to peculiar and individual qualities that make someone distinct and exclusive, a “one-of-a-kind-person.” Here in this great hymn, several unique characteristics are attributed to Christ alone.

a. *He is the image of the invisible God* (v15a). The word “image” is where we get the English word “icon.” It gives us the notion of “representation” or “manifestation.” Similar imagery is in 2 Corinthians 4:4. Romans 1:20 declares that the invisible qualities of God—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen in the created world. Now, the Triune God chooses to *personalize* their presence among humans to the point that God the Father sends God the Son in the power of God the Holy Spirit to let us see in visible form the glorious qualities of the eternal God up close and intimate. When we saw Jesus, we saw in a real way the visible properties of an invisible God (see Hebrews 1:3). The wonder and mystery of the incarnation is that the invisible, spiritual God of eternity became visibly flesh in time and space. We see His imprint, His qualities in an exact, perfect way in the person of Christ. This makes Jesus not only superior to everything else, but also the Christian Faith superior in contrast to other belief systems in the world.

Another way to describe Jesus as the image of the invisible God is with the biblical metaphor, the “second Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45, 47, imagery in Romans 5:12-19); however, Jesus should not be construed simply as fulfilling what the first Adam did not do (as if we are looking through the first Adam to see the better, second Adam). Instead, we understand Jesus as the second, and *perfect Adam who enables us to look*

back and to understand the first Adam more fully and completely: “We can understand Adam only through Jesus, and not Jesus simply as the second instance of the original Adam. This, then is not so much Adamic Christology, as if Jesus is merely Adam Version 2.0, but instead a Christological anthropology, or a christologically reframed Adam...To call Jesus the Eikon of the invisible God is to say that Jesus is the one who rules over all as the Davidic King (Psalm 89:27). [It] connotes revelation as the physical presence, or the ‘exact representation’ (Hebrews 1:3) in concrete, embodied reality of the ‘invisible’ God.”⁴

Significant: Current scholarship continues to draw a strong connection between the text of this hymn, the *Logos* Hymn (John 1:1-14), and the *Doulos* Hymn (Philippians 2:5-11) with the infamous “Wisdom Literature” that connects Proverbs 8 (especially 8:22-31) with Genesis 1:1. To a Jewish-minded audience, this would immediately register with their knowledge of OT poetry, seeing the portrayal of “Wisdom” in Proverbs 8 with the Genesis creation account, and instilling in their minds that “Wisdom” was the overpass that connected the invisible eternity of God with the visible creation, and Christ is seen as the personification of “Wisdom.” This gives depth to this text, and to the *Logos* Hymn in John 1.

b. He is before all things (v17). The order of the sentence emphasizes the “He” very strongly here. It could literally be translated, “And He, *He* is before all things.” The verb “is” (the Greek eye-mi) parallels what Jesus said to the Pharisees in John 8:58, “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, I AM.” He is the Self-Existent One, the One who never came into being: “He is before all in time and before all in rank.”⁵ This thought coincides with Jesus’ prayer to the Father in John 17:5: “And now, Father, glorify me in Your presence with the glory I had with You before the world began.” The apostle is simply picking up on this understanding of Jesus’ relationship with the Father (and also with the Holy Spirit) seen most clearly in the “oneness language” in John’s Gospel and in Jewish wisdom (sapiential) literature, applying it to Christ in song: “The writer here is taking over language used of divine Wisdom and reusing it to express the significance of Christ, if not, indeed, taking over a pre-Christian hymn to Wisdom. That is to say, he is identifying this divine Wisdom with Christ, just as Ben Sira and Baruch [Jewish tradition books] identified divine Wisdom with the Torah.” It is this kind of distinction—along with the truth that Christ is the image of the invisible God—

that Paul seeks to convey to the Colossian Christians about Christ. He is truly all-sufficient and all-powerful, so powerful that He has always existed as the Glorious, Transcendent, Unending, Potentate of the cosmos.

