



November 2025

Taken from:
BibleProject.com

Sermon on the Mount The Beatitudes

Two thousand years ago, on the eastern side of the Mediterranean, a teacher named Jesus of Nazareth climbed a hillside and started teaching people about the Kingdom of the skies—the renewed world God had long promised. For largely poor, oppressed Galilean farmers and laborers, this was good news.

The Big Idea

The Kingdom of the skies represents a new kind of society where generosity, justice, and peace reign. It's a world where love is the final word.

Context

Matthew places the Sermon on the Mount within his larger narrative about Jesus that takes place in Jerusalem, Judea, Galilee, and the surrounding occupied lands of the Greco-Roman Empire between approximately 4 B.C.E. and 35 C.E. The book was likely composed sometime between 55 and 90 C.E.

Key Themes

- Human affection and action in the Kingdom of God
- The humble, generous, and non-violent character of Kingdom people
- The cost and reward of following Jesus

Structure

The Beatitudes includes nine sayings

from Jesus about the hearts and actions of people living out his Kingdom reality. These statements are grouped into three triads, concluding with three images: salt, light, and a city on a hill.

Jesus Introduces the Kingdom of the Skies

The crowd listening to Jesus had been suffering under the Roman Empire's greed and violence for many years. And they were longing for a new kind of empire, God's heavenly Kingdom in the skies, to become real on Earth. And though this crowd was made up of those societies deemed unimportant, Jesus said that his Kingdom would begin with them and their willingness to choose love. He began his Sermon on the Mount with these words:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:3 NASB

Jesus uses the phrase "Kingdom of the skies" to talk about a new kind of reality. We live in a world of violence and corruption—a world where might makes right. But for Jesus, there is a realm where generosity reigns, where there's justice and peace, and where love is the final word.

And that world might as well be up in the skies. It's beyond us. God's heavenly reality can seem far off. But Jesus claimed that Heaven was coming to Earth here and now, beginning with these people.

Grieving and Unimportant People Know the Good Life

Next, Jesus says to the crowd:

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."
Matthew 5:4 NASB

This group is at the bottom of society, and they know all about loss and grief. But Jesus said this coming reality would turn sorrow into joy.

"Blessed are the gentle, for they will inherit the earth."
Matthew 5:5 NASB

These people are not powerful or important, at least from the world's perspective. But despite this, Jesus tells them that one day, they will be ruling the world. This kind of language almost sounds like Jesus is trying to start a revolution. And that's because he is. But it's a Jesus-style revolution—not a violent grab for power and influence but a new way of life ushered in by people who serve, forgive, and love others because they long for right relationships.

The Merciful and Pure in Heart Peacemakers

Jesus continues to describe these Kingdom people when he says:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied."
"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy."
Matthew 5:6-7 NASB

Continued on page 5

**Pastor David Missel**

585-658-1197 Residence
djmguided1947@gmail.com
585-382-3311 Church

It is our desire to assist anyone who is seeking help, if possible, whether it be spiritual or otherwise. Please contact Pastor David or any Session Elder if you would like us to be of help.

**When Pastor David
is unavailable:**

Pastor David is presently scheduling Fridays as his day off so matters of less urgency could be left on the church office answering device, or call one of the Ruling Elders:

George Briggs	585-382-3038
Patty Gregg	585-245-1311
Carol Griffen	585-382-3681
Shirley Matthews	585-382-3171
Cathy Mlyniec	585-322-6669
Leo Richardson	585-382-3153

(Clerk of Session)

Other Contacts**LEPC website:**

www.seekinggodtogether.com

LEPC Email Address:

grichardson001@rochester.rr.com

LEPC Food Pantry:

(by appointment only)
585-245-3448

Sunshine Person:

Cathy Mlyniec
cmlyniec@gmail.com

Dear Reader,

Have you ever noticed, when you meet someone for the first time, it doesn't take long before the subject of what that person's profession is, comes to light? It seems like our identity is frequently connected to our profession or occupation. I try to make it a point not to reveal my occupation because I've learned that people act differently when they discover I'm a pastor by profession. Although, whatever a person's profession or occupation may be, it doesn't necessarily identify who they are at the core of their being. I'm sure we've all met those people along life's journey.

Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul introduced himself, in the book of Romans, by stating, "Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, and set apart for the gospel of God." He wanted the persecuted Christians who fled to Rome to clearly know who he was and what his calling was as a servant of Jesus Christ.

Paul saw everything in his life through the lens of his identity servitude to Christ. While outwardly he wrote as a slave of Caesar, inwardly he considered himself as a bondsman to Jesus Christ. To Paul the term servant was a title of dignity and humility. For him, there was no greater position, identity, or purpose than to be a servant of the One who rescued him from his old self-centered identity. Therefore, he gladly proclaimed his new identity as a servant of Jesus Christ, the One who loved him, saved him and gave him the privilege of proclaiming the Gospel (Good News) everyone needs to hear.

As present day servants of Jesus Christ, may we too be ready to find our identity in our Lord and Savior so others might come to know and receive the abundant life He promised to those who become his servants. There is no better identity than to be a servant of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let us daily serve Him with our Love and Joy.
Pastor David



**Monthly Celebrations
November Birthdays**

20 Leo Richardson

Anniversaries

1 M/M Leo Richardson

**Liturgists Signup
for November**

For those who want to read scripture during Sunday worship, please remember to sign the "Volunteer" list on the Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall. Thank you! May God Bless!

**Prayer Shawl
and Lap Robe Ministry**

If you know of someone who has serious health problems and would find some encouragement, warmth and comfort from receiving a handmade shawl or lap robe, please contact Carole Missel.

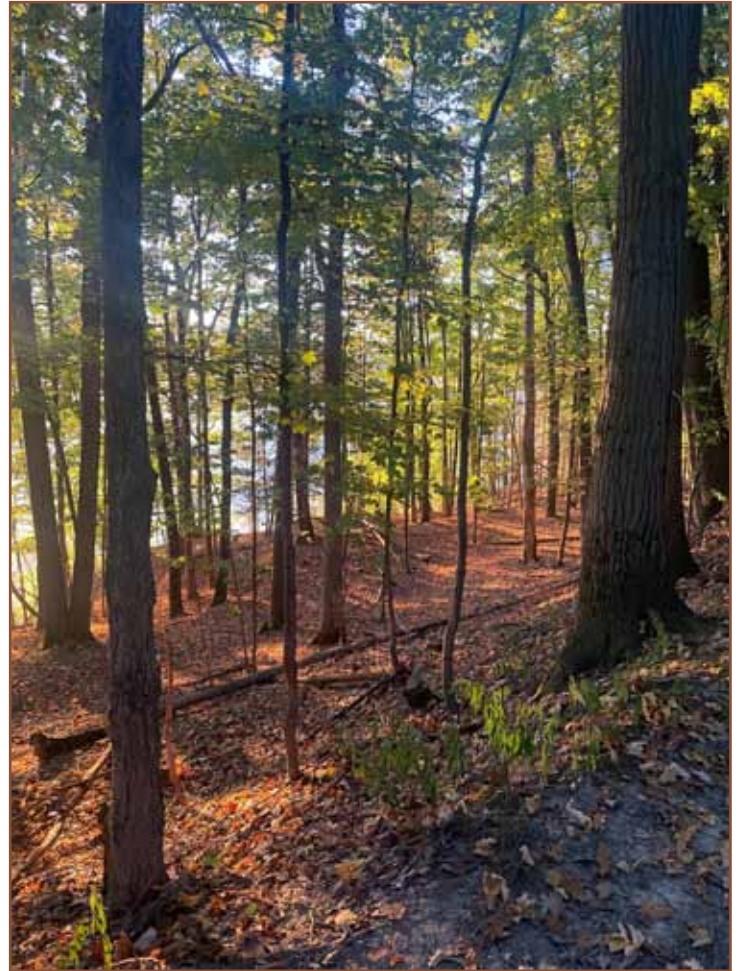


Quilt made by Cathy Mlyniec

*This is
the day
that the
Lord has
made;
let us
rejoice
and be
glad
in it.*

Psalm
118: 24, 25

Letchworth Park
Photo by
George Briggs



Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

are available in Fellowship Hall at Church to fill with Christmas goodies for needy children around the world.

