



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) To watch **sermons recorded** on Zoom on our YouTube Channel, go to the FPCP website: <https://www.fpcpataskala.com/> and click on WORSHIP or follow us on Facebook from the homepage. To potentially increase subscribers & views,  like and  share!
- 2) Please invite family or friends, who want to join us for live worship on Sundays @10:45am, to request access by emailing their name, email, & phone number to fpcopataskala@gmail.com
- 3) **One "Zoom" Schoolhouse** 10-10:30am Sundays for all ages 1/10-2/14 RP3: read, picture, ponder, & put into action Bible basics. Kids & youth earn special awards for perfect attendance!
- 4) Have **communion** elements of bread and juice of the grape vine, at table in your home on Sunday January 17th at 10:45am on zoom. If you need elements provided to you, call 740-901-1232 to reach the Johnsons, who lead the Christian Response Team.
- 5) Monthly **training for seated elders and deacons** on 2021 boards of FPCP. The 1st training session is Thursday 2/4/2021 6:30-8PM thru our Zoom worship invitation. Other ordained officers please register with Pastor Janet to attend and to receive the book, since resources and class size are limited.

WORSHIP for December 27, 2020

Prelude played by Brent Miller "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

Streaming CCLI 20373701; © Copyright 2003 Universal Tunes, a division of Songs of Universal Inc./Brickman Songs (SESAC); All rights controlled and administered by Universal Tunes, Brickman. MOV

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQjW7mPXUy8>

Call to Worship: Psalm 2:7 *Responsively*

I will proclaim the Lord's decree:

He said to me, "You are my son: today I have become your father."

Opening Hymn: **"Hark the Herald"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICt1s44cfMM>

Prayer of Confession: *Unison*

Though we are heirs of the Father and children of the king, we live as though we are poor in spirit and provision. We are forgetful and of little faith. Forgive these sins and increase our trust in you through your Holy Spirit and in Jesus' name. Amen

(Pause now for a time of silent confession.)

Assurance of Forgiveness: Ephesian 1:7-8a *Responsively*

"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us." We believe the good news of the gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

"The Gloria Patri"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgcYD_m4OhU

Hymn of Preparation: “Dear Lord and Father of Mankind”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqOnjmr9Ah0>

Call to God’s Word: *Unison*

“Scripture cannot be set aside... What does Scripture say?” John 10:35 & Romans 4:3.

Prayer for Illumination: *Unison*

Lord, through your Spirit enable us to consider your Word, and to enact it in our lives to bring you glory and praise. Amen.

Scripture Readings: Ephesians 1:1-18

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+1%3A1-18&version=NIV>

SERMON: “Adopted as Son” by *The Reverend Dr. Janet Hufford*

Watch sermon on: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAdy2hvW6PL93B6hbgswTxf93Evs575yd>

Through Advent we heard sermons preached from the letter that Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, Greece, from his house arrest imprisoned in Rome, Italy. Today we begin to hear sermons from another prison letter to the church in Ephesus, Turkey. The central theme of Ephesians is about what it means to be a part of God’s family or household. Some may remember the old TV show of Archie Bunker’s household, called “All in the Family.” Archie was a gruff stern father, not known for being warm and fuzzy. Unfortunately, that has been the family experience of some, and therefore those may have the same impression about God as Father. Imagine today’s sermon as a parable, where listeners may think of God like Archie in All the Family, at least when the story starts. We begin the story in the current time of 2020.

Imagine that like many who had to work at home during this pandemic, our father is hard at work in his office high in the loft of our home. Imagine that during work hours, our eldest brother & favorite son of our father is put in charge of watching over us. Both he & we are told that we’re not to disturb our father’s important work. We certainly don’t want to hear our father shout, “Don’t make me come down there.”

While our father is occupied, however, we become bored. As quietly as possible so as not to be caught, we break all the house rules. We think that we have gotten away with everything, but then we realize that our eldest brother has seen everything that we have done wrong. With that we know that we are in jeopardy of punishment by our father, which we deserve for we are undeniably guilty. But our brother doesn’t run upstairs right away. He waits until our father calls on him to report. Only then does our brother ascend to the highest lofty place to speak to our father about us. From below, we wait in dread as our brother approaches our father “to tell” on us. We know that our brother is speaking to our father about us, but we can’t hear what he says.

