

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
PASS ON THE PEACE OF CHRIST



PSALM 106:1-6, 19-23 NRSV // PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9 NRSV

MONDAY 10/16/23

Psalm106:1-6, 19-23/// 1 Praise the LORD! O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. 2 Who can utter the mighty doings of the LORD, or declare all his praise?

Philippians 4:1-9/// 1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. 2 I Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

REFLECTION This is the last letter Paul is going to write to the Philippians church. So he tells them the joy, and the love he shares with them is because of the Lord. He urges them to have Christ fixed firmly in their minds and hearts as they make decisions. He has a sincere affection for them because they are his crowning work among many other churches. He is delighted they are persevering in their faith in God. All ministers of the word and sacrament have a joy for a group of people they have served. His hope, and my hope, is the Lord will continue to reward those who he has crowned with glory. Therefore continue to “hold fast” to Christ which is essential for any church to remain healthy and faithful. Philippians 2:16 “as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.” (NRSV) Paul’s church, like every church, from time to time will have quarrels and disunity. Paul had faith these two woman, Euodia and Syntyche, would work out the problem through their faith in Christ. To overcome our divisions, we too must first have a mind and heart of Christ. That means the Holy Spirit works through the Word of God which then becomes the voice of reasoning and wisdom.

PRAYER I praise you Lord Jesus and I give thanks for your steadfast love which endures forever. I pray to continue to have my mind and heart changed O Lord Jesus. In Jesus Name, Amen

TUESDAY 10/17/23

Psalm106:1-6, 19-23/// 3 Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times. 4 Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people; help me when you deliver them.

Philippians 4:1-9///3 Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

REFLECTION Paul pleads for the leaders to help these woman resolve their issue because their names are written in the “Book of Life” We do not hear much about the Book of Life. So what is it? It is a record written by God before the creation of the world, listing people who will live forever in the kingdom of heaven. The term appears in both the Old Testament and New Testament. How can you be sure your name is written in the Book of Life? Romans 10:9 If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. This new life in Christ is offered to all who dare to submit to God’s love. Do you remember the Bee Gee song “Staying Alive? “Whether you're a brother or whether you're a mother you're stayin' alive, stayin' alive, life goin' nowhere, somebody help me, somebody help me, yeah life goin' nowhere, “somebody”help me, yeah I'm stayin' alive.” Jesus talks about giving new life. John 3:6 “Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life.” There are people who have been raised in the church in the 60’s and 70’s but never found a spiritual life with Jesus. Unfortunately many never heard the message of God’s “one way love” . The message of Law only not the message of God’s grace. My life was going nowhere and I needed help. I came back only after I submitted to God’s love for me. That “somebody” who helped me” “was Jesus He was moving towards me before I moved towards him. You see my name was written in the Book of Life but in the 70’s I did not know it.

PRAYER God of heaven and earth thank you for the joy I get from knowing your Son the one true Messiah. O’ Lord thank you for writing my name in the Book of Life. In Jesus Name Amen.

WEDNESDAY 10/18/23

Psalms 106:1-6, 19-23/// 5 I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory in your heritage. 6 Both we and our ancestors have sinned; we have committed iniquity, have done wickedly.

Philippians 4:1-9///4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

REFLECTION This week there are rumors of wars. There are actual three wars going right today. When we hear this news it troubles our minds and we get anxious in our hearts. When we are tempted by distress Paul calls us to “rejoice in the Lord” no matter the situations in the world. That may sound crazy at first but let’s look at what Paul is teaching us. The Lord refreshes us by giving us spiritual comfort in many ways. Even in the midst of anxiety and chaos, we can have a joy-filled heart. We can be strengthened by rejoicing in the Lord, for no matter the outcome, we have God’s eternal promise. The “world”

peace and joy is a deceptive, frail, and soon fades. Luke 6:25 “What sorrow awaits you who laugh now, for your laughing will turn to mourning and sorrow.” When we have a Christ-centered “peace and joy” our distress is eased. The Christian remedy for a tranquil and peaceful mind is accepting God’s fatherly care. For our names are written in the Book of Life.



PRAYER Lord Jesus continue to help me to have a tranquil heart and mind. I rejoice, and am glad your glory shines on me and helps me find peace. In Jesus Name, Amen.

THURSDAY 10/19/23

Psalms 106:1-6, 19-23/// 19 They made a calf at Horeb and worshiped a cast image. 20 They exchanged the glory of God for the image of an ox that eats grass.

Philippians 4:1-9///6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

REFLECTION When we hear the words “do not worry about a thing” we take pause. Can this really be true? Can I actually be less anxious and live with grace and joy? King David said absolutely. By grace we have been saved. From David’s experience he has learned to trust in God. David created a mess of his life. (Read 2 Samuel 11) God was displeased with what David did. As the story continues (1 Samuel 12) God sends the prophet Nathan to tell King David a story about a wicked man who killed his children’s pet lamb to feed a rich man. When King David heard this he was infuriated. Nathan told him he was that man. When David heard this he was filled with deep shame and guilt and repented. . Let’s face it, we think sinning eases our anxiety, i.e. all sorts of vices. God knows our ways and is willing to forgive us when we return to him. God’s Son sacrificed his life to pay the punishment for all our abhorrent activities. King David understood this and paid dearly with many future problems. The only place he found relief was from God’s eternal love. Psalm 51:1-3. 1 Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. 2 Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. 3 For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night.” God answers David’s prayers and now tells us we too can trust God. Psalm 55:22 “Give your burdens to the Lord, and he will take care of you. He will not permit the godly to slip and fall.” Let us bow our heads and hearts in prayer each day and enter into the sacred sanctuary of God. For it is there, through Jesus Christ, we are allowed to seek relief.

PRAYER Heavenly Father as I bow my head today help me to turn over all my burdens into your hands. Help me to live free from needless anxieties and restlessness. In Jesus Name, Amen.

FRIDAY 10/20/23

Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23/// 21 They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt, 22 wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

Philippians 4:1-9/// 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

REFLECTION Our prayer life really matters and we should never take it lightly. Our daily activities with Christ are vital for our faith to grow deep. So, it is essential to learning to trust in God. To do that we “need help” from God. Our confidence in God is measured by the peace we find in God. The Bible teaches our soul has two parts, the mind and heart. The “mind” means understanding, while the “heart” means self-control and moral character. Peace with God we are in unison with the heart and mind of Christ. This peace surpasses all our understanding. This is only known through the word, and the inward work of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 1:28-29 28 God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. 29 As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

PRAYER Heavenly Father thank you for revealing to my you precious Son. I prayer today your Spirit of truth will continue to guide my life. In Jesus Name, Amen.

SATURDAY 10/21/23

Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23/// 23 Therefore he said he would destroy them-- had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them.

Philippians 4:1-9/// 9 Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

REFLECTION The idea of “doing the things that you have learned” is an invitation to participate with the activities of God. He is bringing home the people whose names are written in the Book of Life. Sometimes we do not fully embrace the gravity of what we do as Christians. What we do each week makes a difference in the world. We invite people to be touched by Jesus’s love. This work, we do in unison with Christ. We do not think of being a Christian as a vocation, but the truth is, it is. Imagine for a moment our faith becomes the central purpose of our lives. The work we do to live is only secondary. Our main work is to people to discover they are loved by God. Let the peace of God reign, for God is the Author of peace. Let us pass this peace to everyone we live.

PRAYER Say the Lord’s Prayer.

