



PARISH

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND COVENANT RENEWAL

Epiphany Season

19 January 2025

It ain't the parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me, it's the parts that I do understand. —Mark Twain

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP

It is God Himself who calls His people to worship. We do not call ourselves, but it is the King who opens His gates and beckons us into His courts.

Gospel Invitation—John 6:68

Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the Words of eternal life.”

Sung Response—Come Down, O Love Divine, Vs. 1

Come down, O Love di - vine, seek Thou this soul of mine,
And vis - it it with Thine own ar - dor glow - ing.
O Com - fort - er, draw near, with - in my heart ap - pear,
And kin - dle it, Thy ho - ly flame be - stow - ing.

Text: Bianco da Siena, 15th century, tr. Richard Littledale, 1867; Music: DOWN AMPNEY, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906.

Call to Worship—based on Psalm 19:7-8, 10; Psalm 119:12

Pastor: Blessed are you, O Lord.

All: **Teach us your statutes.**

Reader 1: The Law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

Reader 2: The Precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the Commandments of the Lord are pure, enlightening the eyes;

All: **We praise You, O Lord. For Your Word is sweeter than honey, sweeter even than the drippings of the honeycomb.**

Pastor: Your Word, O Lord, is more to be desired than gold, even much fine gold.

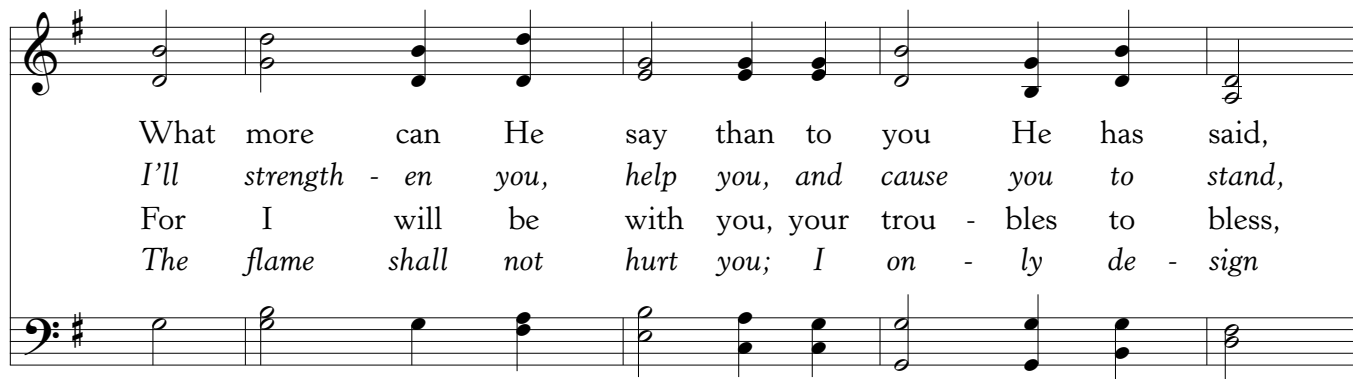
Congregational Hymn—How Firm A Foundation



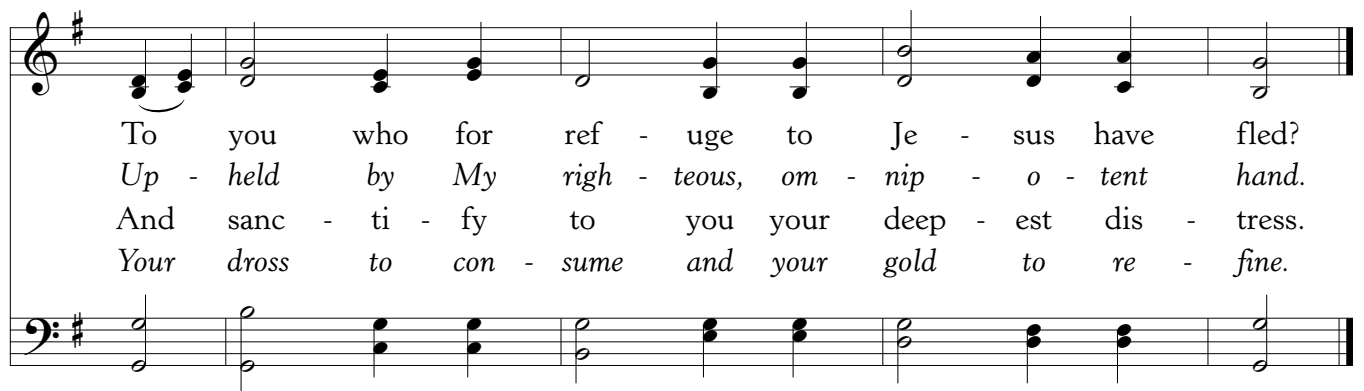
How firm a foun - da - tion, you saints of the Lord,
Fear not, I am with you, O be not dis - mayed;
When through the deep wa - ters I call you to go,
When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way shall lie,