Now were this a scenario in the context of an earthly family like Archie Bunker’s, the scene may play out in the predictable way. The feared expected punishment might be dreadfully real. Paul knows this full well. Further, before he became an apostle, Paul, first called Saul, was a leading persecutor of Jesus’ followers. He initiated the beatings and death of many Christians, because of their breaking the rules of the Jewish household of faith. Paul knew full well how on earth punishment for those guilty of sin took place. For when he went to minister to people in Ephesus for two years, Paul’s longest stay anywhere, he was subject to the rules of the authorities there. Part of his experience is recorded in Acts 19, summarized as follows. Paul proclaimed Christ, such that the people who worshipped the false goddess, Artemis, began to worship Jesus instead. As a result, the silversmiths, who crafted statues of Artemis for shrines, began to complain, likely

because their businesses were being threatened. Protests and riots, such as those occurring now, broke out. Accusations against Paul & his companions were made. Although they went free after the uproar was ended, during the entirety of his ministry Paul had suffered much violence. Paul was beaten, imprisoned, & threatened with death. Ultimately all of Jesus' apostles, except for John, like Jesus were killed.

So Paul following his conversion to Christ & subsequent forgiveness of his sins writes in Ephesians v. 1a as "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God."

Now back to our illustration for Ephesians. After our big brother Jesus speaks, our father now turns his attention to us. We fear the dreadful punishment is coming. We see our father's hand extended out to us. We may even cringe & cower in preparation for being struck down.

But here is the verdict in vv. 1b-3, "To God's holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

Listen! Our father's hand is not stretched out to extend punishment, but blessing. Our father does not pronounce harsh words, like Archie Bunker, but words of love. From the heavenly realms our father pronounces a blessing over us! Our father lays his gentle hand upon our heads. We are covered with every spiritual blessing in Christ. We receive the same blessing as Jesus, his favored son! What grace! What peace!

Paul, continues in v. 4, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless." How can this be so, when we are not holy & blameless, but guilty & deserving of punishment?

Now v. 5-6. "In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will – to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves."

It's true that we're guilty of sin. The only One, who is holy, blameless & without sin, is the Son of God & the Father, Jesus. But Jesus as our Advocate & intercessor also reports us as holy & blameless to the Father. Thru he & the Father we were chosen before the creation of the world. God knew all that was to come before he created us. He knew of this time. He knew of the pandemic. He knew of the violence. He knew of all that would occur at FPCP. He knew of our sin. So, the Father, since before creation, knew that he would send his Son to the earth, and through Jesus Christ we are adopted also as children of the Father. The Father of the Son, Jesus Christ, is our Father, too. But there is more!

The passage concludes in vv. 7-18.

Now we know that our eldest brother on our behalf willingly suffered for our punishment. He willingly took up our guilt, shedding his blood for the forgiveness of our sin & our redemption. Through his blood, we are saved. Through his advocating for us to the Father, we are seen as holy & blameless. We are fellow children, recipients of the Father's lavish grace. And thru Christ & the Father, we are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance. We are fellow heirs with Christ in this guaranteed promise. These are our riches.

No matter what, the will of the Father, carried out by Christ for us, & the promise of the Holy Spirit is forever true. No circumstances on earth can change it. No COVID-19 nor house arrest. No protests nor riots. No sickness nor death. This is the hope we know & to which we have been called. The deposit is guaranteed. We are redeemed thru Christ. Salvation is ours.

To conclude, we reiterate Paul's words, "You heard the message of truth... Praise be to the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ... To the praise of his glory." Alleluia and Amen!

Hymn of Response: "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQ-TO6ypUWM>

PRAYERS of Joy and Concern, followed by:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Please Continue to Give in Dedication to Our Lord and Savior, Jesus

Prayer Of Dedication: *Unison*

In view of your mercy help us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to you, O God. Amen. *Romans 12:1*

Doxology

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqpXWF15avU>

Closing Hymn: "This Is My Father's World"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEE5MvoT3oI>

Benediction: Ephesian 6:23-24 *Responsively*

Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love,... in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**