

Worship Guide for Sunday, October 18, 2020 | 10:00 am

Watch live on [NPC's Facebook Page](#).

PREPARING FOR GOD'S WORD

PRELUDE

Cliff Brock

This is the day the Lord has made. **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Rev. David Jones

Welcome | We are glad you are worshiping with us virtually. Please let us know that you are tuned in. Visitors, please leave a message in the comments thread. One of our elders will reach out to you this week with a word of welcome. All may view the Worship Guide at www.newnanpres.org if you wish to follow along.

Outreach Item of the Month | We are collecting breakfast cereal this month to be distributed to Bridging the Gap and One Roof. You may drop off boxes of cereal in the Church Office during the week or next Sunday, from 11:00 am-1:00 pm underneath the Barrow Hall Portico.

Hubbard Endowment Fund Report | Winn Wise

OPENING PRAYER

As we prepare for a time of worship, we breathe in God's mercy...
And breathe out God's mercy to others...

HYMN 666 O Splendor of God's Glory Bright, vv. 1 & 2

*O splendor of God's glory bright, from light eternal bringing light;
O Light of Light, light's living spring, true Day, all days illumining:*

*Come, Holy Sun of heavenly love, rain down your radiance from above,
and to our inward hearts convey the Holy Spirit's cloudless ray.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Tyler Brock

The Lord says: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The Lord reigns!

Majestic God, do we tremble in awe before you?

[silence]

The Lord reigns!

Worthy God, have we raised your name in praise?

[silence]

The Lord reigns!

Sovereign God, have we executed justice?

[silence]

The Lord reigns!

We bow before you, holy God.

Forgive us. Cleanse us. Free us.

In the strong name of Jesus Christ...

We keep a moment of silence for personal confession.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The Lord said to Moses: There is a place near me where you may stand upon a rock. When my glory passes by, I'll put you in a cleft in the rock. I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Beloved ones, God has shielded us, covered our sin with the hand of protection, as we hide ourselves in Christ, the rock of our salvation. **Thanks be to God!**

RECEIVING THE PEACE

Jesus tell us, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." In this time, let peace reign in our hearts as we strive to live out God's will. May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

A TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

Rev. Darcie Jones

GLORIA 585 Glory to God

Cantor: Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!

ALL: Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!

Cantor: To God be glory forever!

ALL: To God be glory forever!

Cantor: Alleluia, Amen!

ALL: Alleluia, Amen!

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy Spirit, illumine for us this Word, that the message of the gospel may come to us in power. **Amen.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Matthew 22:15-22

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"God's Imprint on Our Lives"

Bell Hooks, a theologian and poet, talks about God's imprint on the land on all of creation. In her book, *Belonging: A Culture of Place*, she discusses how the connection between people and the land that helped to form them is one way that God connects to people. Bell Hooks grew up in the Appalachian region of Kentucky with hills and mountains and hollers and woods to explore and in the Jim Crow south was able to find freedom and a sense of self in the countryside that she doesn't believe she would have seen in the confines of a city. Hooks found a part of herself and she found a part of God in the wild beauty of creation. Maybe you've found God in the natural world as well: in the garden, in the waves near the beach, in the intimate grandeur of a thunderstorm. Or maybe you've found God in the world of ideas and theories and

learning? Perhaps God was revealed in sweeping poetry or elegant prose as it drove along the page, taking you for a journey toward the divine you could not have undertaken in your own imagination? Or maybe you've found a piece of God in the relationships to the people around you as they care for you in times of need, as they hold your hand or offer a kind word in passing? In all of these ways and so many more, God has left an imprint on the world of life; the world God created.

But, God did not leave an imprint just on the things around you. No, not just on the people in your life, but on you as well. You are the imprint of God for someone, likely many *someones*, and assuredly for people you don't remember and whom you will never see again. God's fingerprints are embossed on your heart and your soul and your instinct and your intellect like...well, like a date or a picture is embossed on a coin. Nearly, impossible to remove.

Consider the quarter on your nightstand or in your pocket. Imprinted on each side are words and symbols that exist to remind you where they belong, what they do, and when they were minted. Coins were the major currency in the biblical world and in Jesus' time, the face of Emperor Tiberius and the inscription "Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus, high priest." The Emperor of Rome considered himself a God. This of course, runs counter to what the Jewish people believed which is why Matthew's gospel tells us that the question about paying taxes is a trap for Jesus.

Michael Lee, a Professor of Theology at Fordham University reminds us that the two groups that are sent to Jesus are a strange pairing. The Herodians would have been supporters of Herod the Great and Herod Antipas. You'll recall that Herod Antipas is the king of the Jews most famously from our Nativity Story. Herod and the Herodians got all of their power from Rome and would have been in favor of Caesar's tax. Meanwhile, the disciples of the Pharisees were strict followers of the law, which meant that using coins with a graven image was a no-no. Therefore, opposing groups, having been sent to confront Jesus, whatever his answer, someone will be outraged. But Jesus, sly like a fox cuts to the heart of the matter in a way that only Jesus can, by amazing them with an outside the box, unexpected answer.

