

**Introduction** (Gen 8:18-22)

How many of you like new things? How many of you like new cars? I like to drive a new car. How many like new beginnings? Lots of people do not enjoy new beginnings. I love new beginnings. Karen calls me a pioneer, not a settler. A pioneer is always looking for a new territory, a new beginning. Paul was a pioneer. His ministry was to go where no one else had been. He did not want to build on another man's foundation. He was an apostle who laid foundations and started new works. I knew a couple of years ago that my time at the East Mountain Vineyard was nearly up. God had some new things for me to do. I also knew that we would be selling our home and moving. We began selling things in preparation for this future move. We did not know when or where, but only that God was telling us to get ready to move. We sold part of our land last week, and our house went on the market this week. Last fall, we got off our ark and left the East Mountain Vineyard. It was time for a new beginning for us. We were still not sure of where or when we were moving, but we knew it was a new beginning. God led us to plant the Connection Church of Albuquerque. We understood that we would be moving to Albuquerque for this new beginning. We have been making more preparations for that move. We have been busy getting our house ready to sell, and it is now on the market. God quickly brought a buyer for our extra five acres with the barn. The same person also bought our tractor. God's hand is very evident in our move and our new beginning. I am excited about the Connection Church of Albuquerque and the new beginning. A few weeks ago, Karen said, "You love to plant churches." She is 100% right. I love to plant new churches, and I am excited about our new church plant. I believe that God is excited about it also. He is a God of new beginnings.

We are continuing our series in Genesis. Last week, I called the message, "The End of the Chapter." The waters receded and Noah and all the animals got off of the ark. This chapter of their lives was a long one. It took Noah many years to build the ark. Then, they were on the ark a little over a year. Finally, the water receded, and Noah and all the animals got off the ark. The world and every living thing had been destroyed. The face of the earth had changed dramatically. There were more mountains and higher mountains. It was a new beginning for all the creatures that got off of the ark. It was a new beginning for Noah and his family. What was the first thing that Noah did? He built an altar and worshipped God.

Today's message is about worship. We will look at the priority of worship, the act of worship, and the response to worship. Let's read our passage.

1. The Priority of Worship
2. The Act of Worship
3. The Response to Worship

(Gen 8:18-22) "So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. {19} Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by their families from the ark. {20} Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. {21} The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, 'I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. {22} While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.'"

**Beginning With Worship (Gen 8:18-22)****1. The Priority of Worship (Gen 8:18-20)**

When Karen and I left the East Mountain Vineyard, the very first thing that we did was to hold a worship service in our home. We immediately established a new place for family and corporate worship. Leaving our church did not affect our individual worship. We spend time individually with God every day. But, corporately, we needed a new place of worship. It was time to plant a new church and establish a new place for corporate worship, for our family and for other families that God would bring to be a part of this new church family.

(Gen 8:20) “Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.”

I believe that Noah had an altar at his former home. He and his family worshipped the Lord and were in the habit of offering sacrifices to God. Now that he was starting over, the very first thing that he did when he got off the ark is to build an altar to the Lord. Worship was clearly a priority for Noah and his family. In Psalm 96, families are told to ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Families are told to ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name. Families are told to bring an offering and come into His courts. I believe that Noah and his family worshipped the Lord.

(Ps 96:7-9) “Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. {8} Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name; Bring an offering and come into His courts. {9} Worship the LORD in holy attire; Tremble before Him, all the earth.”

There are 442 references to altars in the Scriptures. This is the first reference to an altar, but I do not believe it was the first altar. I believe that Adam and Eve had an altar. I believe when Abel brought his firstlings and the fat portion, he sacrificed them on an altar that they had built to worship the Lord. Let me give you a few verses about people that built altars.

In Genesis 12:7, Abram built an altar to the Lord at the oak of Moreh. In the next verse, Abram moved to Bethel, and built an altar to the Lord. What was Abram doing at the altars. In verse seven the Lord appeared to Abram. Abram encountered God at the oaks of Moreh and built an altar to worship the Lord. In verse eight, Abram built an altar and called upon the name of the Lord. Altars were built to worship the Lord. They encountered the Lord in worship, and they called upon the name of the Lord. In addition, it was interactive. The Lord interacted with them.