You may either fill them yourself or fill a box online. If you fill one on line, please let Gene and Patty Gregg know, so they can keep track of how many boxes are donated.

**Please return filled boxes
by November 9th.**

Postage will be paid by the church.
Any questions see Gene and
Patty Gregg.



[www.samaritanspurse.org/
operation-christmas-child/buildonline/](http://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/)

*May You and your Loved Ones
Have a Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving!*

Psalm 92 niv

A psalm. A song. For the Sabbath day.

*It is good to praise the LORD
and make music to your name,
O Most High,
proclaiming your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,
to the music of the ten-stringed lyre
and the melody of the harp.*

*For you make me glad by your deeds,
LORD;
I sing for joy at what your hands
have done.*

*How great are your works, LORD,
how profound your thoughts!
Senseless people do not know,
fools do not understand,
that though the wicked spring up like
grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they will be destroyed forever.*

But you, LORD, are forever exalted.

*For surely your enemies, LORD,
surely your enemies will perish;
all evildoers will be scattered.
You have exalted my horn like that of a
wild ox;
fine oils have been poured on me.
My eyes have seen the defeat of my
adversaries;
my ears have heard the rout of my
wicked foes.*

*The righteous will flourish like a palm
tree,*

*they will grow like a cedar of
Lebanon;
planted in the house of the LORD,
they will flourish in the courts of our
God.*

*They will still bear fruit in old age,
they will stay fresh and green,
proclaiming, "The LORD is upright;
he is my Rock, and there is no
wickedness in him."*

Session Meeting Highlights of October 9, 2025

Special Presentation: Leafguard Salesperson made a 40 minute presentation. He quoted a total cost for replacing our current gutters with the Leafguard system plus any fascia replacement costs, if needed. Session will seek other quotes.

Sharing Life, Spiritual Focus and Prayers for the Church: Concern was raised for the Radleys' health, Chris Dunham's new job and vehicle repair. Carol Griffen read a passage from the book "Brave By Faith". Session members offered prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for those discussed, the local church, for peace and the expansion of God's Kingdom.

Pastor's Report: Shirley Siniapkin's whereabouts has yet to be determined, because of privacy issues, since she left The Cloisters in Warsaw, NY. Pastor scheduled his last week of vacation for October 13-19.

Worship Report: Pulpit supply: 10/19 Rev. Tom Wray, 10/26 Pastor Dave Seely, 11/9 Greg Burns. LEPC will host a Christmas Eve Service beginning at 7:00 p.m. York UPC will be asked if they'd like to join with us.

Witness Report: Report from Carol Griffen about the (informational) Food Insecurity Meeting, attended by various organizations from the local area who shared their missions in providing food for those in need.

Missions: A Zoom Prayer Meeting is scheduled with one of our missionaries. LEPC received a letter from our EduNations' sponsored child. Voice of the Martyrs received our support from last month. Session approved a donation for Hope for Renewal church plant. Session approved a donation to Samaritan's Purse for current needs. Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child physical shoe boxes or online shoeboxes were discussed. Session agreed that the congregation should have the option, but Session would like to keep a tally.

Stewardship: Initial planning stage to begin for the 2026 Budget.

Personnel: CLP Contract Worksheet will soon be available for Pastor and Personnel Divisions.

Miscellaneous: Up Coming Events Calendar: A "Movie Night" being planned by Sharon and Leo Richardson. The movie selection was "Amazing Grace" as a probable matinee during the 2nd or 3rd week in November. Use of bulletin board for Christmas wishes will be prepared by Sharon and Leo Richardson.

Next Regular Session Meeting Date was scheduled for 11/13/2025 at 3:00 p.m. On motion by George Briggs and seconded, Session approved to recess. Pastor David closed with prayer at 5:08 p.m.

