

FAITHFUL GOD*

God does not desert us. He stays committed to our relationship and His own promises, no matter what.

SCRIPTURE†	MUSIC‡
Deuteronomy 7:6-11 Psalm 89:1-33 Psalm 92:1-5 Psalm 92 Psalm 111 Lamentations 3:19-24 1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:11-13 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 2 Timothy 2:10-19 Hebrews 6:10-20; 10:19-25 Hebrews 11:8-10	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God Almighty Father By Faith (arr. Nichols) TTBB God of the Ages Great Is Thy Faithfulness How Firm a Foundation Mercies Anew O God, Our Help in Ages Past Our Great Savior Rock of Ages (arr. Lopez) SATB The King of Love... (arr. Forrest) SATB The Steadfast Love of the Lord You Are Always Good



NORTHWEST VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

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* Theme corresponds well to first Sunday after **New Year's Day**.

† Daily preparatory readings shown in **bold**.

‡ Published choral and vocal music shown in **bold**.

INTRODUCING & PROMOTING THIS THEME

ABRAHAM & SARAH

I Thessalonians 5:24; Philippians 1:6 | *God's faithfulness is a personal application of His unchangeableness. It is often seen in His proving Himself true by keeping His promises (thought from Erickson's Systematic Theology p. 317). The account of Abraham and Sarah is an example of God's faithfulness being shown by His keeping a promise. As an illustration, Pastor can announce that his mother is expecting a baby. Probably most of us would laugh incredulously; our reaction is the same as Sarah's was when God told her she would have a child. Yet God kept His promise because He is faithful, and when He promises something, He will do it. We can confidently trust that all the promises of God will be fulfilled. One specific promise we can claim is that God will complete our sanctification – the good work that He has begun in us.*

PROMISES KEPT IN 2020

What promises of God did He break in the past year? Where did He not provide? How has He been unfaithful? In spite of the difficulties of the past year, God has been faithful. Not one of His promises has failed. He doesn't promise to protect from illness. Is God going to change in the coming year? God will keep His Word and keep His people.

As the world rang in the New Year last week, a common topic of conversation was how happy everyone was that 2020 was finally OVER.

It's been a difficult year, hasn't it? It started back in March when Covid burst onto the scene, resulting in stay-at-home orders and multiple quarantines for billions of people. (Some older folks are basically still in quarantine over 9 months later!)

In 2020, there were two periods—one back in the spring that lasted 8 weeks and another just recently that lasted 2 weeks—in which we could not meet as a church. That was hard!

Perhaps some of you faced loss of work or at least a more challenging work environment in 2020. Children were not able to attend school in person, which made not only their parents' lives but also their teachers' lives more difficult, as they dealt with the challenges of distance learning.

2020 included multiple controversial police shootings and racial unrest. Of course, on May 25, 2020, George Floyd was tragically killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and his death was followed by thousands of protests, some of which led to rioting, looting, and violence.

And then there was a presidential election... which got ugly at times but was also discouraging because it revealed the extent to which our nation is divided and has embraced unbiblical

philosophies. Of course, the result of the election was disappointing to millions of Christians, because crucial issues like religious liberty and the sanctity of human life were at stake.

Some of you got sick in 2020, whether with Covid or with something else. Many of you who are watching from home are still battling sickness, and certainly all of us have friends or loved ones who are struggling.

Those are just the obvious trials. Some of you faced difficulties in 2020 that meant more to you than any of the trials I just mentioned.

2020 was a hard year... and I hate to break it to you, but we have no guarantee that 2021 will be any better!

And yet, our theme this morning is “Faithful God,” so I ask you this: “Which of God’s promises fell to the ground in 2020? When did He fail to protect, to provide, to comfort, or to keep? How has He been unfaithful?”

2020 has been a difficult year, but God has NOT been unfaithful! Rather, in the words of the hymn, we have “proved Him o’er and o’er” (or, “over and over”). God has always been faithful to us, and He we can count on Him no matter what the future may hold!

I leave you with some fitting words taken from Lamentations 3, the thought of which is also expressed many times in the Psalms.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,

His mercies never come to an end.

They are new every morning—

Great is Thy faithfulness!

Pastor Krisopher Schaal

Promotional Post: Did God break any of His promises last year? Did He fail to meet our needs? As we look back at God’s faithfulness through the year 2020, we can look forward with confidence to His continued faithfulness in 2021. Join us Sunday to worship our Faithful God.