First, Jesus tells them to show him the coin, never touching it, thus avoiding becoming unclean himself and then when they respond to his question of who is on the coin, he says give what belongs to Caesar to Caesar. If Caesar's imprint is on the coin, it belongs to him. What is unsaid and what I imagine to be in Jesus' tone and physical expression is something like Give to God what is God's as he indicates with huge arms all the rest that is around them. Yes, we should pay our taxes to Caesar, it is the law. But we do not belong to Caesar, we belong to God. Ted Wardlaw is the president and a preaching professor at Austin Presbyterian Seminary and he writes: "We belong not to our possession, but to God. We belong not to the partisan political claims we make in election seasons or that the Herodians or Pharisees were making, but to God. We belong not to the demands of our vocations, but to God. We belong not to the charms of our secular world, but to God. Christians may have to pay the emperor the tax, but that does not mean a neat division of loyalties that ends up given Caesar far more than his due. Instead, our greatest loyalty is to the one who made us and to whom in body and soul, we ultimately belong."

How many of us struggle each day with what we own and who owns us? Jesus encourages us in this passage that not everything belongs to the emperor. Caesar does not own our faith, our ultimate allegiance, and doesn't deserve a relationship with us that forces God into the emperor's pocket. Do not give to the emperor what is God's for that which belongs to God is vastly larger than that which belongs to any emperor. Jesus amazes the Herodians and the disciples of the Pharisees, and perhaps you and me as well, not by avoiding the trap question, but by getting at the heart of our faith. Let the Emperor have his taxes, they may even do some good. But what is God's should never be given over to the powers of the world. We belong to God; our lives, ourselves, our energy, our everything. Let Caesar have the rest.

A time of silent reflection follows the sermon.

SERMON HYMN 438 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me, vv. 1 & 2

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.
Let the water and the blood from thy wounded side which flowed
be of sin the double cure, cleanse from guilt and make me pure.*

*Not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,
all for sin could not atone. Thou must save, and thou alone.*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

ANTHEM

“Sing a New Song”
from Psalm 96

M. Praetorius

*Sing a new song, Sing to God with a voice of triumph,
Make his praises known to all the nations;
Sing the honor of his name.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Sally Anderson and family in the death of her mother, Libby Turner
Nick Kantorczyk as he recovers from surgery

Loving God, you are steadfast, forever enfolding even when we cannot accept ourselves.

May your Spirit empower us to imitate you:

by receiving those who feel judged and rejected,

by walking alongside those who despair,

by encouraging those who tend to the broken,

by affirming those who labor in love.

We lift into your tender care those whose bodies, minds, or spirits have been weakened or crushed. We lift up to your compassionate grace those whose burdens, guilt, or fears seem too massive to bear. We lift before your expansive mercy those whose hatred, rage, or vengeance cannot be contained. Receive all these cares, loving God, and fill us with the light of Christ, through the work of your Spirit in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray saying...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

HYMN 526 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

*Let us talents and tongues employ,
reaching out with a shout of joy:
bread is broken; the wine is poured;
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.*

Refrain: *Jesus lives again; earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again; earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

We trust you, Lord God, to multiply the blessings these gifts and offerings represent. Strengthen our resolve as we seek to live through You and bless our spiritual deepening. Guide each of us, who devote ourselves to the mission and operation of the church. Build up those new leaders among us, who have been chosen to serve this congregation and their ministries. Be with us as we pour out your love and grace on those who long to hear your word to them, to see your power at work within them, to feel your comfort beside them, through the generous gifts of your Spirit. **Amen.**

GOING FORTH TO SHARE GOD'S WORD

HYMN 765 May the God of Hope Go with Us

*May the God of hope go with us every day,
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
bringing light and hope to every land and race.
Praying, let us work for peace; singing, share our joy with all;
working for a world that's new, faithful when we hear Christ's call.*

BENEDICTION

May God tuck us securely into the cleft of the rock of our salvation, Jesus Christ. May we sense the inexpressible awe of God's glory passing over us. And may we rest in the peace that passes all understanding, now and forevermore.

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes for One Roof | In November, we have an opportunity to help One Roof with Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes. For a gift of \$40, One Roof can assemble a Thanksgiving Dinner Box to feed a family in need. Their buying power is greater than ours, so they are asking for financial donations. Give online through Realm or by making checks payable to NPC, designating them for “Thanksgiving Dinner Box.”

Christmas Eve Service Survey | Please take a moment to complete the survey linked below.

[CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE SURVEY](#)

We are interested in your plans to worship on Christmas Eve. You may also contact the Church Office at 770-253-4405 or by emailing at npcadmin@newnanpres.org to indicate your preferences.

GIVING REPORT

	<u>Giving 2020</u>	<u>Giving 2019</u>
Pledged	<u>\$340,394.61</u>	<u>\$328,334.57</u>
Unpledged	<u>\$24,214.00</u>	<u>\$55,455.49</u>
Total	<u>\$364,608.61</u>	<u>\$383,790.06</u>



Members and visitors alike, please plan to give today in whatever way you are able either [Online through Realm](#), through your bank account, using the QR code or by mailing a check to the church. Thank you for your generosity.