



Faith - Family - Fellowship

ORDER OF WORSHIP
CONTEMPORARY SERVICE
MARCH 23, 2025
11:05 a.m.

CALL TO WORSHIP	Open Up the Heavens	Praise Team & Congregation
SONG OF FAITH	Build My Life	Praise Team & Congregation
GREETING & PRAYER OF CONFESSION		PR
WORDS OF WISDOM	Daniel 5:1-28	Deb Reeves
SONG OF HOPE	Gratitude	Praise Team (solo)
NEW DOXLOGY / BLESSING OF THE OFFERING		
PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH / THE LORD'S PRAYER		Justin Claiborne
WORD OF GOD	John 2:13-22	Rick Stoltz
SPIRITUAL VITAMIN	THE CROSS Reconstruct! God's systems will not look like the world's systems, Amen!	
SONG OF LOVE	Freedom	Praise Team & Congregation
GOING FORTH		

GREETING:

Pastor: Lord, today we gather to witness you.
People: You bring glory to the earth, from the deepest valley to the highest mountain.
Pastor: Lord, today we gather to listen to you.
People: You call us to go and bring good news to your people
Pastor: Lord, today we gather to praise you.
People: You invite us to your table and draw us into your presence.
Leader: Lord, today we gather to worship you.
People: Fill our hearts, minds, and souls with your Holy Spirit. Guide us with your mercy to be courageous to spread the Good News to all we meet.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Pastor: We have not believed you or trusted in your power.
People: Lord, help our unbelief.
Pastor: We have stained our souls by our action and inaction.
People: Cleanse us, Lord.
Pastor: We are broken by disease, bruised by the sins of others, weakened and unable to repair ourselves.
People: Heal us, Lord.
Pastor: We ignore your call to center our lives in you, and so are deaf to the hopes and cries of the poor, the sick, the needy, and the earth.
People: Ground us, Lord!
Pastor: When we confess our sinful ways, God abundantly pardons. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
People: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are all forgiven. Glory to God!
Pastor: By one spirit we are all baptized into the one body.
People: Let us then pursue the things that make for peace and build up our common life.

WORDS OF WISDOM - DANIEL 5:1-28

Daniel's life and ministry bridge the entire seventy-year period of Babylonian captivity. Deported to Babylon at the age of sixteen, and handpicked for government service, Daniel becomes God's prophetic mouthpiece to the Gentile and Jewish world declaring God's present and eternal purpose. Nine of the twelve chapters in his book revolve around dreams, including God-given visions involving trees, animals, beasts, and images. In both his personal adventures and prophetic visions, Daniel shows God guidance, intervention, and power in the affairs of men.

Allow this revelation from chapter five to open up your heart, soul, and mind to grasp the awareness of living a life of obedience to the creator of the world.

Many years later King Belshazzar gave a great feast for 1,000 of his nobles, and he drank wine with them. While Belshazzar was drinking the wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. He wanted to drink from them with his nobles, his wives, and his concubines. So, they brought these gold cups taken from the Temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. While they drank from them, they praised their idols made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone. Suddenly, they saw the fingers of a human handwriting on the plaster wall of the king's palace, near the lampstand. The king himself saw the hand as it wrote, and his face turned pale with fright. His knees knocked together in fear and his legs gave way beneath him. The king shouted for the enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers to be brought before him. He said to these wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read this writing and tell me what it means will be dressed in purple robes of royal honor and will have a gold chain placed around his neck. He will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom!"

But when all the king's wise men had come in, none of them could read the writing or tell him what it meant. So the king grew even more alarmed, and his face turned pale. His nobles, too, were shaken. But when the queen mother heard what was happening, she hurried to the banquet hall. She said to Belshazzar, "Long live the king! Don't be so pale and frightened. There is a man in your kingdom who has within him the spirit of the holy gods. During Nebuchadnezzar's reign, this man was found to have insight, understanding, and wisdom like that of the gods. Your predecessor, the king—your predecessor King Nebuchadnezzar—made him chief over all the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and fortune-tellers of Babylon. This man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, has exceptional ability and is filled with divine knowledge and understanding. He can interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve difficult problems. Call for Daniel, and he will tell you what the writing means."

So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king asked him, "Are you Daniel, one of the exiles brought from Judah by my predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar? I have heard that you have the spirit of the gods within you and that you are filled with insight, understanding, and wisdom. My wise men and enchanters have tried to read the words on the wall and tell me their meaning, but they cannot do it. I am told that you can give interpretations and solve difficult problems. If you can read these words and tell me their meaning, you will be clothed in purple robes of royal honor,

and you will have a gold chain placed around your neck. You will become the third highest ruler in the kingdom.” Daniel answered the king, “Keep your gifts or give them to someone else, but I will tell you what the writing means. Your Majesty, the Most High God gave sovereignty, majesty, glory, and honor to your predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar. He made him so great that people of all races and nations and languages trembled before him in fear. He killed those he wanted to kill and spared those he wanted to spare. He honored those he wanted to honor and disgraced those he wanted to disgrace. But when his heart and mind were puffed up with arrogance, he was brought down from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. He was driven from human society. He was given the mind of a wild animal, and he lived among the wild donkeys. He ate grass like a cow, and he was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of the world and appoints anyone he desires to rule over them. “You are his successor, O Belshazzar, and you knew all this, yet you have not humbled yourself. For you have proudly defied the Lord of heaven and have had these cups from his Temple brought before you. You and your nobles and your wives and concubines have been drinking wine from them while praising gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone—gods that neither see nor hear nor know anything at all. But you have not honored the God who gives you the breath of life and controls your destiny! So God has sent this hand to write this message.

“This is the message that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. This is what these words mean:

Mene means ‘numbered’—God has numbered the days of your reign and has brought it to an end.
Tekel means ‘weighed’—you have been weighed on the balances and have not measured up.
Parsin means ‘divided’—your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.”

That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of sixty-two.

O Lord, you have given us the gift of your Word.

People: May we ever protect and keep it pure. Amen.

WORD OF GOD - JOHN 2:13-22

Just as a coin has two sides, both valid, so Jesus Christ has two natures, both valid. Luke presents Jesus in His humanity as the Son of Man; John portrays Him in His deity as the Son of God. John's purpose is crystal clear: to set forth Christ in His deity in order to spark believing faith in his readers. John's gospel is topical, not primarily chronological, and it revolves around seven miracles and seven "I am" statements of Christ. Following an extended eyewitness account and description of the Upper Room meal and discourse, John records events leading up to the Resurrection, the final climatic proof that Jesus is who He claims to be - the Son of God.

Today's passage comes from chapter 2, verses 13 through 22. Allow these words to open up your heart, mind, and soul.

It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!"

Then his disciples remembered this prophecy from the Scriptures: "Passion for God's house will consume me."

But the Jewish leaders demanded, "What are you doing? If God gave you authority to do this, show us a miraculous sign to prove it."

"All right," Jesus replied. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

"What!" they exclaimed. "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you can rebuild it in three days?" But when Jesus said "this temple," he meant his own body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this, and they believed both the Scriptures and what Jesus had said.

This is the word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.