Is laid for your faith in His ex - cel - lent Word!
For I am your God, and will still give you aid;
The riv - ers of sor - row shall not o - ver - flow;
My grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be your sup - ply;



What more can He say than to you He has said,
I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
For I will be with you, your trou - bles to bless,
The flame shall not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign



To you who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
Up - held by My righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
And sanc - ti - fy to you your deep - est dis - tress.
Your dross to con - sume and your gold to re - fine.

Text: "K" in John Rippon's *A Selection of Hymns*, 1787;
Music: FOUNDATION, Traditional American melody.

GOD SPEAKS TO HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS WORD

The Bible is the means by which God graciously reveals Himself to His people—so we listen, read, and study with expectant hearts. God particularly entreats us in His Word to sing psalms. And while all Scripture is appropriate for hymns and spiritual songs, there is a specific exhortation for us to make use of the Psalter as the church's songbook.

Congregational Psalm—Lord, Hear My Voice (Psalm 61)



Lord, hear my voice, my prayer at - tend, from earth's re - mot - est bound I send
In You my soul has shel - ter found, and You have been from foes a - round
For You, O Lord, my vows have heard, on me their her - i - tage con - ferred,
Be - fore the Lord shall he a - bide; oh, give him truth, and grace pro - vide



My bro - ken heart - ed cry. When trou - bles fill my faint - ing breast,
The tow'r of my de - fense. My home shall your pa - vil - ion be;
That fear Your ho - ly name. Long life You to Your ser - vant give,
To guard him in the way. So I Your prais - es will make known,

Vs. 1 & 2, then Chorus



Then lead me on the rock to rest, the rock high - er than I.
And un - der - neath Your wings I'll flee, to find de - liv - er - ance.
Through gen - er - a - tions he shall live, from age to age the same.
And hum - bly bend - ing at Your throne, my vows will dai - ly pay.

Chorus



When trou - bles fill my faint - ing breast, then lead me on



The rock to rest, the rock high - er than I.

Text: Psalm 61:1-8, *The Psalter*, 1900, alt. 2022; Music: TRAVELLER, Henry C. Haffner, 2022.

Scripture Reading—2 Timothy 3:12-17

All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Congregational Psalm—O Come Before The Lord, Our King (Psalm 95)



O come be - fore the Lord, our King, and in— His pres - ence let— us sing;
Al - might - y pow'r the Lord main - tains, ex - alt - ed o - ver all— He reigns;
O come and let us wor - ship now, be - fore our Mak - er let— us bow;
Take heed and har - den not— your heart as did— our fath - ers, nor de - part
Take heed that you pro - voke him not, as did your fath - ers, who for - got,



Let us in glad and joy - ful lays the rock— of our sal - va - tion praise;
He holds the val - leys in— His hand, He makes the might - y moun - tains stand;
We are His sheep and He our God, He feeds our souls in pas - tures broad;
From God to fol - low in— their ways; for with— com - plaints in - stead of praise,
With err - ing heart, God's ho - ly ways and grieved Him all their sin - ful days;



Be - fore Him come with thank - ful song, in joy - ful psalms His praise pro - long.
To Him be - long both land and sea, — Cre - a - tor of the world is He.
He safe - ly leads us in— the way; O come and hear His voice to - day.
With doubt in - stead of faith con - fessed, they put— His mer - cy to the test.
To whom in wrath the Lord de - clared: "My prom - ised rest they shall not share."

Text: Psalm 95:1-11, *The Psalter*, 1912; Music: ST. PETERSBURG, Dimitri Bortniansky, 1825.

Reading of the Word—Acts 7:17-43

¹⁷ “But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt ¹⁸ until there arose over Egypt another king who did not know Joseph. ¹⁹ He dealt shrewdly with our race and forced our fathers to expose their infants, so that they would not be kept alive. ²⁰ At this time Moses was born; and he was beautiful in God's sight. And he was brought up for three months in his father's house, ²¹ and when he was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son. ²² And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.

²³ “When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. ²⁴ And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian. ²⁵ He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand. ²⁶ And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?’ ²⁷ But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?’ ²⁸ Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’ ²⁹ At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

³⁰ “Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. ³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look, there came the voice of the Lord: ³² ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look. ³³ Then the Lord said to him, ‘Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴ I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.’

