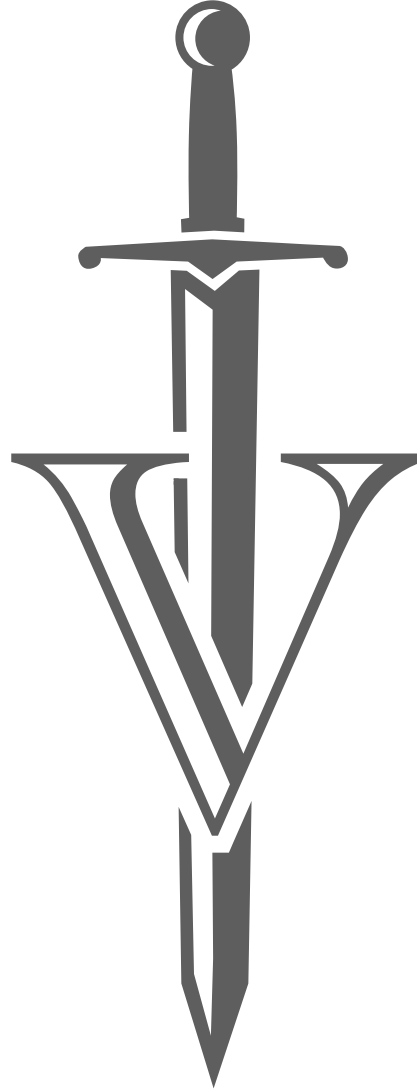


VERITAS REFORMED CHURCH

*Allen Powers,
Leading Elder*

*Sunday Liturgy
August 27
Anno Domini 2023*

*The Thirteenth
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

When we understand our calling, it is not only true but beautiful—and it should be exciting. It is hard to understand how an orthodox, evangelical, Bible-believing Christian can fail to be excited. The answers in the realm of the intellect should make us overwhelmingly excited. But more than this, we are returned to a personal relationship with the God who is there. If we are unexcited Christians, we should go back and see what is wrong.

Francis Schaeffer
from *The God Who is There*

[Thomas Cromwell seeks to persuade the young Reformation scholar, John Frith, from seeking martyrdom for his beliefs in Tudor England, 1533]

“You must help me to help you. If I could get you an audience with the king...do you think you could soften your answers, to accommodate him?”

Frith says, his voice barely audible, “Thomas More still had some credit with the king, and he has written him a letter, saying” he manages a smile, “that I am Wycliffe, Luther and Zwingli rolled together and tied up in string--one reformer stuffed inside another, as for a feast you might parcel a pheasant inside a chicken inside a goose. More means to dine on me, so do not injure your credit by asking for mercy. As for softening my answersI believe and will say before any tribunal what I will say before the last judge--the Eucharist is but bread, of penance we have no need, purgatory is an invention ungrounded in Scripture—”

“They will burn you.”

“And you think I cannot bear the pain? You are right. I cannot. But they will give me no choice. As More says, it hardly makes a man a hero to agree to stand and burn once he is chained to a stake. I have written books and I cannot unwrite them. I cannot unbelieve what I believe. I cannot unlive my life.”

Hillary Mantel
from *Wolf Hall*

The assumption of spirituality is that always God is doing something before I know it. So the task is not to get God to do something I think needs to be done, but to become aware of what God is doing so that I can respond to it and participate and take delight in it.

Eugene Peterson

The happiest Christians are not those who accomplish all of their personal goals, but those who embrace God's goals.

Jonathan Edwards

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Call to Worship: from Psalm 117

Leader: Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!

People: For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.

ALL: Praise the Lord!

Hymn of Praise: Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

4
7

Come, ye sin - ners, poor and nee - dy, weak and woun - ded,
Come, ye thir - sty, come and wel - come, God's free boun - ty
Let not con - science make you lin - ger, nor of fit - ness
sick and sore; Je - sus rea - dy stands to sa - ve you,
glo - ri - fy, True be - lief and true re - pen - tance,
fond - ly dream; all the fit - ness He re - quire - eth
full of pi - ty, love, and power.
ev - 'ry grace that brings you night.
is to feel your need of Him.

