

October 4, 2020

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: Student Slingerland 9:30 a.m. and **2:30 p.m.**

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service and **2:30 p.m.** service with Rev. Witvoet
-All the Lord willing-

Offerings Today: 1st General Fund Next week: 1st General Fund
2nd School Fund 2nd Living Bread

Collections Received in July and August:

| | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| General Fund | \$6684.00 |
| Living Bread | \$3076.75 |
| School Fund | \$841.00 |
| Theological School | \$621.00 |
| Treasured Med | \$571.00 |
| NAGM | \$1646.00 |

We Remember in Prayer:

- Mr. Leonard Spaans who hopes to commemorate his 85th birthday tomorrow, October 5.
- Mrs. Joyce van Voorst who hopes to commemorate her 72nd birthday tomorrow, October 5.
- Our elderly members who cannot come up to God's house from week to week, especially for safety and health with the coronavirus widespread in our area.
- Our widows, widowers and lonely ones, the unborn, prodigal sons and daughters, and all those with hidden crosses.

MEDITATIONS

“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)

“Awake, O north wind.” Song. 4. 16; Isa. 61. 11

When Zion’s sons, great God! appear
In Zion’s courts for praise and prayer,
There, in thy Spirit, deign to be
As one with those who worship thee.

Without thy sovereign power, O Lord,
No sweets the gospel can afford;
No drops of heavenly love will fall
To cheer the weary, thirsting soul.

Winds from the north and south, awake,
Take of the things of Jesus, take;
Diffuse thy kind celestial dew,
Bring pardon, peace, and healing too.

Then shall we count the season dear
To those who speak or those who hear;
And all conspire with sweet accord,
In hymns of joy, to praise the Lord.
~J. Kent

NOTES

Netherlands Reformed Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



*Let us come before his presence with
thanksgiving, and make a joyful
noise unto him with psalms.*

Psalm 95:2

Consistory

Mr. Craig Timmer, President Mr. Norm DeWit, Treasurer
Mr. Derek Kattenberg, Clerk

Contacts

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