c. *He is beginning* (18). Notice how this statement is nestled in the context of 1:18 and tied to the thought that Christ is the head of the body, the church, and the firstborn from the dead (phrases we will study later). What is the significance of this statement with these two phrases on either side of it? This word “beginning” is the Greek word *archē* where we get several English words like “archaeology” (the study of beginnings or antiquities) and “archaic” (something antiquated or from primitive times). In the Greek sense, it has two dominant ideas: 1) One who has priority in time (before the creation of the cosmos) and who is the source of all life and the cause of our being; and 2) One who was first in human time to create a new human race, a new spiritual society that has and will experience the transformational power of the resurrection. He is the starting point, the origin of that new race and society. In both instances, Christ is seen as the fountainhead of life, and without Him we are lifeless. This helps us understand Jesus’ words in John 10:10, “I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full.” This is a subtle, but important point for Paul to make because a common practice in that time and in Jewish culture was *angel worship* (notice its mention in 2:18). In powerful rhetorical (persuasive) fashion, Paul presents Christ’s qualities and properties in such a way that compelled them to ask the question, “Are angels the visible image of the invisible God?” Are angels self-existent and first in rank, time, and creation power? The answer is a resounding *no!* This argument is further emphasized when seen in the light that there is no definite article before “beginning.” In other words, it can be literally rendered, “*He is beginning.*” This feature stresses the absolute nature of Christ apart from anything else in the entire cosmos:

- He is first in time.
- He is first in rank.
- He is first in position.
- He is first in priority.
- He is first in every single thing.

“The claim that these powers are subordinate to Christ sets the church at odds with the rest of the first-century world. People outside the church see the beings they worship in various cults as more powerful than Christ. That is why they worship them rather than joining with the worshippers of Christ in the church. The claim of Christ’s superiority also sets the church against the claims of the empire. Rome’s propaganda included claims that the Romans ruled the world because the gods willed it...The church that recites this piece in worship reject such claims by asserting the subordination of all powers to Christ.”⁷

Summary:

“By assigning to Jesus the role previously assigned to God’s Wisdom, equated in some places with God’s Torah or Law, Paul has attributed to Jesus Christ the place in God’s purposes elsewhere delegated to Wisdom or the Law. Paul has shifted the focus from God’s creation through God’s Word or Wisdom to God’s creation through Christ.”⁸

Recap:

So far in this great early credal hymn, we see from the mind of the apostle Paul that we can have great sufficiency in Jesus Christ because of His supremacy as the Son of God. He is supreme because of:

- The Father’s plan to rescue us from the dominion of darkness and to transplant us into the kingdom of Christ (vvi3-14).
- The Father’s pleasure to have all the fullness of His deity dwelling in Him (vi9).
- The properties or qualities that make up the Son’s nature. He is the image of the invisible God, the One before all things, and the One Who is beginning.

Personal Reflection:

“What does the apostle point at when he speaks of the express image, or as it is in the original, the character of God the Father? Well, God’s character, His express image, is just His divine nature. It is just His love, and His joy, and His peace, and His long-suffering, and His gentleness, and all His goodness. That is God’s character. It is His fullness of all these things that makes Him God, and our God. Jehovah revealed His whole moral and spiritual character when He descended and proclaimed the name of

the Lord to Moses on the Mount. ‘The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.’ That is God’s name and nature. That is God’s express image. That is God’s character. That is what makes Him the only living and true God. That is what makes all the psalmists extol Him. And that is what makes Micah exclaim at the end of his life, and as the seal of his ministry—Who is a God like unto Thee!

And then the Son of God is set forth to us in the New Testament as the brightness of His Father’s glory, and the express image of His person. Or, as the original Greek has it, the Father’s whole ‘character’ is fully and forever stamped and sealed down upon His Son. While the eternal generation of the Divine Son is unapproachably beyond and above us; while the conveyance of the Father’s character to the Son is high, and we cannot attain unto it; at the same time the conveying and the impressing of the Divine character of the Father and the Son on the human nature of our Lord is that supreme study, and all-satisfying contemplation, to which the New Testament on its every page invites us. From His birth to His death, we are enabled, and we are intended to see the character of our Lord manifested in every word He spoke, and in every act He did. The whole of the four Gospels are written, and have been put into our hands, in order that we may have continually before our eyes the character of Jesus Christ, both for our justifying faith in Him, and for our sanctifying imitation of Him.”

Study and Discussion Questions:

1. Note the four different groupings of early hymns: Christological, sacramental, meditative, and confessional. This hymn in Colossians 1 is a Christological hymn. Why?
2. Review some of the qualities or characteristics of Christ mentioned in today’s study, and their meanings. How would they set Christ apart from the other religions and cults of the day?
3. Discuss this concept: “We understand Jesus as the second, and *perfect Adam who enables us to look back and to understand the first Adam more fully and completely.*” How does this help you read and understand the creation account in Genesis 1-2?
4. Take time to read Proverbs 8 as a whole, and especially vv22-31, seeing it in light of Genesis 1:1. How does this help you understand Colossians 1:15-18? How would this help

a Jewish believer “connect-the-dots” to see Christ’s greatness and uniqueness?