4.
Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Lost and ruined by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.

5.
I will arise and go to Jesus,
He will embrace me in His arms;
In the arms of my dear Savior,
O there are ten thousand charms.

Prayer of Praise and the Lord's Prayer

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Confession of Sin

Scripture Reading: From Mark 7: 14-15, 20-23

And he called the people to him again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him." For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Corporate Confession of Sin

A Prayer of St. Anselm (1033-1109)

Holy Father, Almighty and Eternal, we confess before you that we were born into sin and corruption and that our hearts are always focused on evil, unable to follow your holy commandments. We know our sin and confess it to you. We come again to you in repentance, praying that you, through the power of your Son, will heal us. Heal our sinful hearts and cause us to grow in grace through the power of the Holy Spirit, more and more to walk in your ways and seek your paths. Amen.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Assurance of Pardon and the Peace of God: Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Leader: Christian, through the mercy of God who gives us both the needed grace and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven and you are at peace with God.

People: **All thanks and glory to God!**

Leader: The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Collection of Tithes & Offerings

And Hymn of Response:

Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed?

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ALAS AND DID MY SAVIOR BLEED



1. A - las! and did my Sav - ior bleed, and did my
2. Was it for crimes that I have done, he groaned up -
3. Well might the sun in dark - ness hide and shut its
4. Thus might I hide my blush - ing face while His dear
5. But drops of grief can ne'er re - pay the debt of



Sov - 'reign die? _____ Would He de - vote that
on the tree? _____ A - maz - ing pit - y!
glo - ries in, _____ when God, the might - y
cross ap - pears, _____ dis - solve my heart in
love I owe; _____ Here, Lord, I give my -



sa - cred head for such a wretch as I.
grace un - known! and love be - yond de - gree!
Mak - er, died for man the crea - ture's sin.
thank - ful - ness, and melt mine eyes to tears.
self a - way; 'tis all that I can do.

Ending: Here, Lord, I give myself away; 'tis all that I can do.

Presentation of Tithes and Offertory Prayer

Hymn: Doxology

Affirmation of Faith: *The Westminster Confession of Faith*
Chapter III: God's Eternal Decree, Pts. 1-2

Leader: Christian, what do you believe concerning God's Eternal Decree?

People: God, from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordained everything that ever happens, yet in such a way that God is not the author of sin nor is violence done to the will of the creatures, nor is the power or possibility of secondary causes taken away, but rather established.

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Although God knows everything that may or can come to pass based on all possible conditions, yet he has not decreed anything just because he foresaw it as future, or as what would happen because of such conditions.

Hymn of Response: Gloria Patri

Prayer of Intercession

Hymn of Preparation: Whate'er My God Ordains is Right

Whate'er My God Ordains Is Right 231

1. What - e'er my God or - dains is right: his ho - ly will a -
2. What - e'er my God or - dains is right: he nev - er will de -
3. What - e'er my God or - dains is right: though now this cup, in
4. What - e'er my God or - dains is right: here shall my stand be

bid - eth; I will be still, what - e'er he doth, and fol - low where he
ceive me; he leads me by the prop - er path; I know he will not
drink - ing, may bit - ter seem to my faint heart, I take it, all un -
tak - en; though sor - row, need, or death be mine, yet am I not for -

guid - eth. He is my God; though dark my road, he holds me
leave me. I take, con - tent, what he hath sent; his hand can
shrink - ing. My God is true; each morn a - new sweet com - fort
sak - en. My Fa - ther's care is round me there; he holds me

that I shall not fall: where - fore to him I leave it all.
turn my griefs a - way, and pa - tient - ly I wait his day.
yet shall fill my heart, and pain and sor - row shall de - part.
that I shall not fall: and so to him I leave it all.

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The Preaching of the Word

Scripture: Philippians 1:12-26

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the Word without fear.

Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Leader: The grass withers, the flower fades,
People: **But the Word of our God will stand forever!**

**Sermon: Some of the Practical Implications of
Loving a God Who Knows What He's Doing**

Rev. Rob Looper

The Sacrament of Communion

Distribution of the Bread

Prayer

Distribution of Wine

Prayer

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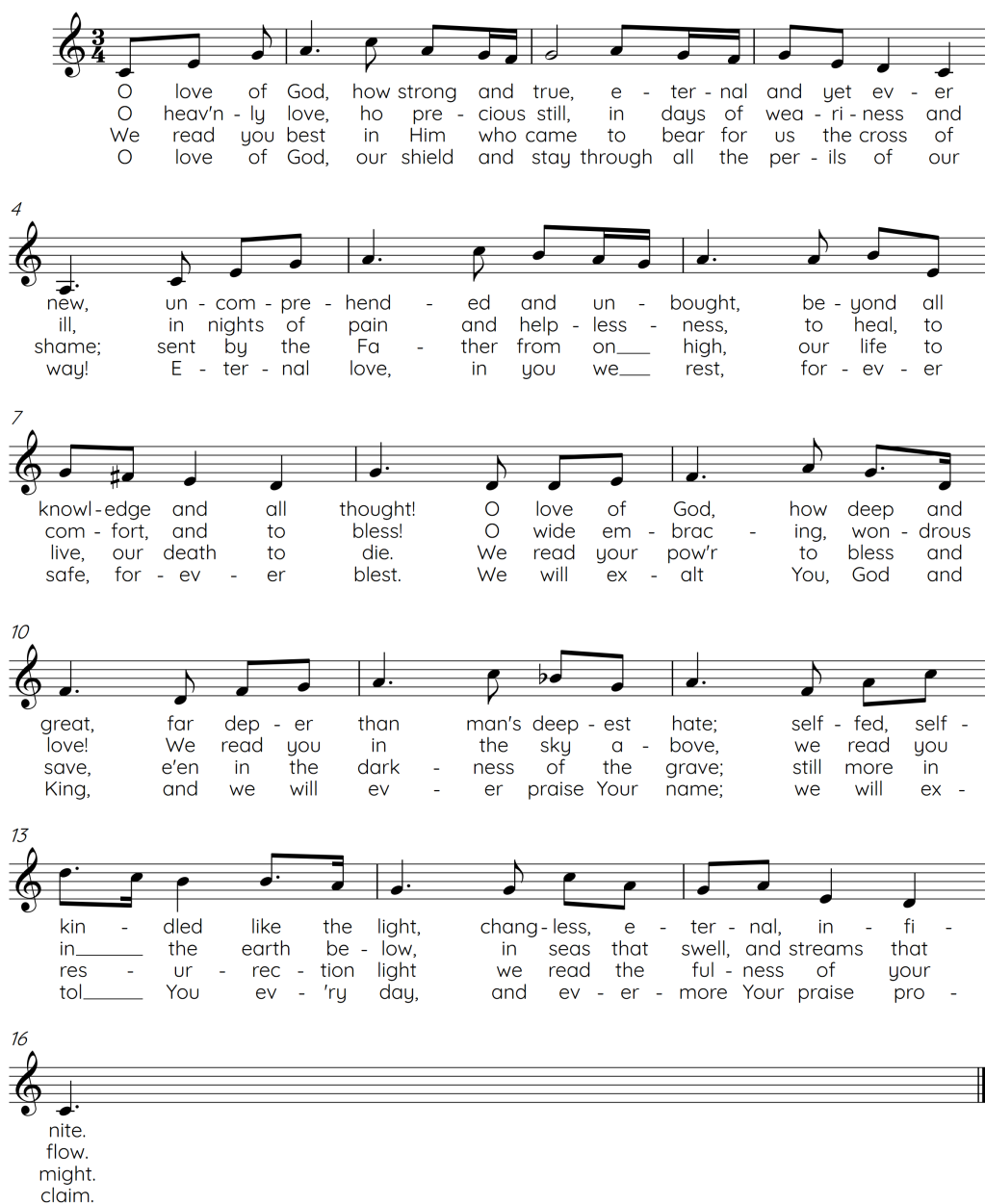
The Giving of Peace

Pastor: May the peace of Christ be with you!

People: **And also with you!**

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

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.

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Benediction: Hebrews 13:20-21

Pastor: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

And God's people said:

All: Amen!