



Sunday Evening Service
January 26, 2025

"For the better government and further edification of the Church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called synods or councils, and it belongs to the overseers and other rulers of the particular churches, by virtue of their office and the power which Christ has given them for the edification of the church and not for destruction, to appoint such assemblies and to convene together in them as often as they deem it expedient for the good of the church."

- Westminster Confession of Faith 31:1

Evening Worship Service

City Reformed Presbyterian Church
Sunday Evening Worship – January 26, 2025
Presider: Elder David Bacon

Call to Worship: Galatians 4:3b-7

Please stand for the Call to Worship if you are able.

Leader When we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.

People **But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son,**

Leader Born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law,

People **So that we might receive adoption as sons.**

Leader And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

People **So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.**

Prayer of Invocation

God With Us

(Words & Music: Leslie Jordan 2012)

You have come to bring peace
To be love, to be nearer to us
You have come to bring life
To be light, to shine brighter in us.
Oh Emmanuel, "God with us".

*Our Deliverer, you are Savior
In your presence we find our strength
Over everything, our redemption
God with us, you are God with us.*

You have come to be hope
To this world for your honor and name.
You have come to take sin
To bear shame and to conquer the grave.
Oh Emmanuel, "God with us".

You are here and
You are holy
We are standing
In your glory (Lord)

Living Stones | 1 Peter 2:1-12

(Words & Music: Daniel Snoke 2019)

May you keep your actions noble
May your neighbors see your love
When they speak about your failure
May they see your deeds and give God glory

*For you, you have been chosen
To be God's holy people
That he builds into his house like living stones
Full of the Spirit*

*And you, you have been chosen
To be God's holy people
That he builds into his house like living stones
Full of the Spirit of peace*

If you've seen that God is precious
If you've tasted that he's good
If you struggle with your passion
Come to rest your soul as God's beloved

Come to him, the stone rejected
Come to him and give your life
Put away your sin and slander
Come to Christ the Living Stone of Zion

His mercy calls you
From darkness into his glory
The day of the Lord will come

Call to Confession: Galatians 3:1-3

O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Prayer of Confession:

Father, you have shown your love to us by sending your son to die for our sins. Your love is vast, unending, boundless and free. But we are slow to believe and slow to respond. Our hearts turn back to the things of this world and we forget your love. Forgive us and renew us. Strengthen us through your Spirit that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith. Help us to better know the surpassing love of Christ. Help us to see the depth of his love to cover our sin. Help us to taste the heights of his love to satisfy our deep longings. Help us to trust the length of his love which continues to the end of time. Help us to rest in the broadness of his love as it meets us in our disappointment. Help us to abide in his love. Amen.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon: Galatians 2:20-21

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Corporate Prayer

Song of Renewal

We consider tithes & offering as an act of worship within the corporate family of Christ. Please direct giving online or via mail (cityreformed.org/give; 3929 Coleman St., 15207)

How Deep the Father's Love for Us

(Words & Music: Stuart Townend 1995)

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That he should give his only Son
To make a wretch his treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns his face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross
My sin upon his shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts no power no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from his reward
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

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Scripture & Homily: Acts 15:1-35

"Jerusalem Council"

- Reverend Matt Koerber

But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”² And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question.³ So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers.⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.⁵ But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses.”

⁶The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.⁷ And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.⁸ And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us,⁹ and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.¹⁰ Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?¹¹ But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.”

¹²And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to

Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. ¹³After they finished speaking, James replied, “Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name. ¹⁵And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written,

¹⁶“After this I will return,
and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen;
I will rebuild its ruins,
and I will restore it,

¹⁷that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord,
and all the Gentiles who are called by my name,
says the Lord, who makes these things ¹⁸known from of old.’

¹⁹Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, ²⁰but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. ²¹For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.”

²²Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers, ²³with the following letter: “The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. ²⁴Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, ²⁵it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you

with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. ²⁸For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: ²⁹that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

³⁰So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch, and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. ³¹And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement. ³²And Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with many words. ³³And after they had spent some time, they were sent off in peace by the brothers to those who had sent them. ³⁵But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

Leader This is the Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Outline

1. The Dispute and the Theology at Stake
2. How it was Resolved
3. What this Means for Us Today

Additional Scripture

Galatians 2:11-16 / But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?" We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

Song of Thanksgiving

The Church's One Foundation

(Words: Samuel Stone; Music: Brian Moss 1996)

The church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
She is his new creation
By water and the Word:
From heav'n he came and sought her
To be his holy bride;
With his own blood he bought her,
And for her life he died.

Elect from ev'ry nation,
Yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With ev'ry grace endued.

(continued on next page)

Though with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch are keeping,
Their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.

The church shall never perish!
Her dear Lord to defend,
To guide, sustain, and cherish,
Is with her to the end;
Though there be those that hate her,
And false sons in her pale,
Against or foe or traitor
She ever shall prevail.

'Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace forevermore;
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great church victorious
Shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union
With God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
With those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with thee.

Benediction