³⁵ “This Moses, whom they rejected, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge?’—this man God sent as both ruler and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶ This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in Egypt and at the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years. ³⁷ This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.’

³⁸ This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us. ³⁹ Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt, ⁴⁰ saying to Aaron, ‘Make for us gods who will go before us. As for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ ⁴¹ And they made a calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol and were rejoicing in the works of their hands. ⁴² But God turned away and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets: “Did you bring to Me slain beasts and sacrifices during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? ⁴³ You took up the tent of Moloch and the star of your god Rephan, the images that you made to worship; and I will send you into exile beyond Babylon.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—Come, Thou Fount Of Every Blessing, Vs. 3

O to grace how great a debt-or dai - ly I'm con - strained to be;

Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-d'ring heart to Thee.

Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts a - bove.

Text: Robert Robinson, 1758; Music: NETTLETON, Asahel Nettleton, 1825.

Sermon—*Beautiful in God’s Sight*

—Pastor Emeritus, George Grant

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO CONFESSION, REPENTANCE, AND RECONCILIATION

The people of God respond to His Word by confessing their sins, repenting of their sinful ways, and seeking God’s favor through the reconciling work of Jesus, the Son of God.

Confession of Sin—based on Hosea 4:6; Amos 8:11; Matthew 4:4; Romans 10:17

Pastor: O Lord, You have said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge.” Therefore, we come confessing.

All: **There is a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord.**

Pastor: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God.

All: **Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ.**

(Silent prayers of confession)

Sung Response—Kyrie

WOMEN

MEN

Lord have mer - cy — Christ have mer - cy —

— Lord have mer - cy — Up - on us.

Lord have mer - cy — Up - on us.

Text: Traditional; Music: Nathan George & Henry C. Haffner, 2012.

Assurance of Pardon—from 2 Peter 1:3-4; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 11:28

[Christ's] divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence, by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them [we] might become partakers of the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God shall stand forever.

Pastor: This is the promise of God.

All: This is the Word of the Lord.

Pastor: He says to us, "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

All: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: Amen.

Sung Response—Fivefold Amen

A - men, a - men. A - men, a - men, a - men.

Text: Traditional; Music: Traditional African-American spiritual, arr. Nelsie T. Johnson, 1988.

HEAVENLY GIFT—*EUCCHARISTO*

As God beckons His people to the bounty of His table, they make joyous profession of their fealty to Him.

Profession of Faith—The Apostles' Creed

We believe in God:

The Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,

Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,

Was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into Hell.

On the third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

From whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit; the one holy church—both visible and invisible;

The communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;

The resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Sursum Corda

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to You, Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, we praise You, Triune God, and we join our voices with the angels, the archangels, and the whole company of Heaven in this hymn of eternal praise:

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly is the Lord God Al - might - y,
Heav'n and Earth are full of Thy glor - y, glor - y be un - to Thee,
O Lord most high, O Lord most high, O Lord most high, A - men.

Text: Traditional, based on Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4:8;

Music: Nathan George, 2013.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND THE LORD'S TABLE

This table is open to all baptized Christians who have made a profession of faith. You may come forward to receive the bread and wine or grape juice.

Congregational Hymn—If Thou But Suffer God To Guide Thee



If thou but suf - fer God to guide thee and hope in Him through all thy ways,
Be pa - tient and a - wait His lei - sure in cheer - ful hope, with heart con - tent
Sing, pray, and keep His ways un - swerv - ing, per - form thy du - ties faith - ful - ly,



He'll give thee strength, what - e'er be - tide thee, and bear thee through the e - vil days.
To take what - e'er thy Fa - ther's plea - sure and His dis - cern - ing love hath sent,
And trust His Word: though un - de - serv - ing, thou yet shalt find it true for thee.



Who trusts in God's un - chang - ing love builds on the rock that naught can move.
Nor doubt our in - most wants are known to Him who chose us for His own.
God nev - er yet for - sook in need the soul that trust - ed Him in - deed.

Text: Georg Neumark, 1641, tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; Music: NEUMARK, Georg Neumark, 1657.

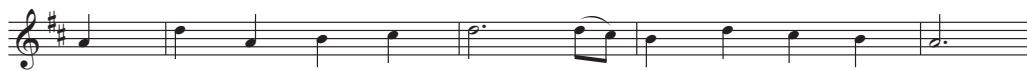
Congregational Hymn—O Put Your Trust In God



O put your trust in God, in du - ty's path go on;
Though years on years roll on, His cov' - nant shall en - dure;
Through waves, and clouds, and storms, His pow'r will clear your way;



Walk in His strength with faith and hope, so shall your work be done.
Though clouds and dark - ness hide His path, the prom - ised grace is sure.
Wait on His time, the dark - est night shall end in bright - est day.



