



Stewardship 2021

Here, There, and *Everywhere*

“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

25th Reign of Christ
November 22, 2020
10:30am

GATHERING

Welcome

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

Prelude

Holy, Holy, Holy
Pat McCall, violin

arr. David Abramsky

Call to Worship — based on Hymn 643

We all gather to thank our God
with heart and hands and voices.
**God has done wonderful things
in the world and in our lives.**

May this generous God
through all our life be near us,
**with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to secure us.**

All praise and thanks to God,
who reigns in highest heaven,
to Father and to Son
and Spirit now be given:
**the one living and eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore,
the God who was, and is,
and will be evermore.**

Morning Prayer

*Hymn #643

Now Thank We All Our God



Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices, who won-drous
O may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us, with ev - er
All praise and thanks to God, who reigns in high - est heav-en, to Fa - ther



things hath done, in whom this world re-joic - es; who from our moth - ers' arms, hath
joy - ful hearts and bless-ed peace to cheer us; and keep us in God's grace, and
and to Son and Spir - it now be giv - en: the one e - ter - nal God, whom



blessed us on our way with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
guide us when per - plexed, and free us from all ills in this world and the next.
heaven and earth a - dore, the God who was, and is, and shall be ev - er - more.

Call to Gratitude

Gratitude

**Gracious God,
your heart abounds with goodness,
and your hand pours out abundance.
We praise you for the continuous cycle of seedtime and harvest
and the order of creation that sustains and nourishes us.
We bless you for the beauty of autumn and its generous yield.
We thank you that you are mindful of us and supply our needs.
Accept our thanksgiving and our praise for the cycle of life
and for all the joys of living.**

Hear now our own prayers of thanksgiving ...

[silent prayers]

Assurance of Blessing

*Response #606

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow



Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise Him, all crea-tures here be - low; praise



Him a - bove, ye heaven-ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

*Signs of Peace

LISTENING

Stewardship Season for 2021

Prayers of Intercession

Lord's Prayer

DEPARTING

*Hymn #298

Lord, You Give the Great Commission

Lord, you give the great com - mis-sion: "Heal the sick and preach the word."
 Lord, you make the com - mon ho - ly: "This, my bod - y; this, my blood."
 Lord, you bless with words as - sur-ing: "I am with you to the end."

9



Lest the church ne - glect its mis-sion, and the gos - pel go un - heard,
 Let us all, for earth's true glo - ry, dia - ly lift life heav - en - ward,
 Faith and hope and love re - stor-ing, may we serve as you in - tend,

17



help us wit - ness to your pur-pose with re - newed in - teg - ri - ty:
 ask - ing that the world a - round us share your chil - dren's lib - er - ty:
 and, a - mid the cares that claim us, hold in mind e - ter - ni - ty:

25



with the Spir - it's gifts em - power us for the work of min - is - try.

*Affirmation of Faith

Presbyterian Study Catechism

Question 1. What is God's purpose for your life?

God wills that I should live by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the love of God, and in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Question 2. How do you live by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?

I am not my own. I have been bought with a price. The Lord Jesus Christ loved me and gave himself for me. I entrust myself completely to his care, giving thanks each day for his wonderful goodness.

Question 3. How do you live for the love of God?

I love because God first loved me. God loves me in Christ with a love that never ends. Amazed by grace, I no longer live for myself. I live for the Lord who died and rose again, triumphant over death, for my sake. Therefore, I take those around me to heart, especially those in particular need, knowing that Christ died for them no less than for me.

Question 4. How do you live in the communion of the Holy Spirit?

By the Holy Spirit, I am made one with the Lord Jesus Christ. I am baptized into Christ's body, the church, along with all others who confess him by faith. As a member of this community, I trust in God's Word, share in the Lord's Supper, and turn to God constantly in prayer. As I grow in grace and knowledge, I am led to do the good works that God intends for my life.

*Charge and Benediction

*Response

Northumbria Blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever he may send you. May he guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm. May he bring you home rejoicing at the wonders he has shown you. May he bring you home rejoicing, once again into our doors.

Postlude

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INFORMATION

Welcome to our guests!

