**Sunday, September 11, 2011**

**Welcome** - Greg Snow

**Call to Worship** – Psalm 111 (*Source: The Open Sourcebook* )

*Welcome!*

*As we begin our time together, let’s be reminded: When we gather as the church we recognize that God is calling us all to truly remember, celebrate, and rest in a much greater work than we could ever do – a work that He alone has finished through His Son Jesus Christ. Let’s proclaim the word of the Lord:*

**Worship Leader**
“I will thank the Lord with all my heart as I meet with his godly people.
How amazing are the deeds of the Lord! All who delight in Him should ponder them.

**Congregation**
Everything he does reveals His glory and majesty. His righteousness never fails.

**Worship Leader**
He causes us to remember His wonderful works. How gracious and merciful is our Lord!

**Congregation**
He has paid a full ransom for His people. He has guaranteed His covenant with us forever.
His name awesome and holy. Let us praise Him forever!”

*Let us sing of the finished work of our holy God.*

**Song of Praise** *– For All You’ve Done*

**Psalm 33**

Psalms 33 tell us to “Sing a new song of praise to him and sing with joy. For the word of the Lord holds true, and we can trust everything he does. The unfailing love of the Lord fills the earth.” Truly our God is an Awesome God!

**Song of Praise** – Awesome God

**All We Have Is Christ** – John Piper

Ten years ago today, the first plane that hit the World Trade Towers, Flight 11, immediately killed 92 people on board that flight. Flight 175 that hit the second tower a few minutes later killed 65 people on board. In the Towers themselves it appears now that 2,595 people perished when the Towers fell, including those who worked there or visited there, and those who were entering to save them.

Flight 77 carried 64 people when it hit the Pentagon within an hour after the first attack. Inside the Pentagon 125 people died in addition to these 64. Flight 93 with 45 people aboard turned around over Pennsylvania and was headed . . . where? The White House? The Congress? Todd Beamer and others wrestled control from the hijackers, it seems, and the plane crashed with no survivors near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. All 45 people died. The total fatalities in these terrorist events was about 2,986.

And who could forget the 2,000 lives that were lost with Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and the most recent May 22 tornado that claimed 160 lives.

And lest we think naively in response to these calamities, as though the cost of lives was something unusual, let’s remind ourselves of the obvious and the almost overwhelming fact that over 50,000,000 people die every year in this world. Over 6,000 ever hour. Over 100 every minute. And most of them do not die in ripe old age by sleeping peacefully away into eternity. Most die young. Most die after long struggles with pain. And millions die because of the evil of man against man.

Sudden calamities shock us only to make more plain what is happening every hour of every day of your entire life. Thousands perish in pain and misery every day. Probably seven or eight thousand people will have died during this worship service. Some of them are screaming out in pain just now as I am speaking and as you sit there in relative comfort. If there is to be any Christian joy in this world, along with love, it will be sorrowful joy, broken-hearted joy. What person in this room, who has lived long enough, does not know that the sweetest joys, the deepest joys, are marked with tears, not laughter?

Romans 5:8, “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” All his suffering was the plan of God to reveal redeeming love to us. The sovereignty of God, the evil of the world, and the love of God meet at the cross of Christ.

Listen to this amazing statement from Acts 4:27-28 about God’s plan for the suffering of his Son—for you! “Truly in this city [Jerusalem] there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.” All the scheming, all the flogging, all the spitting, all the beating with rods, all the mockery, all the abandonment by his friends, all the thorns in his head, all the nails in his hands and feet, the sword in his side, weight of the sins of the world—all of it according to God’s plan. For you to see God’s love more graphically.

God’s deepest answer to terrorism and calamity is the suffering and death of his Son. He entered into our fallen world of sin and misery and death. He bore in himself the cause of it all—sin. And he bought by his death the cure for it all—forgiveness and everlasting joy in the age to come.

On his behalf I invite—I urge—you to receive him as your Savior and Lord and the supreme Treasure of your life. After all, All We Have Is Christ.

**Songs of Worship** – All I Have Is Christ

**Offering**

**Who Do You Want Me To Love For You Today?**

The following is an excerpt from Francis Chan’s book, *Forgotten God*:

"Esther Ahn Kim’s biography is among the most powerful testimonies I have ever read. It was during WWII, and the Japanese occupation of Korea, that Esther’s journey of faith really began. She refused to bow down at the shrines set up in every corner of her country and was eventually imprisoned for six years, from 1939 until 1945. Knowing she was destined for prison for refusing to bow to idols, Esther spent time training herself both physically and spiritually. Each day she would find and eat food that was decaying, knowing that was what she would be served in prison. The discipline she demonstrated is humbling; how many of us would choose to eat rotten foods? While preparing for prison, she memorized more than one hundred chapters of the Bible and many hymns because she knew she would not be allowed to keep her Bible. She spent countless hours seeking God through fasting and prayer. These times when she read the Scriptures led to greater clarity, and she was able to surrender her fear of being tortured.

Reading her story left me wanting more. More intimacy with Christ. More love for people. More of God in my life. And to be honest, more discipline. She was a well-disciplined believer, but there was nothing self-righteous about her. Her obedience to Christ only increased her ability to hear the voice of the Spirit, and consequently filled her with overwhelming love for the people she came in contact with. When she eventually was taken to prison, God used her in countless ways. One night a young Chinese woman convicted of killing her husband was brought in. She moaned incessantly and beat on the doors until the guards tied her hands behind her back. It was this woman that God called Esther to love and reach out to. Esther held the woman’s feet at night to warm them, even though the woman was covered in her own excrement. Though food rations were small, Esther gave up her portions for three days to this woman. Over time, the Chinese woman began to respond, carrying on conversation and eventually accepting the good news of the gospel. The woman was later executed for her crime, but she went to her death alive in Christ.

This is one of many people God used Esther to minister to. Murderers and swindlers who were utter outcasts were changed before all who watched as the love of Christ, through Esther, healed their hearts and gave them hope. Even the jailers and government officials noticed how Esther shone in that dark place. She could have just endured her suffering like a good Christian, and we would have applauded her for it. But she was not content to merely endure. She was ready every day and every moment, asking God, “Who do You want me to love for You today?”"

Francis Chan remarked “We are most alive when we are loving and actively giving of ourselves because we were made to do these things. It is when we live like this that the Spirit of God moves and acts in and through us in ways that on our own we are not capable of. This is our purpose for living. This is our hope.”

I present the question to each of us, “Are we ready every day and every moment, asking God, “Who do You want me to love for You today” or are we simply content to merely endure?

**Songs of Praise –** I Will Praise Him Still; The Power of the Cross

**Message** - "*Motivation For Ministry*"; Scripture Reference: 2 Timothy 2:8-13

 Does God have an elect? (Below are only a small portion of scripture passages concerning this subject.)

1. Romans 9:21
2. Genesis 1:1
3. Genesis 3:9
4. Genesis 12:1-3
5. Deuteronomy 7:6
6. Psalm 135:4
7. Isaiah 41:8-9
8. Matthew 22:14
9. Matthew 24:22, 24, 31
10. Mark 13:20
11. Luke 4:21-30
12. Luke 18:7
13. John 6:37, 44, 65, 70
14. John 13:18
15. John 17
16. Acts 13:48
17. Acts 18:10
18. Romans 9:6-8
19. Romans 8:29-30
20. Romans 11
21. 1 Corinthians 1:25-31
22. Ephesians 1-2
23. 2 Timothy 2

**Time of Prayer**