

Sunday Gathering Liturgy

Alive With Christ, Ephesians
2:1-7 - Todd Robertson

March 15, 2020

Ephesians: Into the Fullness
of Christ

Call to Worship - Bradley Bell

Good morning and thanks for joining the online meeting of Antioch Church. My name is Brad and I'm one of the pastors here. If this is your first time worshipping with us, we're so glad you're tuning in and we hope you feel a warm welcome. Please connect with us directly by sending a Facebook message; we'd love to get to know you more.

Well church, I know that gathering in this way will probably feel a bit awkward at first. After all, relationships are at the heart of who Antioch is and what Antioch does. But in times like these, when it seems that everything is changing, we do well to focus on those things which cannot change.

The first and most important thing that cannot change is the reality that our God is perfectly in control of all things, even a global pandemic. Hear the word of the Lord from 2 Samuel 22:

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold and my refuge,
my savior; you save me from violence.
I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies. 2 Samuel 22:2-4

As we begin this our first online meeting, the starting point for our church's response to current events is this: worship. Just like always, it's a call to worship. Because our God has taken the worst evil—the death of Jesus Christ—and turned it for the greatest good—the resurrection of Jesus Christ, then Coronavirus is certainly in his hands as well. We can trust him, therefore we can worship him, even scattered in our homes. So let's lift our voices to the God who will hear them as one voice...

On Christ The Solid Rock

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name

Chorus

On Christ the solid Rock I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand

When darkness seems to hide his face
I rest on his unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil

His oath, his covenant, his blood
Support me in the whelming flood
When all around my soul gives way
He then is all my hope and stay

When he shall come with trumpet sound
Oh may I then in him be found
Dressed in his righteousness alone
Faultless to stand before the throne

Confession - Bradley Bell

Church, hear the word of the Lord from Moses in Psalm 90:

Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
[Yet] You return man to dust
and say, "Return, O children of man!"
So teach us to number our days
that we may get a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:2-3, 12

It is in times like these that we realize our desperate need for God and our great privilege of prayer. Multiple entities have declared today a national day of prayer to seek the Lord in unity. So church, let's join our many brothers and sisters in Christ around the country and the world in prayer.

- 1) God, in your mercy, we ask that you would stop this pandemic and save lives—not only in our communities but around the world, particularly in places that are unequipped medically to deal with the virus.
- 2) We also pray for our government leaders and medical professionals to have wisdom in the best courses of action for prevention and care.
- 3) We also ask that you teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Help us to respond with neither panic nor apathy, but with love for our neighbors. May you awaken people to how fragile life is, and lead them to turn to you.
- 4) Finally, we pray for our distributed members and others serving around the world. Please protect them and give them a wide door for declaring your good news as the hope that the world needs most.

This we pray in Jesus name, amen.

Sermon - Alive With Christ, Ephesians 2:1-7 - Todd Robertson

Assurance - Bradley Bell

Normally this time would serve as the climactic moment of our gathering, where the baptized believers among us respond to Christ by coming forward to celebrate communion together. Because it is communion with Christ and with one another through sharing the bread and the cup, we can't enjoy it without a public gathering. However, the realities that it represents do not change: that by faith in the broken body and spilled blood of Christ, we can be reconciled to God and to one another.

So, for baptized believers, may this absence fill you with longing for the day we will be reunited to one another and celebrate communion together.

For believers who have not yet been baptized, now is the time to make the commitment to follow in obedience to Christ by being baptized. Let us know that you want to join our other candidates for baptism, which will take place on Easter Sunday.

And for those who have not yet believed, you don't have to be in a church building to respond to Christ. He has made a way for you to be forgiven of your sins and made alive with him, and he is available to you right now wherever you are. Trust him! He loves you so much.

Now let's all respond by singing of his great love...

How Deep The Father's Love For Us

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That he should give his only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns his face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross
My sin upon his shoulders
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection

Why should I gain from his reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Announcements & Benediction - Bradley Bell

Thank you for joining this online meeting of Antioch Church. As we always say, this is only a small part of the life of Antioch. We would love to have you in one of our Family Groups, where we truly seek to live out the Christian life together. Even though our Family Groups will not be gathering in homes as usual this week, we will still have online meetings through video-conferencing tools. If you would like to join in one of them, simply message us and we'll get you connected.

Church, here are a few important announcements before we conclude:

1) Remember the changes to this week's previously scheduled events: Baptism Class and Women's Formation Training are postponed until further notice, and Food Pantry this Saturday is cancelled. We will give further information about next week's event later this week.

2) Also, remember that though the format of our gatherings have changed, the function of our church has not. So please continue to give generously through one of the following options: your bank's autopay option, GivApp, our website, or by check (mailed to 7315 Southside Dr, Louisville, KY 40214).

We begin each gathering with a call to worship and end with a benediction, which is simply a reminder that we are blessed to be a blessing. Church, you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, made us alive together with Christ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places. This week, because you are already seated with Christ, may you have the peace that allows you to first wash hands, and then wash feet.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: We are sent.