Submitted by Leo Richardson



**Time Change -
Set clocks back
November 2nd, 2:00 a.m.**



Continued from page 1

Just imagine it: a group of powerless people at the margins of society, ruling the world through generosity, forgiveness, and justice. This is what a Jesus-style revolution looks like.

The next thing Jesus says is:

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Matthew 5:8 NASB

Doing good without mixed motives can feel impossible. Even our best choices can come from poor motivations. But Jesus says that the good, blessed life belongs to those who love with pure intentions, as God does. This is at the heart of experiencing God’s blessing and true peace.

When we are compelled to love because of love itself rather than personal gain, we can experience the blessing of good life. This is a radical calling already, and Jesus makes it more radical by what he says next.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Matthew 5:9 NASB

God’s new reality requires people who are willing to stop fighting with their enemies and start seeking good in the world. Kingdom people are those willing to help resolve conflict with love and patience and urge those around them to create a way toward peace.

Persecuted Peacemakers Like Israel’s Prophets

Jesus acknowledges that life as a peacemaker can be dangerous when he says:

“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10 NASB

Entering into conflicts and advocating for peace is not a comfortable

way to live. And Jesus names the high cost of joining this peace-making revolution.

“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in this same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:11-12 NASB

What does Jesus mean by “the prophets before you”? He and most of his audience are Israelites who know the Hebrew Scriptures well. And in the Scriptures, God promised that his Kingdom would be restored over all the world through Israel. With this comparison, Jesus is telling his audience that they will suffer a fate similar to the Hebrew prophets—abused, rejected, and often killed.

As the story goes on, Israel becomes as corrupt and violent as everyone else, and they end up enslaved to oppressive nations. But Israel’s prophets stood up to these kingdoms and criticized their corruption, even calling out their own wayward leaders. The prophets said that one day, God’s heavenly Kingdom would break in, starting with a small group of faithful Israelites willing to surrender the desire to destroy their enemies and embrace love instead. These people would turn to God and trust that his way of life is truly good.

Now on that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will no longer rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.

A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.

For though your people, Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, Only a remnant within them will return;

A destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness. Isaiah 10:20-22 NASB

“But I will leave among you A humble and lowly people, And they will take refuge in the name of the Lord.

“The remnant of Israel will do no wrong

And tell no lies,

Nor will a deceitful tongue

Be found in their mouths;

For they will feed and lie down

With no one to frighten them.”

Zephaniah 3:12-13 NASB

Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened attentively and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and esteem His name.

“And they will be Mine,” says the Lord of armies, “on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will have compassion for them just as a man has compassion for his own son who serves him.”

Malachi 3:16-17 NASB

In the Beatitudes, Jesus invites the crowd to follow in the way of these prophets by embracing truth and love for others in the patient, bold, and good ways of God.

The Salt, Light, and City

Jesus concludes the Beatitudes with three images from Israel’s Scriptures.

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

The first is:

“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by people. Matthew 5:13 NASB

Salt is a mineral that preserves food for a long time. And in the Bible, salt is a symbol of God’s long-lasting covenant with Israel.

Every grain offering of yours, moreover, you shall season with salt, so that the salt of the covenant of your God will not be lacking from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt. Leviticus 2:13 NASB

All the offerings of the holy gifts, which the sons of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to you and your sons and your daughters with you, as a permanent allotment. It is a permanent covenant of salt before the Lord to you and your descendants with you.” Numbers 18:19 NASB

Do you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the rule over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt? 2 Chronicles 13:5 NASB

Jesus is saying that he and this ragtag group will become the launch party of God’s long-lasting, ancient promises to renew the world. And then he says:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; Matthew 5:14 NASB

Here, Jesus is referring to the biblical image of God’s light, his presence shining out from its dwelling place in the temple in Jerusalem, which was a city on a hill. But Jesus’

audience aren’t rulers or people with power, and they’re a long way from Jerusalem. But Jesus says that despite this, they are God’s salt and

light and city. They are the blessed ones, the new Jerusalem that’s going to display God’s Kingdom to all the world.

May LEPC be the “light and salt” and a “city on a hill that cannot be hidden!”