Whether you are sharing in the worship of God with us for the first time, visiting with family or friends, or returning for a visit to your home church, we welcome you today in the name of Jesus. Please share some contact information with us so we can follow up with you and make a place for you in our weekly fellowship. You may email our church office at admin@northminstermacon.org.

Pastoral Care

Pastor Ralph welcomes and encourages opportunities to share in fellowship, pastoral conversation, and spiritual discernment. He keeps office hours most mornings at the church, but is always available by appointment. You are always welcome to call or text at 478-250-3355 or to reach out by email: pastorhawkins@northminstermacon.org

Lectionary Readings

Nov. 22, Reign of Christ – Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Psalm 100; Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

Nov. 29, 1st Sunday of Advent – Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

PRAYER CONCERNS

If you have a need or a request for prayer, please contact the church office at 477-6646, or you could join us at our prayer group that meets the third Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM in Room 108.

Current Member Concerns: Ann R. Smith; Karen Jones; Jewel James; Ann Hall; Jane Ebey; John Hurst; John Geerlings; Grace Goodwin; Mary Ann Ellis; Kathy Wheeler; Andy Weaver; Shelby Duffy

Current Friends and Family Concerns: Margaret Yawn; Donna Carole Kitchens; Nelda Crow; Kirk Knox

Military Personnel Prayer List: Austin Riley; T. Wright Goodwin, IV; James C. Watwood; Joshua Sulkers

Calista Koch, Harpist – Sunday, November 29

Sunday, November 29th, harpist Calista Koch will be here to share her talents with our congregation during our 10:30 am worship service. Please be sure to come or log-in 5-10 minutes before the service to hear what is sure to be a beautiful extended prelude. Calista will return for our Christmas Eve worship service, beginning a 30-minute prelude at 5:30pm.

Church Hours – Thanksgiving Holiday

The church office and building will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 26-27, for the Thanksgiving Holiday. We will remain open Monday through Wednesday from 9:00am – 1:00pm.

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our calling at Northminster is to make disciples, to grow in faith together, and to serve others in Christ.

CONGREGATION: Ministers of the Good News

SESSION of Ruling Elders: Sam Alderman, III; Boyd Ellison; Judy Hill; Ricky Smith; Ann Weaver
Emily Brown; Beau Kitchens; Lynn Denny; Charlotte Nolan; Sandra Ridgeway

RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate

SANDRA SMITH, Music Director KAREN JONES, Clerk of Session

BENJAMIN GAIL, Sexton JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant

Office hours this week: Mon-Wed 9:00-1:00

WWW.NORTHMINSTERMACON.ORG

478-477-6646

565 WIMBISH RD. MACON, GA 31210

Monday Morning

When they were together for the last time [his disciples] asked, “Master, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Is this the time?” Jesus told them, “You don’t get to know the time. Timing is the Father’s business. What you’ll get is the Holy Spirit. **And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world.**”

Acts 1 - The Message



TO THE
ENDS
OF THE
EARTH

“To the Ends of the Earth” — St. John’s Illuminated Bible
Donald Jackson, Sally Mae Joseph, and Andrew Jamieson

When the disciples gather after Easter, they do so as those who wait and question. What they know of what has happened in the resurrection is the source of their hope but also of their yearning. They want Christ to fulfill his promise of restoration, to finish the work begun. When? they ask. As the recipients of their Lord's instruction and as witnesses to his death and resurrection, they know that the decisive battle has been fought and won—but not yet. Now, in the meantime, they wait as those who are still dependent upon the Father's faithfulness, those who have no control over the timetable of a beneficent God who graciously allows enough time to accomplish the work begun in Jesus. This time between ascension and Pentecost was once designated by Karl Barth as a "significant pause" between the mighty acts of God, a pause in which the church's task is to wait and to pray, *Veni, Creator Spiritus*. But their waiting is not empty-handed. They wait in hope, as those who know that their Master has been "taken up" (1:2) where he is "exalted at the right hand of God" (2:33). After the ascension, when Christians speak of God they must also speak of Christ, for Christ now reigns with God. The followers of Christ know that the one who served, taught, and loved them now rules for them. But this knowledge is no smug *gnosis* of the privileged first few. It is a knowledge which demands a witness. Thus, in the meantime, they are given a job to do and will have power with which to do it. The time between Easter and the restoration of the kingdom is the gracious interim for witness. The opening episode ends with the angelic reproof, "Why do you stand looking into heaven?" There is work to be done; let the church be about that work in the meantime, secure in the promise that Jesus who was so dramatically taken from his disciples shall return to them in the same way.

