

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE



A JOY MADE COMPLETE

OPENING PRAYER

O God, our Strength and Refuge,

We come into Your Presence this morning as we are. Specifically, You know what many of us are carrying into this hospital this morning. Some are carrying fear. Some are carrying loss. Some are carrying heartbreak or disappointment. Some are carrying uncertainty and fear. However, O God, though these situations may seem dire, You are the source of our joy. Teach our hearts not to be troubled, calm our spirits. Show us this morning that no matter what comes against us, nothing can shake us, move us, or waver us, because You are by our side, sustaining us through the journey.

We ask you to search our hearts and recalibrate our focus and attention to Your goodness and character, which you bring into our lives,

Amen.

SONG: THE JOY OF THE LORD IS MY SONG BY MAVERICK CITY CHOIR

I'm pulling on joy from Heaven's reserve
He's stored up enough for every winter I'm served
I'm seeing beyond my circumstance
This joy that I have is my Inheritance
Joy, this is the joy of the Lord

The joy, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength
The joy, oh, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength
Oh-oh-oh, He is my hope (yes, it is)
The joy, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength

There is a Savior in the valley place
He's walking beside me and He knows my pain (yeah)
God, the beginning and the end
God, right there in the midst of it
Joy, this is the Joy of the Lord
Oh, joy, this is the joy of the Lord, whoa

The joy, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength
The joy, oh, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength
Oh-oh-oh, He is my hope
The joy, oh, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength

There's gonna be glory
There's gonna be glory
There will be glory after this
No need to worry
In this present suffering
There will be glory after this (Sing it out)
There's gonna be glory
There's gonna be glory
There will be glory after this (glory after this)
(Oh, no need to worry)
No need to worry
In this present suffering

There will be glory after this
(Sing the joy)

Oh, the joy, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength
The joy, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength
Oh-oh-oh, He is my hope
The joy, the joy
The joy of the Lord is my strength

SELECTED READING OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

Nehemiah 8:9-10

⁹ Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, and the Levites who were instructing the people, said to them all, “This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep.” For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

¹⁰ Nehemiah said, “Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

John 16:20-24

²⁰ Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. ²¹ A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born, she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. ²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again, and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. ²³ In that day, you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ²⁴ Until now, you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask, and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

REFLECTION: A JOY COMPLETE

Let's be honest: being in a place like a hospital arouses so many feelings inside of us that aren't indicative of joy. It's not fun, it's not exciting, but it can be very stressful and anxiety-inducing.

For those of you who are patients here, you are constantly standing at critical thresholds regarding your health, which may look different from others'. It may look like receiving a life-altering diagnosis, starting dialysis for the first time, or losing mobility and independence. It can look like having the sudden realization, "I might die". Moving from hope for a cure to hope for comfort. Other times, it can be relational thresholds, such as saying goodbye to your loved one or becoming a burden in one's eyes. Either way, joy seems almost impossible to attain when facing these circumstances.

For our families, you witness these moments that your loved ones endure. You toss and turn, expecting the best to come, realizing that it may not turn out as you'd hoped for. An undesired test result, hearing a poor prognosis from the doctor, or accepting the truth that all other curable options have been exhausted. Joy may not seem improbable, but somewhat foolish as well.

And our staff and healthcare professionals. You enter these spaces with joy, eager to help and willing to go the extra mile to ensure you provide holistic care for those you serve. However, there are days when you feel depleted, empty, and low in spirit. Sometimes this can look like burnout, compassion fatigue, or simply not feeling appreciated for the sacrifices you make every day. Considering all this, joy feels unattainable.

Despite this, the Lord's promise remains. Jesus says that our "joy will be made complete" when we abide in Him. This joy is not naïve, as it refuses to acknowledge the ongoing suffering that occurs here. It's not contingent upon circumstances, trials, or desired outcomes. It's not loud, brash, or celebratory. This joy is found in the One who grants it to those who continually stay rooted and grounded in Him.

Jesus made the promise to His twelve disciples moments before His crucifixion. He prepared his followers for the impending loss of their Messiah, whom they had followed for years. Yet, as Jesus prepares his disciples for suffering, he encourages them that His presence will abide in them as they remain close to Him.

For those of you who are patients, families, or staff, this feels like a paradox. Having sustained joy amidst profound suffering almost feels like an invitation to negate your current experiences. However, Jesus sees and knows exactly where you are and what you are carrying this morning. He doesn't stand distant or unmoved by your pain. Rather, He walks towards you, eager to make His presence known to you, where both realities can coexist. Joy, true and lasting joy that remains, is available for you to have.

You don't have to strive, perform, or be in a better state to receive it. Just come to the Lord as you are and trust that He will see you through. Allow Him to be the source of your joy today.

Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

BENEDICTION:

As we go from this place, may the God of all joy and comfort fill and surround you with His presence. May He turn your mourning into dancing, sorrow into rejoicing, and despair into hope, whatever predicament you may face. May you draw closer toward Him as He draws closer to you and be reminded that your joy will be made complete in Him.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord shine His face upon you and be gracious to you, and may the Lord watch over you and give you His peace.