EduNations Updates

Recently a letter was received from our Sponsored Student, Fatu Thoronka. She shared, “My favorite subject at school is R-M-E because the teacher is very good”. She was looking forward to spending her summer holiday with her mother. Her specific prayer request for us, **“I want you to pray for my education and pray for my family.”** Please keep Fatu in your prayers.



EduNations US Director Dana Kaltenberger and Pastor Scott Graham have traveled throughout the Sierra Leone region to visit all the EduNations communities. Each community has been grateful that they came in person. Dana shared, “We remain steadfast in our commitment to educate their children and uphold the highest standards of accountability and integrity in all we do.” and “We are confident that the future of EduNations is bright. We continue to seek God’s wisdom and guidance as we move forward in the work He has called us to do in Sierra Leone.”

Please continue to pray for EduNations and the work that is being done so the children in Sierra Leone can receive an education and thrive.

World Outreach - EPC Missionaries

LEPC supports a missionary family stationed in the Middle East. Greg held a prayer meeting by Zoom on Wednesday October 15. The prayer focus was peace between the countries, religious groups, and political parties in the Middle East. Participants also prayed for believers to grow and share their faith with others among their community, family and church.

Please pray for our missionaries and the work they do.
May the Kingdom of God go forth!

Submitted by Cathy Mlyniec

Voice of the Martyr's:
icommittoprayer.com

September 11, 2025 | Togo

**Church Nearly Destroyed,
Eight Killed**

On October 26, 2024, Islamist militants attacked a church in Nalgbangou in northern Togo. During the attack, the Islamists burned houses and killed eight men in the village. They also filled the local church with bullet holes, knocked the metal sheeting roof down and set the building on fire. Since then, many members of the congregation have been afraid to return. The pastor said that even before the attack, church members who had converted from Islam faced regular persecution. **Front-line workers request prayer for this pastor, his church and all the Christians in northern Togo.**

September 25, 2025 | Eritrea

**Arrests of Christians
Increasing**

Front-line workers report that arrests of Christians in Eritrea have increased in 2025 with very few releases of current prisoners. Since Jan. 1, 2025, there have been over 200 new arrests, putting the total number of Christian prisoners in the country around 550. This is the highest it has been in over five years. The conditions inside these "prisons" are some of the harshest in the world as Christian prisoners are provided meager rations and held in shipping containers in extreme desert conditions for years. Some prisoners, like Dr. Tecteab Menghisteb and Dr. Kiflu Gebremeskel, have been imprisoned in Eritrea for more than 20 years. **Pray for God's peace to be with Christian prisoners in Eritrea and with their families, and pray for their release.**