(Gen 12:7-8) “The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. {8} Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD.

In Genesis 13:18, Abram moved again. This time he moved to the oaks of Mamre. What did he do as soon as he moved there? He built an altar. Abram built an altar every time he moved to a new place. It did not matter where Abram was, he made sure that he built an altar so that he could worship the Lord. Worship was a priority to him.

(Gen 13:18) “Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.”

In Genesis 26:25, Isaac built an altar at Beersheba and called upon the name of the Lord. Notice what it says immediately after he built the altar. Isaac then pitched his tent, and then dug a well. Isaac built an altar to worship God before he even pitched his tent to live in. He built an altar before he dug a well. You cannot survive without water to drink, but worship was a higher priority. We see a common thread of what they did when they built an altar. They obviously were bringing animal sacrifices to offer to God, but that is not what all these verses say. It says that they called upon the name of the Lord.

(Gen 26:25) “So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.”

In Genesis 33:18-20, Jacob came to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan. He pitched his tent and camped before the city. Then, he went into the city and bought the piece of land that he had pitched his tent on. He paid one hundred pieces of money for the land. Once he owned the land, the very first thing he did was erect an altar. Worship was a priority to Jacob. What did Jacob do? He called upon the name of the Lord. He called the altar, El-Elohe-Israel, which means, God, the God of Israel. It was a name of God.

(Gen 33:18-20) “Now Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram, and camped before the city. {19} He bought the piece of land where he had pitched his tent from the hand of the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. {20} Then he erected there an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.”

In Exodus 17, Israel was fighting against Amalek at Rephidim. Joshua was leading the battle and Moses was interceding with his arms up. When his arms were up, Israel prevailed, and when his arms got tired and began to sink down, Amalek prevailed. So Aaron and Hur put a stone under Moses' arms and they each held one of Moses' arms up, and Israel prevailed. After they had beat Amalek, they built an altar. They named the altar, Jehovah Nissi, which means God is my victory. It is a name of God. Altars were given names of God. In particular, they named the altar after the name of God that they were calling upon.

(Ex 17:15-16) “Moses built an altar and named it The LORD is My Banner; {16} and he said, ‘The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.’”

As I mentioned, there are 442 references to altars in the Scriptures. We do not have time to go through all of them. I just wanted you to get a taste of some of these. Building a place to worship was a priority. It should be a priority for us.

Before I move on to the act of worship, I want to mention a couple other things about altars. The first altars were made of earth and stone. In Exodus 20:24, God specifically said to build altars of earth in order to offer burnt offerings and peace offerings. If they used stones, they were not allowed to cut them or wield a tool on it, so that they would not profane it. I believe that God gave these same instructions to Adam, Noah, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses.

(Ex 20:24) “You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you. {25} If you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, for if you wield your tool on it, you will profane it. {26} And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, so that your nakedness will not be exposed on it.”

Once the law was given and the Levites and Priests were given the responsibility of overseeing the tabernacle and the worship, a different altar was made. They constructed the altar out of acacia wood and overlaid it with bronze. They made it so that it could be carried with poles on the shoulders of men. Everywhere that God led Moses and the Israelites, they carried this altar with them. They always had an altar to worship God wherever they were at.

(Ex 27:1-8) “And you shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide; the altar shall be square, and its height shall be three cubits. {2} You shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze. {3} You shall make its pails for removing its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze. {4} You shall make for it a grating of network of bronze, and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. {5} You shall put it beneath, under the ledge of the altar, so that the net will reach halfway up the altar. {6} You shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. {7} Its poles shall be inserted into the rings, so that the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. {8} You shall make it hollow with planks; as it was shown to you in the mountain, so they shall make it.”

We find out in Exodus 40:5 that there was also a gold altar made for burning incense. The gold refers to purity and the incense is symbolic of the prayers of the saints. We are to offer holy sacrifices, and one of the sacrifices that we offer is our prayers.

