

Letters to the Church



JANUARY '23

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,

As I'm sure you can imagine, growing up with Michael as my brother, there was always music in our house. We enjoyed all kinds of instruments at all kinds of decibels at all kinds of hours. Looking back, it's a minor miracle that our neighbors didn't call the police about the noise more often! However, even with all the stereos, amplifiers, drum sets, and endless pages of sheet music all throughout the house, my favorite times were always at the end of the week when our Dad would make a fire in the backyard pit, and we would sit down with just one acoustic guitar, and sing hymns together. These simple family songs were our most cherished music.



As brothers and sisters in Christ, there is also something very powerful and very important about us singing together as a redeemed family. We are joining our voices to proclaim together not just truth, but also our shared value of it and our heartfelt affection for it. Whenever we gather, this should compel us to lift our voices high because singing as an assembly presents a unique opportunity to unite our minds and hearts in a shared declaration of the glory of our God.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

COLOSSIANS 3:16

Praise is an outward expression of what we consider valuable. Humans naturally praise what they most treasure. In fact, we get the word "worth" from the same root as "worship." Assembled worship is a shared seeing, a shared savoring, and a shared showing of the worth of God.



This means that it is significant that our intentions are to worship together going into every Sunday. As we live in a world that would much rather choose to worship anything other than God and give His glory as God to something else, to anything else (**Romans 1:21-25**), our assembled praises of Him spurn the enemy. We as the church have been eternally purposed in what God foreordained in Christ to become one of the chief places in all creation to manifest and display that God is more glorious than all! (**Ephesians 3:10 – 11, 21**)

So, we assemble and praise to vindicate God's character against all the slander of the demonic realm and the world led by their course. So we assemble and worship to publicly display the eternal beauty and brilliance of God's purposes in Christ Jesus our Lord. So we assemble and proclaim in all seasons: when our voices are choked with tears, when our hearts are failing, when our circumstances are frustrating, when nothing else in our lives seem to make any sense - our God is still good, His steadfast love still endures forever, He is still faithful, (**Psalms 100:5**) and so we assemble and sing!

I will tell of your name to my
brothers; in the midst of the
congregation I will praise you:
You who fear the LORD, praise him!

PSALM 22:22 - 23B

YOUR PASTOR & SERVANT,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John".