October 9, 2025 | Israel

**West Bank Christians
Threatened**

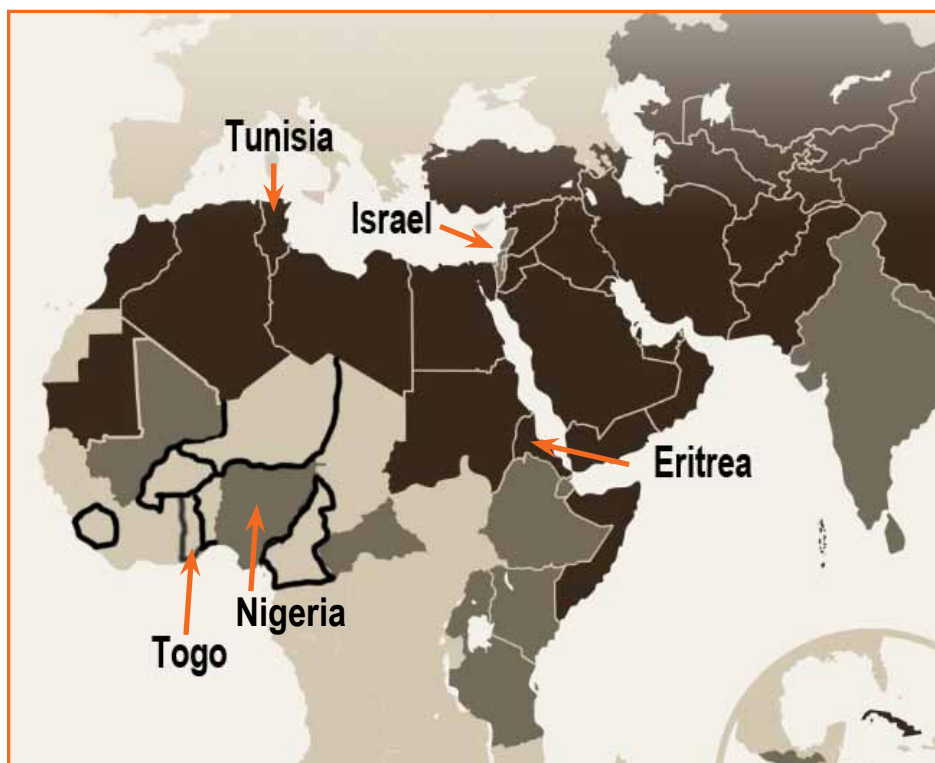
Radical Muslims in the West Bank have threatened to kill a Christian convert from Islam and his family, including his four children. After receiving the death threats, the man and his family fled from Bethlehem to hide in a larger city. They request prayer that Israeli authorities will allow them to stay. Another West Bank convert to Christianity was confronted by his parents and his village imam with an ultimatum: Return to Islam within a month or be imprisoned by local Palestinian officials. "When a Palestinian Muslim embraces Christ, it leads not only to a change in their religious beliefs, but their community also perceives that he or she has betrayed their own people," a front-line worker explained. "No one wants to be related to a traitor, so the pressure from family members on new

Christian converts is often intense and violent." **The worker requested prayer for both converts."**

October 2, 2025 | Tunisia

**More Field Workers Needed,
Especially Women**

Front-line workers report there is a **need for more workers in the harvest fields of Tunisia**, especially for more women. "We need to have more sisters who are willing to work with women here," he said. Tunisia is home to many people who have fled violence and insecurity in neighboring Libya. Because of their tenuous living situations, many are looking for hope and are open to hearing the gospel, but cultural pressures make Christian work challenging. "It is complicated," said the front-line worker regarding reaching out to Muslims in the country. **"Wisdom is needed."**





Our Mission

The EPC exists to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus as a denomination of Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations.

Our Vision

To the glory of God, the EPC family aspires to embody and proclaim Jesus' love as a global movement of congregations engaged together in God's mission through transformation, multiplication, and effective biblical leadership.

Our Motto

*In Essentials: Unity.
In Non-Essentials: Liberty.
In All Things: Charity.*

The Steeple Newsletter

is published monthly by the Leicester Evangelical Presbyterian Church, for the purpose of proclaiming that Jesus is Lord and that He is moving among his people here. Our intent is to keep the readers informed of church and local events, and provide information to stimulate and edify its readers.

For those who would like a printed version of the church newsletters, we keep the last 2 months' issues in the brochure rack, on the wall to your right, as you exit the sanctuary to Fellowship Hall.

Submission Deadline:
The 3rd Sunday of the month.

Contact:

Sharon Richardson
srichardson002@rochester.rr.com
Leo Richardson
grichardson001@rochester.rr.com

Staying Connected: If anyone does not receive the Steeple Newsletter, participate in Prayer Chain Activations, receive church updates by e-mail, or has a change for the "Birthdays and Anniversaries" and wants to be included, please contact Leo Richardson.

Count Your Blessings

1 When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Refrain:

Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your many blessings, see what God hath done.

2 Are you ever burdened with a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?
Count your many blessings, ev'ry doubt will fly,
And you will be singing as the days go by. [Refrain]

3 When you look at others with their lands and gold,
Think that Christ has promised you His wealth untold;
Count your many blessings, money cannot buy
Your reward in heaven, nor your home on high. [Refrain]

4 So, amid the conflict, whether great or small,
Do not be discouraged, God is over all;
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,
Help and comfort give you to your journey's end. [Refrain]

Author: Johnson Oatman, Jr., 1856 - 1922
<http://www.hymntime.com/tch/>

Johnson Oatman, Jr., son of Johnson and Rachel Ann Oatman, was born near Medford, N. J., April 21, 1856. His father was an excellent singer, and it always delighted the son to sit by his side and hear him sing the songs of the church.

