

Under the Law, the alleluia chorus of God's righteousness and redemption was an unfinished symphony. Sacrifices had to be repeated. The melody kept circling back, unresolved.

But in Jesus the composition is complete. His life, death, and resurrection bring the music to its full and final form.

(vs. 14) "By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."

Perfected forever, but still being made holy?

The choir still assembles for rehearsal. Notes are learned. Timing is shaped. Voices are trained to articulate the words clearly. Breath is controlled. Listening deepens. The work is finished, but the singers themselves are still being formed.

Every choir knows the difference between composing a piece and covering one. A cover does not change the song. The melody stays the same. The harmonies are already there. But every choir, every congregation, every assembly gives its own rendition.

The church is not asked to improve Christ's work; we are called to embody it. Each assembly, in its time and place, offers its own cover of Jesus' perfect composition. Same gospel. Same grace. Same finished work. Sung through different voices, in different keys, with lives slowly trained to match the music.

This is why the assembly keeps gathering.
God is still teaching us how to faithfully sing it.

FINAL THOUGHTS 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 p. 1,771
"The Equipping of the Assembly"

Paul tells us that God himself equips the assembly (i.e ecclesia/church) so every part of God's people may faithfully sing their unique cover of God's song of redemption until Christ returns when our voices are joined with the chorus of heaven.

This equipping is for others and for us, sustaining us with hope, joy, and peace as we actively await the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon Notes 01-18-2026

FIRST THOUGHTS Psalm 40:1-10 p. 878
"The Great Assembly"

Have you ever sung in a Choir, Ensemble, or music group?
School, Church, Community?

The Psalmist speaks of being part of the singing of the "Great Assembly."

(vs. 3) He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise....
(vs. 9) I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips...
(vs. 10) I do not hide your righteousness...I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly.

Who are the "great assembly?" They are the people of God who gather, (they assemble), to witness in word and song what God has accomplished/promises on behalf on his people.

In this sense, the great assembly becomes a choir as it gathers to sing its witness to God. (You and me included)

Psalm 40 as a liturgy of Thanksgiving.

FURTHER THOUGHTS Hebrews 10:1-14 p. 1,872
"Perfecting the Assembly"

Why does a choir practice? "*Practice makes perfect.*"

Arthur Rubinstein "*If I don't practice for one day, I know it. Two days, the critics know it. Three days, the audience knows it.*"

The writer of Hebrews tells us the music itself is finished. The score is written. No revisions needed like was needed under the Law. Under the Law, the Alleluia Chorus of God's Righteousness and Redemption was an unfinished symphony.

Practice does not exist because the music needs more work, it exists so the musicians can better express the music.

That is the tension the writer of Hebrews names for us. The score is written. No revisions are needed, unlike under the Law. But those who sing it still need rehearsal.

*Prayerfully, openly engage in relationships
through Christ's love."*

CONTACT INFO

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PRAYER LIST

John Nimmon, Rev. Jim Richards, Catherine Bitner, Jo Smith, Pastor Vern, Family of Heidi Hefflefinger. Sam & Barb Shenk. Family of Bob Rhoades.

Prayer Persons: Luke & Tina Fry- 717-440-6624

1688 Walnut Bottom Road, Newville PA 17241

Local Church: BS United Lutheran- Jenn Richards

Presbyterian: Harrisburg Korean-Rev Inho Kang

Come and chase the Winter Blues away with soup and games after Church today. Bring a shareable food or dessert and a game. We will start after church around 11:30. All are welcome.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jan. 20th 7pm Deacons

Jan. 21 6:30pm Bible Study

BRIGHT SPOT

The CLC committee is planning a music and game event for all in the Newville area who have memory issues and their caregivers/loved ones. It is called Bright Spot because it is designed to encourage fun and relaxation—a time to get away from the tasks of daily living. **Saturday, February 21 at 1:30 pm** is the event's date. We will begin with a get acquainted game, then enjoy music with Chip Messenger followed by Bingo and light refreshments. We need a few volunteers to help set up tables, greet folks as they come in and to offer assistance, if needed, during the event. A couple batches of cookies are needed, too. A sign up sheet is on the table. Help us to share God's love with our community. Questions? Call Rausa at 717-776-9142.

Join us for the **Super Bowl of Caring**! We are collecting donations to buy beef for the Big Spring Area Food Bank. Our goal is to provide 1 lb beef packages to each family unit that the area food bank serves. Write Super Bowl on the memo line of your donation. We will finish collecting donations on February 8th.