

VERITAS REFORMED CHURCH

Sunday Liturgy

July 16

Anno Domini 2023

*Jimmy Hopper,
Leading Elder*

*The Seventh
Sunday
After Pentecost*



For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

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Reflections

Christ as Creator implies to me that His role as Christ is intrinsic to Creation—that in the first moment creatures were foreseen whose nature and course of life He could take on altogether without in any way diminishing His high holiness. It was foreseen that these creatures would need Him to restore them by an epochal act—of love, forgiveness, loyalty, grace, friendship, brotherliness—all of them human things whose names we have learned from our own capacities, and in every good human bond. They are things we know from our own experience, our own hearts, souls, and minds. Then, in this profounder sense, we are not aliens in the universe, taking the word in its largest sense, but are singularly rooted in it. If Providence is reflected in this arbitrary construction, this beautiful and orderly, knowable and manipulable delusion we share then our privileged place is very evident.

Marilynne Robinson
from “Theology” in *The Givenness of Things*

For those in physical exile, for those suffering for their faith, for those despised and marginalized by the world around them, the knowledge that history is under God’s control provides encouragement. However weak the Church appears to be, however many setbacks it faces, the end of history is already determined in Christ. This knowledge allows believers to taste here and now something of the delights of the end of time. Indeed, combined with the rich New Testament teaching on resurrection and on the fact that death is not the final word for those who live in Christ by faith, a strong doctrine of providence is not only a means of construing the metaphysical connection between God and his creation, but is also a source of personal strength, comfort, assurance, and hope for Reformed Christians.

Carl Truman
from an article, “*A Church for Exiles*”

Night and day I pondered Romans 1:17 until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that “the just shall live by faith.” Then I grasped that the justice of God is the righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning, and whereas before the ‘justice of God’ had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This passage of Paul became to me a gate to heaven...

Martin Luther

Though our persons fall, our cause shall be as truly, certainly, and infallibly victorious, as that Christ sits at the right hand of God. The gospel shall be victorious. This greatly comforts and refreshes me.

John Owen, 1680

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Call to Worship: from Psalm 47

Leader: Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

People: **For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared, a great King over all the earth.**

Leader: He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob, whom He loves.

People: **Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!**

ALL: **God reigns over the nations. God sits on His holy throne!**

Leader: Come. Let us worship Him!

Hymn of Praise: Let All Things Now Living

Let All Things Now Living

Let all things now liv - ing a song of_ thanks - giv - ing to God the_ Crea -
His law He en - forc - es; the stars in_ their_ cours - es, the sun in_ its_

6
- a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise, Who fash - ioned and_ made us, pro -
or - bit, o - be - dient - ly shine; the hills and the_ moun - tains, the

11
tect - ed_ and_ stayed us, Who guides us_ and_ leads to the end of our
riv - ers_ and_ foun - tains, the deeps of_ the_ o - cean pro - claim Him di -

16
days. His_ ban - ners_ are_ o'er us, His light goes be - fore us, a
vine. WE_ too should be_ voic - ing our love and_ re - joic - ing, with

21
pil - lar_ of_ fire shin - ing forth in the night, 'til shad - ows have
glad ad - o - ra - tion a song let us raise, 'til all things now_

26
van - ished and dark - ness_ is_ ban - ished, as for - ward we_ trav - el from
liv - ing u - nite in_ thanks - giv - ing to God ibn_ the_ high - est, ho -

31
light
san - in - - to and light.
na - na and priase!

