

Good morning! When Pam and I came to Christ in the early 1970's, we both came from church backgrounds. Unlike so many families today, most young people I knew back then had some kind of church experience in their upbringing. Their families may not have been very religious but they had some affiliation. Although we had both been raised with church, neither of us committed our lives to Christ until our late teens. Interestingly, one of the things that drew us to Him then was passionate worship. My background was Lutheran and traditional Lutheran worship is very liturgical. Pam's background was Presbyterian and they had a well-defined liturgy as well. When we began to experience a different kind of worship experience, it touched us and drew us in. Worship became a whole new thing to us! This morning, let's consider that as we read today's passage together:

Happy are those who hear the joyful call to worship, for they will walk in the light of your presence, Lord. **Psa. 89:15**

Last Saturday, I spent some time hanging out in the backyard with an interesting group of men. As we talked, we learned about each other. Mike is a retired Presbyterian minister and has had a lengthy and varied church experience in the Presbyterian Church. Lamar is a retired Parole Officer and Social Worker, and is very active in his Baptist congregation. Lamar had been raised in an AME church, had briefly had dabbled in Nation of Islam after returning from Viet Nam, and then committed himself to Christ in the Baptist church. I had been raised Lutheran but had been in charismatic congregations for 30 years, then Baptist, and now, Lutheran again. We talked a little about how different our church experiences are, while always thinking we are all doing everything the same way. Although Pam and I have been in many kinds of churches, one thing that has remained for us for more than forty years has been the joy of worship. When we returned to the Lutheran church after so much time in charismatic congregations, we thought we would have a hard time with the liturgy but we have discovered the joy of worshiping that way, too. Today's passage really resonates with me: *"Happy are those who hear the joyful call to worship, for they will walk in the light of your presence, Lord."* Worship---and the call to worship---bring me joy. I look forward to it and I experience God's Presence as I gather with God's people. Is it just me or is it that way for you, too? This morning, celebrate our amazing and awesome God. Live in His Presence. Hear the joyful call...and worship Him!