

March 22, 2020

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: Services are “listen live” only through our website at nrscf.com. If you have trouble accessing this method, please call Mr. Timmer at 231-942-1389.

9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service and 6:30 p.m. Passion Sermon Reading

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Reading Service, 6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading

-All the Lord willing-

Announcement (please see back of bulletin)

Marriage announcement: William John Van Der Vlist and Rhonda Sue Hup hope to be united in Holy Matrimony in our church, on May 14 at 10:30 a.m. with Rev. Adams officiating. Any legal objections may be brought to the consistory. This is the 2nd announcement.

We Remember in Prayer:

-Those who have been unable to gather with us for some time, our widows and widowers, our elderly, the unborn, prodigal sons and daughters, those who are under doctor’s care, and all those who have hidden crosses.

MEDITATION

“Hear.... But My people would not hearken to My voice.” Psalm 81: 8a, 11a

*“Open,” saith the Lord
“Wide thy mouth, believing
This My covenant word:
‘I will, if thou plead,
Fill thine every need,
All thy wants relieving”* Psalter 431:4

How touching the 81st psalm is, for it contains the loving chastisement of a deeply offended Father. The people to whom the Lord spoke were not strangers. They were His people, whom He had sovereignly chosen. He had liberated and led Israel in a wondrous manner (v. 5-7). But what had this covenant people

done? They had quarreled and murmured! And what did the Lord do? Did He turn away? On the contrary, He lovingly stooped to His people and said, “Hear!” The Lord warned them of their unholy ways and strange gods. At the same time the Lord kindly invited them to look only unto Him, because He was able and willing richly to grant them all things.

In the midst of the restless time in which we live our busy lives, we are called upon to stand still and reflect. How have you lived your life? Ask yourself before God. What has the Lord done for you, and what have you been in the Lord’s sight? Are your deeds better than those of the people of Israel? Yet the Lord says, “If thou wilt hearken unto Me” (v. 8b). The Lord is worthy of it. It is His just due. The idols we worship are our ruin. Not one of them can help or save us. But with the Lord all things are possible. He is able and willing to supply all our temporal and spiritual needs.

Did Israel respond to this loving invitation? Do we respond to it? Many think they do: God is willing and I am willing too. But God’s word teaches us differently. “But My people would not hearken to My voice.” The invitation was refused!

This is not said of the world, but of “My people.” Who are they? They are those who are in an outward covenant relationship with the Lord. All God’s living people, who must by grace learn their true condition, are also included. In our text our state is described as disobedient and unwilling.

We prefer to talk about our helplessness, but God is speaking here of our guilty unwillingness. Through the fall we have become great fools and enemies of God and our own salvation. All would be lost, were it not for the provision in the covenant of grace of One who is willing to hear and obey (Psalm 40:8,9). Christ bowed willingly under God’s demands, and He did it for the unwilling, that they might be made willing through the Spirit. Then it is fulfilled, I will and they shall. Then ears are opened and hearts are humbled in obedience.

But if warnings have no effect, God becomes silent and leaves us to our own sinful lusts. The worst judgement is when God is silent and when it seems as though He does not see wickedness. Then destruction is near at hand! As long as God still punishes us with His deeds and His word, as long as He still inspires fear with His judgements, and as long as He still condescends in His longsuffering, it is still a time of mercy.

Congregation, I greet you heartily with the Lord’s invitation, “Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.”

~Rev. C. A. Van Dieren (At Thy Sacred Altar Bending)

Letter from the Consistory

Congregation, due to the concerns surrounding the coronavirus we will be broadcasting our services through Mixlr and over the phone. You can access Mixlr either through our website (nrcof.com) or directly on the Mixlr website, searching for nrcof. If you want to listen over the telephone please contact us by calling or texting (231-942-1389) with how you want to be reached, and we will contact you shortly before the service starts. Please stay in contact with us and let us know if you have any difficulty in listening and we will be glad to help you.

While we are thankful for the opportunity to broadcast our services, it is not the same as gathering together in corporate worship which we should not forsake under normal circumstances (Hebrews 10:25). May our hearts long with the psalmist of Psalm 63 "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." May we take to heart God's clear calling to examine ourselves, be found out by His Word and Spirit, say with Judah "What shall we say unto my Lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my Lord's servants," and repent from our sins.

As we continue through these times, it is our desire to bind together as a church family and support each other as needs arise. If you are experiencing financial hardship due to decrease or loss of income during this time of uncertainty, we encourage you to reach out to your deacon. May we continually look to the Lord and His faithful promise to supply our daily needs.

Anyone who would like to continue giving may send their offerings to Deacon Norm deWit, 25411 485th Ave., Garretson, SD 57030

We are considering continuing the adult class on the Westminster confession via a platform similar to Zoom Meeting. If this is of interest to you, please let us know when it would work for you the best.

May we all daily make this a matter of prayer, for those infected, the health care workers, our leaders of local and national rank, for wisdom, and above all that we would entreat the Lord, "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God?" Joel 2:12-14

Consistory

Mr. Craig Timmer, President Mr. Norm DeWit, Treasurer

Contacts

Bulletin announcements: Mr. Craig Timmer or (231) 942-1389

Sermon recordings: Mr. Ryan Rozeboom

Netherlands Reformed Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



Lord, teach us to pray...
Luke 11:1

Church Times: 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 or 6:30 p.m.