5. Remember, the ultimate objective of this hymn is that it is expressed in *worship*. What does this tell us about the kind of songs we should be singing in our private and public worship? Additionally, what does this tell us of the greatness of Christ as the object not only of our faith, but also of our love?

Footnotes:

1. Ralph P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians 2:5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship*. 2nd Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983, 19.
2. Pliny, *Letters*, 10.96-97. Letter to the Emperor Trajan:
3. <https://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html> Emphasis added. Pliny the Younger was governor of Pontus/Bithynia (modern Türkiye) from 111-113 AD.
4. J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 14th Printing. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978, 145. Originally published in 1879 by MacMillan and Company.
5. Scot McKnight, *The Letter to the Colossians*. *New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Ed. Joel B. Green. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018, 146-147.
6. Curtis Vaughan *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Colossians*. Twelve Volumes. Second Printing. Eds. Frank E. Gaebelin and J.D. Douglas. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979. XI: 183.
7. James D.G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon*. *New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Eds. I. Howard Marshall and Donald A. Hagner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, 89.
8. Jerry L. Sumney, *Colossians: A Commentary*. *The New Testament Library*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2008, 68.
9. Marianne Meye Thompson, *Colossians and Philemon*. *The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, 30.
10. Alexander Whyte, *The Walk, Conversation, and Character of Jesus Christ Our Lord*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975, 13-15. Originally published in Edinburgh in 1905.

* Trinity Hymnal # 168—I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art



1. I greet thee, who my sure Re - deem - er art,
 2. Thou art the King of mer - cy and of grace,
 3. Thou art the Life, by which a - lone we live,
 4. Thou hast the true and per - fect gen - tle - ness;
 5. Our hope is in no oth - er save in thee;



my on - ly trust and Sav - ior of my heart,
 reign - ing om - ni - po - tent in ev - 'ry place:
 and all our sub - stance and our strength re - ceive;
 no harsh - ness hast thou and no bit - ter - ness:
 our faith is built up - on thy prom - ise free;



who pain didst un - der - go for my poor sake;
 so come, O King, and our whole be - ing sway;
 O com - fort us in death's ap - proach - ing hour,
 make us to taste the sweet grace found in thee
 O grant to us such strong - er hope and sure



I pray thee from our hearts all cares to take,
 shine on us with the light of thy pure day.
 strong - heart - ed then to face it by thy pow'r.
 and ev - er stay in thy sweet u - ni - ty.
 that we can bold - ly con - quer and en - dure.

Trinity Hymnal No. 168
 Text: *Strasbourg Psalter*, 1545; Tr. by Elizabeth L. Smith, 1868; alt. 1961
 Tune (TOULON): *Genevan Psalter*, 1551
 © 1990, Great Commission Publications, Inc.
 Used by Permission. CCLI License #668805

* Sending

* Benediction | Jude 24-25

Leader: Now to him Who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Postlude

Serving This Morning:

Updates: Anita Boland

Liturgist and Pastoral Prayer: Doug Inman

Readers: Tim McConnell and Tonya Fink

Musicians: Abigail Baarendse, Butch Bost, Barb Howell, Ruth Ellen Lorick, and Josiah Rogers

Audio/visual and livestream: Chris Hollis and Don Parker

51st General Assembly Recap #1

A Portion of TE Dr. Bryan Chapell's Report of the Stated Clerk to the denomination:

In their new book, *The Great Dechurching*, Jim Davis and Michael Graham write, "More people have left the church in the last 25 years than all the new people who became Christians from the First Great Awakening, Second Great Awakening, and Billy Graham crusades combined." Pew Foundation researchers now estimate Christians will only comprise about a third of the U.S. population by 2070.¹ If we only consider the math, then the question is not whether Christianity will decline in our nation but how fast and to what degree.

Church statistician Ryan Burge pulls no punches when describing what is happening in the major Protestant churches. He says, "The mainline is just a bloodbath," with the major liberal denominations down by at least 30 percent since 1987.² Evangelicals are not far behind. Southern Baptists lose more members every year than our total denomination and are down at least three million from their 16 million high a decade ago.