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Prayer of Praise and the Lord's Prayer

Confession of Sin

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:17-20

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

Corporate Confession of Sin

God of mercy, you sent Jesus Christ to seek and to save the lost. We confess that we have strayed, and again have turned aside from you and your way. We are ruled by pride, for we see ourselves pure when we are stained and great when we are small. We have failed to love, neglected justice, and ignored your truth. We have trusted in other things instead of you. We have lived for ourselves and not for you. Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sins. Return us to the paths of righteousness through Jesus Christ, our only Savior. Amen.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Assurance of Pardon and the Peace of God: Psalm 103:11-13

For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

Leader: May the peace of God be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Collection of Tithes & Offerings

And Hymn of Response: Kind and Merciful God, We Have Sinned

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Kind and Merciful God, We Have Sinned

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If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins. 1 John 1:9

1. Kind and mer - ci - ful God, we have sinned in your sight, we have
2. Kind and mer - ci - ful God, we've ne - glect - ed your Word and the
3. Kind and mer - ci - ful God, we have bro - ken your laws and in
4. Kind and mer - ci - ful God, in Christ's death on the cross you pro -
5. Kind and mer - ci - ful God, bid us lift up our heads and com -

all wan - dered far from your way; we have fol - lowed de - sire, we have
truth that would guide us a - right; we have lived in the shade of the
• con - duct have veered from the norm; we have dreamed of the good, but the
vid - ed a cleans - ing from sin; speak the words that for - give that hence -
mand us to rise from our knees; may our hearts now be changed and no

failed to as - pire to the vir - tue we ought to dis - play.
dark we have made, when you willed us to walk in the light.
• good that we could we have fre - quent - ly failed to per - form.
forth we may live by the might of your Spir - it with - in.
lon - ger es - tranged, through the pow'r of your par - don and peace.

Presentation of Tithes and Offertory Prayer

Hymn: Doxology

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Affirmation of Faith: *Of the Gospel:* from 1 Corinthians 15:3-7; Romans 1:16, 17

Leader: What is the Gospel we preach, that which we have received, in which we stand, and by which we are saved?

People: **Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.**

Leader: Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

All: **We are not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”**

Hymn of Response: Gloria Patri

Prayer of Intercession

Hymn of Preparation: O Love of God, How Strong and True

(Music on next page.)

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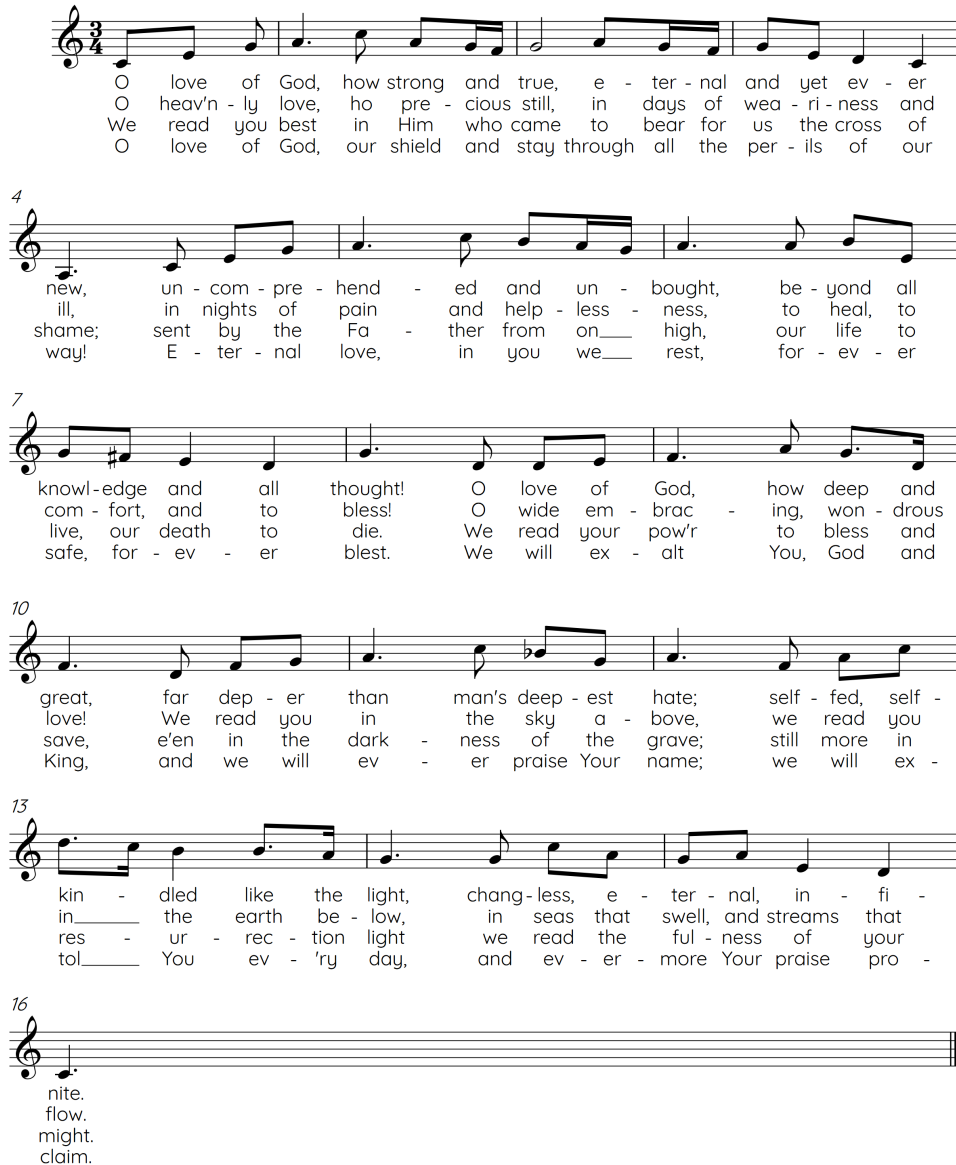
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O Love of God, How Strong and True