(Ex 40:5) “Moreover, you shall set the gold altar of incense before the ark of the testimony, and set up the veil for the doorway to the tabernacle.”

When the temple was built in Jerusalem, Solomon overlaid the whole house with gold. In 1 Kings 6:22 we find that the whole altar which was by the inner sanctuary was overlaid with gold. The altar was in the temple, which was the place of worship. The Jews were commanded to bring their offerings to the temple. The tithes and offerings were a way to worship God, and it also provided for the priests and Levites. Giving or returning to the Lord a portion of what He has given you has always been a part of worship.

(1 Kings 6:22) “He overlaid the whole house with gold, until all the house was finished. Also the whole altar which was by the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold.”

(Deut 12:5-6) “But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the LORD your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come. {6} There you shall bring your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the contribution of your hand, your votive offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock.”

I want to go to two other Scriptures before moving on. In Jesus' interaction with the woman of Samaria at the well, she tells Jesus that her fathers worshipped in this mountain. This was the time period before the temple was built. She goes on to say that the Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus responds by telling her that an hour is coming when neither in this mountain or in Jerusalem will men worship God. He said that "true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers. God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

(John 4:20-24) "'Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.' {21} Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. {22} You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. {23} But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. {24} God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.'"

We have seen a progression of building altars. First, men built earthen altars wherever they were and worshipped the Lord. Second, in the days of the tabernacle of Moses, they had a portable altar made of acacia wood which was overlaid with bronze. They also made a gold altar for their incense. The third era of altars was the temple altar. The altar was not portable and was located in Jerusalem at the temple. The Jews brought their offerings to the temple. The fourth era of altars is in the New Testament. Jesus was the last sin offering that was needed. There is no reason or purpose to keep offering sin offerings. We do not worship God that way any longer. Jesus said that true worshippers worship in spirit and truth. When a person receives Christ, the person is sealed with the Holy Spirit. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19 that we are temples of the Holy Spirit. We are to continually offer sacrifices of thanksgivings and praises in our earthen temples, our bodies. That was God's intention all along, to build earthen temples to place His Spirit inside. God was not interested in man-made religion and worship. God wanted us to build an altar in our hearts where we continually offer up sacrifices to Him. Our altar is made of earth. Our altar is portable and goes where we go. Our altar is a place where we call upon God. Building a time and place in our lives to worship God is a priority.

(1 Cor 3:16) "Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

(1 Cor 6:19) "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

One final thought about worship. Worship was not just an individual priority; it is a corporate priority. We are individually to build an altar in our lives. But, corporate worship is also a priority. Collectively, we are living stones who are being built into a spiritual house to offer up sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God. We are told in Hebrews 10:24-25 that we are not to forsake the assembling of the saints. Corporate worship is a priority for all of us, and we are not to forsake that assembling.

After Paul escaped from Damascus, he went to Jerusalem. What did he try to do? We find in Acts 9 that he tried to associate with the disciples. He immediately tried to be with the disciples. He was not forsaking the assembling of the saints. It was a priority to him. In fact, the word associate is not a good translation. The word is *kollao*, which means glue. It is typically

translated as cleave or join, as in marriage. Paul tried to attach himself, glue himself, and join the disciples in Jerusalem. Paul understood that corporate fellowship and worship was a priority.

(Acts 9:26) “When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.”

## 2. **The Act of Worship** (Gen 8:20)

After building an altar to the Lord, Noah took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. God told Noah to bring seven pairs of every clean animal and bird. God had provided the sacrifice that would be offered. Everything that we have to offer has come from God. Romans 11:36 says that “from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.” In verse 35, Paul asks the question, “for who has first given to Him that it might be paid back again?” It is a rhetorical question. Nobody has ever first given to God. We give back a portion of what God has already provided to us. Some of the teaching today, particularly from those teaching a prosperity doctrine, tell you to give so that God will give back to you. God does bless our obedience in giving. He rebukes the devourer, and He pours out a blessing. But anything we give is in response to what He has already given us. We have it backwards. And, besides having it backwards, we have our motives wrong. We should give to bless and honor God, not to receive more from Him.