Com - mit your ways to Him, your works in - to His hands,
Give to the winds your fears; hope, and be un - dis - mayed;
Leave to His sover - eign sway to choose and to com - mand;



And rest on His un - chang - ing Word, who Heav'n and Earth com - mands.
God hears your sighs and counts your tears; God shall lift up your head.
So shall you, wond' - ring, own His way, How wise, how strong His hand.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1656, tr. John Wesley, 18th century; Music: TERRA BEATA, Franklin L. Sheppard, 1915.

GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND IN GRATEFUL PRAISE, PETITIONS, TITHES & OFFERINGS

Our praying, serving, and giving are essential aspects of worship. It is here that our faith moves from our heads and hearts into our lives and callings.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession—The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. *Amen.*

Antiphonal Scripture Song—Song At The Sea

* REFRAIN

Leader



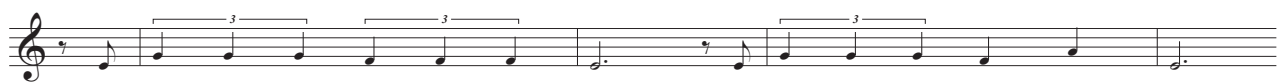
To the Lord I will sing for His glo-rious vic-to-ry; the horse and the ri-der He has thrown in-to the sea.

Congregation



To the Lord I will sing for His glo-rious vic-to-ry; the horse and the ri-der He has thrown in-to the sea.

Leader



The Lord is my strength and my song, sal - va - tion He brings to me;
For Phar - aoh and all of his host, He cast them in - to the sea,
The en - e - my vowed to pur - sue, to ru - in to rape to spoil;
You led to Your ho - ly a - bode the peo - ple whom You re - deemed;
You plant them on Your ho - ly hill, the moun - tain which You have made,



My fa - ther's God, He is my God, and I will ex - alt and praise.
The floods went up; and in the depths their char - i - ots sank like stones.
The sea rose up and cov - ered them; in wa - ter they sank like lead.
The na - tions heard; they trem - ble still; all Ca - naan shall melt a - way.
Es - tab - lished there by Your right hand, for - ev - er with You they'll reign.

Congregation



The Lord is a man of war; Je - ho - vah is His name. *
Your hand shows your glor - ious pow'r to crush your en - e - mies.
O who is like You, my Lord, in per - fect ho - li - ness? *
On them shall great ter - ror fall till all Your folk pass by.
Ma - jes - tic are all Your deeds, the won - ders of Your hand. *

Text: Exodus 15:1-21, Henry C. Haffner, 2022; Music: MIDNIGHT SUN. Henry C. Haffner, 2022.

GOD SENDS HIS PEOPLE OUT

After calling His people into His presence, forgiving their sins, instructing them in His Word, and providing a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb, God sends His people into the world to show His light in the darkness.

Benediction—based on Psalm 119: 105

God's Word is a lamp to your feet and a light to your path. Go forth in the full confidence of His provision. *Amen.*

Sung Response—Doxology

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Him, all crea - tures here be - low;

praise Him a - bove ye heav'n - ly host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1674; Music: OLD 100TH, Louis Bourgeois, 1551.

Announcements

Worship Notes:

The middle portion of Stephen's address to the Sanhedrin in Acts 7 concerns the life of Moses. In particular, he highlights the Israelites' continual resistance to the leadership of the "man God sent as both ruler and redeemer" (Acts 7:35). Many of the psalms and hymns in the service this morning urge us not to make this same mistake. We are warned not to "depart from God" to follow in the ways of the rebellious Hebrews (*O Come Before The Lord, Our King—Psalm 95*). We confess that we are "prone to wander" (*Come, Thou Fount Of Every Blessing*), and we ask the Lord to send His grace to "guard us in the way" (*Lord, Hear My Voice—Psalm 61*). The communion hymns recommend a contrasting course, keeping to the Lord's ways "unswerving," faithfully going in "duty's path," and trusting and resting on His unchanging Word (*If Thou But Suffer God To Guide Thee; O Put Your Trust In God*). Since the sermon text highlights Moses, it seemed only fitting to conclude the service with *The Song at the Sea*, Moses and Miriam's tribute to God's provision for His people during one of the bleakest moments of the Exodus. —Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Beautiful, Understand, Rejected, Refused, Written

Keystone Verse: This man God sent as both ruler and redeemer. (Acts 7:35)



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Elder Emeritus

Steve Nelson

Deacons

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All Biblical quotes taken from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.