Against all that bad news, Burge says this: "There are two traditions that are up. The Assemblies of God has grown by over 50% in the [last] 35 years. The PCA has doubled in size, as well." But then he says that the Assemblies are not doing as well as a first glance would indicate. "Sure, they have grown 50% since the late 1980s. But notice... their growth rate has decline[d] from 2% per annum to nearly 0% in the last few years."

Only the PCA has kept growing. Burge acknowledges that the PCA is "incredibly small" compared to the Assemblies and the SBC, but, according to Burge, we are actually exceeding the growth rate of the general population (but only by 0.1%). According to these observations, the PCA is a clear outlier according to national church trends. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord also that our numbers indicate that we grew again this past year, consistent with our 50-year history – except for the Covid years. What should we make of these blessings?

First, we must acknowledge that we cannot be exact about our numbers. Although we continue to show growth, the numbers of 100 churches (mostly small ones) were estimated by their presbytery clerks for last year's 50th Anniversary statistics, and we do not regularly receive annual reports from many others. Still, the numbers are generally

trending upward which, in an age of unquestionable church decline, gives us cause for being grateful for the Lord's blessing.

Second, we must humbly pray, asking that God would make us faithful stewards of our unique blessings. We should not pretend that we can explain or deserve such blessings, but we can affirm, as we come away from our 50th Anniversary celebrations, that our forefathers did something special when they declared us to be Scriptural and Confessional and, at the same time, to have the Great Commission as our #1 "top priority".³ Our founders humbly acknowledged that our doctrinal scruples and love of tradition could turn us inward and tempt us to pride or schism. They also believed that prioritizing Christ's mission could keep us alive and flourishing. So far, they have been proven correct. We have had our share of controversy, but somehow our mission priorities have stayed intact and now mark us as a church that God has used against the cultural tides to proclaim the gospel to a world that needs Jesus.

-Dr. Curt McDaniel

ENDNOTES:

1 David O'Reilly, "What Is the Future of Religion in America?," Trust Magazine (Feb. 7, 2023).

<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/trust/archive/winter-2023/what-is-the-future-of-religion-in-america>

2 Ryan Burge, "Religion Data Wonk: Just How Bad Is Denominational Decline?," Religion Unplugged (June 15, 2023). <https://religionunplugged.com/news/2023/6/12/just-how-bad-is-denominational-decline>

Updates

Church Administrator and Director of Youth Ministry

LPC is seeking a full-time Church Administrator (aka Business Manager), and also a Director of Youth Ministry. Please visit lexpreschurch.com and click on "Jobs" at the bottom of the home page to view the full job description and learn how to apply. Thank you!

Stewardship

- LPC fiscal budget year is July 1st to June 30th.
- The current budget was revised on January 1st, 2024.

Through the end of April, 2024:

Budget FYTD	\$1,025,486
-------------	-------------

Received FYTD	\$1,072,452
---------------	-------------

Expenditures FYTD	\$1,006,961
-------------------	-------------



@LPC

VBS 2024
REGISTRATION
IS NOW OPEN!

Please join us as we set sail this summer
on a grand adventure during VBS this summer!

Tuesday, July 23 - Friday, July 26



scan to register



steadfast

A DEVOTIONAL BIBLE STUDY
on THE BOOK of JAMES

Summer Women's Bible Study

June 4th - July 16th

Tuesdays - 6:30 - 7:30PM

Tomlin Hall

Led by Christy Spurgeon

*pick up books in the welcome center
and pay Christy at the first meeting*

COURTNEY DOCTOR

SUMMER SUNDAY SOCIALS at LPC

Let's
worship together
pray together
feast together
fellowship together

June 30th

9:45 CE and 11:00 worship
followed by a covered-dish lunch
*there will be no 8:15 service

5th Sunday

prayer

June 30th
during CE hour

Connect Card

Thanks for joining us today.
We would love to come alongside
you in your walk with Jesus,
whether you're new to our
community or you've been here a
while.

Visit lexpreschurch.com/connect
or scan the QR code to fill out
our Connect Card!

If you're not familiar with QR
codes, we're here to help!

1. Open your smartphone's
camera and point it at the QR
code so that it shows clearly on
your screen.
2. Wait for the camera to
recognize and scan the QR code.
3. Click the link banner or
notification when it pops up on
your screen. Our Connect Card
will automatically load in your
browser.



246 Barr Road | Lexington, SC 29072
www.lexpreschurch.com
hello@lexpreschurch.com
803.359.9501