(Gen 8:20) “Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.”

Notice what Noah gave. He offered burnt offerings on the altar. There are a number of different offerings mentioned in Scripture. In fact, a form of offer or offering is used 1,423 times in the Bible. We don't have time to go through all those verses on offerings. But, there were grain offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, wave offerings, burnt offerings, and special offerings. One of the things that distinguished burnt offerings from other offerings was the partaking of the offering. When the priests offered a sin offering or peace offering, they ate part of the offering. God specified what part was their portion. A burnt offering was different. None of the burnt offering was eaten by those presenting the offering. They were not getting anything out of the offering. There was no tasty barbecue. There was no fellowship meal paid for by our tithes. There was no promise of future wealth. This offering was solely to bless and honor the Lord. It was an offering that recognized our sinfulness and at the same time recognized God's mercy and forgiveness. But, it was given to be consumed entirely by the Lord. Noah had no hidden agendas or motives. His motive was to thank God for His mercy and grace, and for bringing them safely through the flood. His offering was gratitude for saving him and his family, because he knew outside of the grace of God, he deserved to die also. What a humble, contrite, and grateful heart Noah displays in his act of worship.

Our acts of worship are a little different in some ways. Our heart should be the same. We should worship God with humble, contrite, and grateful hearts. But, our acts of worship are a little different. We are not bringing goats, sheep, cows, oxen, or clean birds to church to slaughter and barbecue. We are not bringing sin or burnt offerings. We are not bringing peace offerings. So, what are the offerings we bring? Let's take a look at a few of the offerings we present on our altars.

In Psalm 50, God tells us that if He were hungry He would not tell us. He does not need our bulls. He tells us to offer to God “a sacrifice of thanksgiving.” He tells us to call upon Him and to honor Him. In our individual and corporate times with God, we need to offer up thanksgivings and praises to God. That is what God wants on our earthen altars. God concludes by saying, “he who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me, and to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God.” God is honored by our thanksgivings, and He is honored by living upright lives that honor and glorify Him.

(Ps 50:12-23) “If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains. {13} Shall I eat the flesh of bulls Or drink the blood of male goats? {14} Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High; {15} Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me....{23} He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God.”

Similarly, in Hebrews 13:15-16, we are told to continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.” It should be clear that thanksgivings and praises are acts of worship that God loves. The writer of Hebrews goes on, “and do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” Our good and upright lives honor God. Sharing with those in need honors God. We do not have to offer clean animals; we offer thanksgivings, praises, and holy lives.

(Heb 13:15-16) “Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. {16} And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”

In Romans 12:1, we are urged by Paul to “present ourselves as living and holy sacrifices, acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service of worship.” Every morning in our prayer time, Karen and I present ourselves to God as living and holy sacrifices. What does that mean? One of the keys is found in the Greek word used for worship. The normal word for worship is *proskuneo*, but the word here is *latreia*. *Latreia* means service. Karen and I present our lives to God to use each day. It is only fitting that the rest of Romans 12 is about spiritual gifts and our place of service in the body of Christ. We are to lay our lives down for one another every day. This is the acceptable sacrifice that Paul is encouraging us to do.

(Rom 12:1) “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

There are many people in the body of Christ that do not serve in the church. I know many people that go to several different churches. They like the music at this church, and the preaching at this church, and so they go to different churches. When I ask where they are serving and laying their lives down for the local body, they have no answer. Church is a “get what you can” activity that makes them feel good. True worship is “giving all that you have” to honor God and build up others. That is the acceptable service of worship sacrifice that Paul is speaking about.

### 3. **The Response to Worship** (Gen 8:21-22)

We have looked at the priority of worship, and acts of worship. Now, let’s look at the response to worship. “The Lord smelled the soothing aroma.” The barbecue smelled good to the Lord. The

fragrance of the burnt offering did not just smell good. It was a soothing aroma. The term is used forty-three times, and it is always in the context of offerings. The primary context is in regard to sin. Have you ever been sunburned and put some cool soothing lotion on it? The burnt offering for sins soothed the scorching effects of our sins. God hates sin. He loves sinners, but He hates sin. The burnt offering that Noah and others in Scripture offered to God were a soothing aroma.