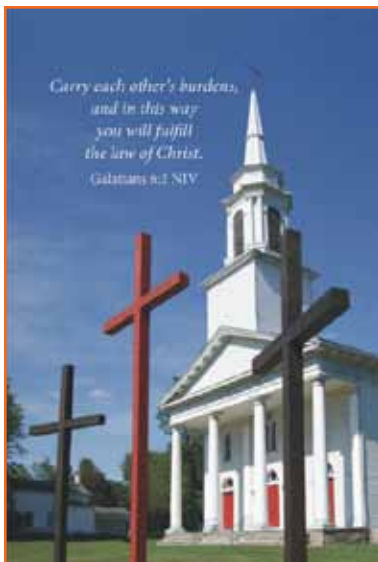
Outside of the usual time spent in the public schools, Mr. Oatman received his education at Herbert's Academy, Princetown, N. J., and the New Jersey Collegiate Institute, Bordentown, N. J. At the age of nineteen he joined the M.E. Church, and a few years later he was granted a license to preach the Gospel, and still later he was regularly ordained by Bishop Merrill. However, Mr. Oatman only serves as a local preacher.

For many years he was engaged with his father in the mercantile business at Lumberton, N. J., under the firm name of Johnson Oatman & Son. Since the death of his father, he has for the past fifteen years been in the life insurance business, having charge of the business of one of the great companies in Mt. Holly, N. J., where he resides.

He has written over three thousand hymns, and no gospel song book is considered as being complete unless it contains some of his hymns.

In 1878 he married Wilhelmina Reid, of Lumberton, N. J. and had three children, Rachel, Miriam, and Percy.

Excerpted from Biography of Gospel Song and Hymn Writers by Jacob Henry Hall; Fleming H. Revell, Co. 1914



EPCConnection

EPCConnection is the news and information service of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, a denomination of Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations. To the glory of God, the EPC family aspires to be a global movement of congregations engaged together in God's mission through transformation, multiplication, and effective biblical leadership, embodying Jesus' love to our neighbors near and far.



To subscribe go to:
<https://epconnection.org>

Everyone is Welcome!

Sunday morning Worship

9:15 - 9:30	Prayer and Share
9:40 - 10:20	Berean Sunday School
10:30 -	Traditional worship (Hymnals/piano)
Communion	First Sunday of the month
Dish-to-Pass Luncheon	2nd Sunday of the month after church



Leicester EPC
161 Main Street
P.O. Box 202
Leicester, NY 14481

*May You and
Your Loved Ones
Have a Blessed and
Happy Thanksgiving!*

Christian Leaders Call on US Govt. To Help Protect Nigerian Christians

by John Stonestreet and Bob Ditmer

Christians in Nigeria are paying for their faith like no one else in the world. Attacks from Muslim extremists were once mostly limited to sacred holidays of Easter and Christmas. Now, they are almost continuous. This year, the slaughter of Nigerian Christians has hit an unprecedented level. According to a Newsweek report, over 7,000 Christians have been killed in Nigeria

during the first 220 days of 2025, an average of 35 killings a day.

Across Nigeria's north, innocent Muslims and Christians, alike, are brutally victimized by Boko Haram, and other Islamic State and al Qaeda-linked terror groups seeking religious and political domination within that country. Significantly, for Christians, Nigeria is singled out as currently the world's most deadly country, according to the respected Christian research group Open Doors. The Nigerian civic group Inter Society on Civil Rights and Rule of Law finds that 52,000

Christians have been killed and over 20,000 churches have been attacked and destroyed since 2009 by various Islamist extremist groups in Nigeria. Thousands of Christians have been murdered and raped in the current year so far. Over 100 Christian pastors and Catholic priests have been taken hostage for ransom.

Excerpts from Breakpoint, Colson Center

To read the entire article go to:
<https://www.breakpoint.org/christian-leaders-call-on-trump-to-protect-nigerian-christians/>