O love of God, how strong and true, e - ter - nal and yet ev - er
O heav'n - ly love, ho pre - cious still, in days of wea - ri - ness and
We read you best in Him who came to bear for us the cross of
O love of God, our shield and stay through all the per - ils of our
new, un - com - pre - hend - ed and un - bought, be - yond all
ill, in nights of pain and help - less - ness, to heal, to
shame; sent by the Fa - ther from on_ high, our life to
way! E - ter - nal love, in you we_ rest, for - ev - er
knowl - edge and all thought! O love of God, how deep and
com - fort, and to bless! O wide em - brac - ing, won - drous
live, our death to die. We read your pow'r to bless and
safe, for - ev - er blest. We will ex - alt You, God and
great, far dep - er than man's deep - est hate; self - fed, self -
love! We read you in the sky a - bove; we read you
save, e'en in the dark - ness of the grave; still more in
King, and we will ev - er praise Your name; we will ex -
kin - dled like the light, chang - less, e - ter - nal, in - fi -
in_ the earth be - low, in seas that swell, and streams that
res - ur - rec - tion light we read the ful - ness of your
tol_ You ev - 'ry day, and ev - er - more Your praise pro -
nite.
flow.
might.
claim.

The Preaching of the Word

Scripture: Ephesians 3:1-21

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles — assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the

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Distribution of Wine

Prayer

The Giving of Peace

Pastor: May the peace of Christ be with you!

People: **And also with you!**

Closing Hymn: I Know That My Redeemer Lives - Glory, Hallelujah!

I Know That My Redeemer Lives - Glory, Hallelujah!

I know that my Re - deem - er lives. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! What
He lives, He lives, who once was dead. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! He
He lives to bless me with His love. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! He
He lives to crush the fiends of hell. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! He
He lives, all glo - ry to His name! Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! He

5
com - fort this sweet sen - tence gives. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Shout
lives, my ev - er - last - ing Head. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah!
lives to plead for me a - bove. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah!
lives and doth with in me dwell. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah!
lives, my Je - sus, still the same. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah!

9
on, pray on, we're gain - ing ground. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! The

13
dead's a - live and the lost is found. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah!

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Benediction: Ephesians 3:20-21

Leader: Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.

And God's people said:

All: Amen