(Gen 8:21-22) “The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, “I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. {22} While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, And cold and heat, And summer and winter, And day and night Shall not cease.”

The next response is what God said to Himself. He said, “I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” Noah must have overheard God talking to Himself. Or, perhaps, the Spirit of God, communicated the thoughts of God to Noah. In 1 Corinthians 2, we find that it is the Spirit of God that reveals the mind of God. I believe that Noah was full of the Spirit of God and the Spirit of God revealed the thoughts of God to him.

(1 Cor 2:10-12) “For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. {11} For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. {12} Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,”

When we worship, we get filled with the Spirit of God. Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:18-20 that we are to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit. How? We are continually filled by speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and giving thanks to the Lord. We are filled with the Holy Spirit when we worship. Noah was worshipping God and got filled with the Holy Spirit. Noah has built an altar, presented burnt offerings to God, and it has been a soothing aroma to God. I believe that the Spirit and the presence of God filled that place and filled Noah. Then, I believe that Noah heard the thoughts of God. If you are having a hard time hearing from God, let me suggest that you spend more time worshipping God. Let me suggest that you spend time building an altar where you can call upon the names of God. Let me suggest that you bring acceptable sacrifices to God that move the heart of God.

(Eph 5:18-20) “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, {19} speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; {20} always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”

God promises that He will not destroy the earth again with water. God destroyed every living thing, but sin was still alive and well. God recognized that the intents and thoughts of men are evil from our youth up. God would provide a solution for that, and that is in Jesus Christ, His Son. Jesus would take away our sins, and give us His righteousness. God would send His Spirit to dwell in us. The ultimate fulfillment of this is in Jesus’ second coming, when He gathers the elect from the earth. When we go to heaven, there will no longer be any sin. But until that day,

there would be seasons. There would be winter and summer, cold and heat. There would be seedtime and harvest. There would be sowing and reaping, both spiritually and physically. Life would go on until the second coming of Christ. It is interesting that the second coming of Christ will be like the days of Noah. People will be eating and drinking and living their normal sinful lives.

I want to finish with one final thought. Worship is supposed to be interactive. Worship was never intended to be one way. We do not come and present our tithes and offerings, sing a few songs, and go home. Worship is intended to be interactive. Worship is intended to connect us to God. We bring our sacrifices of thanksgivings, praises, prayers, lives, and our tithes and offerings, and we present them to the Lord. When we connect with God, we speak to Him, and He speaks to us. We need to come with the expectation of encountering God in worship. Ask God to meet with you in worship. Ask Him what is on His heart? Ask Him what He is thinking about. He revealed His thoughts to Noah. He can reveal His thoughts to you also. When God begins to reveal His thoughts to us, we call that prophecy. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul writes that when this happens people will declare that God is in your midst. At the Connection Church, we want to encounter God. We want to present acceptable sacrifices that are a soothing aroma to God. We want to hear from God. We want Him to fill this place with His presence.

(1 Cor 14:24-25) “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; {25} the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.”

## **Conclusion**

Noah and his family got off the ark, and their first priority was worship. He built an altar and they offered burnt offerings and worshipped. Their offering was a soothing aroma to God. The Holy Spirit revealed to Noah God's thoughts. It was interactive, not a one-way activity.

This morning, did you come to connect with God? Did you come to present your offerings to the Lord? Has He filled you with His Spirit? Did you hear from the Lord? Has the Holy Spirit revealed to you the mind of God this morning? I want to take just a minute to reflect on what He has spoken, or to ask Him to speak to you....What has He spoken to you this morning? Is it something that you can share with others this morning? If so, raise your hand and we will give you an opportunity to share with the rest of us, so that all of us can be edified.

**Communion:** Tom Swenson