William H. Willimon — Acts: Interpretation Bible Commentary

Whatever may be the ongoing role of the United States in missions, world Christianity can never be satisfied with telling a story of missionary transmission without also telling the story of indigenous response. Without the story of how the world's people groups received and responded to the Gospel, we have only half a story. And it is this half of the story, not the American half, that is the most neglected. For two hundred years we have studied the mission from the West. Only recently and in light of the massive response of the Global South to the Gospel have we finally turned our attention to the rest of the story.

Mark Shaw — "World Christianity: A Response to Boundless Faith"

Traditionally, the relationship of God to mission was conceived in a linear way: God, the sender, the church as the sent, the world as the recipient of the church's mission:

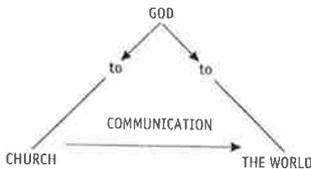
GOD--to--THE CHURCH--to--THE WORLD

Writing in the early 1960s a Dutch missiologist turned this around. J.C. Hoekendijk proposed that God works first with the world not the church:

GOD--to--THE WORLD--to--THE CHURCH

The church's mission then is to find out what God is doing in the world, celebrate it and embrace his mission." The church has the character of an 'intermezzo' between God and the world," and is an illustration (in word and deed) of God's involvement in the world."

With considerable care [missiologist] David Bosch examines whether these two images of the church (the one as sole bearer of God's mission, the other as an illustration of it) need be mutually exclusive. Might not a triangle be a better way of describing the rich way God relates to both the church and the world?



The key to resolving this tension of whether God works primarily through the church or the world is to grasp the relation of the Kingdom of God to the mission of the church. The church's mission is not to 'bring in' the church, or even to extend it. The Church's mission is to 'bring in' the Kingdom. In

this way the people of God participates in, embodies, and serves what God is accomplishing by creation, salvation, sanctification and consummation. But the church does not circumscribe God's work. The church is God's primary agency in fulfilling his sending. But it also recognizes and welcomes the irruption of the Kingdom of God everywhere.

The church then serves as a lighthouse, an outcropping of the Kingdom, a visible manifestation of God's Kingdom on earth. The Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann says the church is the 'sacrament — the gift, the beginning, the presence, the promise, the reality, the anticipation of the Kingdom.'

R. Paul Stevens — The Other Six Days:
Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective

Lord, you give the great commission:
“Heal the sick and preach the word.”
Lest the church neglect its mission,
and the gospel go unheard,
help us witness to your purpose
with renewed integrity:
with the Spirit’s gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

Lord, you call us to your service:
“In my name baptize and teach.”
That the world may trust your promise,
life abundant meant for each,
give us all new fervor, draw us
closer in community:
with the Spirit’s gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

Lord, you make the common holy:
“This, my body; this, my blood.”
Let us all, for earth’s true glory,
daily lift life heavenward,
asking that the world around us
share your children’s liberty:
with the Spirit’s gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

Lord, you show us love’s true measure:
“Father, what they do, forgive.”
Yet we hoard as private treasure
all that you so freely give.
May your care and mercy lead us
to a just society:
with the Spirit’s gifts empower us
for the work of ministry.

“Lord, You Give the Great Commission”
words by Jeffery W. Rowthorn, 1978

2020 Alternative Christmas Fair

Give now through December —15th

Help us support these ministries by giving online, by mail, or at church in support of:

Thornwell

Habitat for Humanity

Loaves & Fishes

Due to Covid-19 precautions, we have modified the annual Alternative Christmas Fair to keep everyone safe while also giving everyone an opportunity to give. The fair will not be held in-person this year. **You will receive an offering envelope to use for your gifts beginning next Sunday, November 29th.**



