



PARISH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

Epiphany Season
January 25th, 2026

Quote for reflection:

God is intent on showing these two truths: first, his plans cannot be nullified by man. They stand... And, second, no plans of man will ever be fulfilled unless they are part of God's plan. God's plans determine which human plans succeed, whether we are talking about the plans of the most powerful nations or of individual kings or their subjects.

— John Piper

We find a multitude of providences so timed to a minute, that had they fallen out never so little sooner, or later, they had signified but little to what now they do. Certainly it cannot be coincidence, but counsel that so exactly nicks the opportunity.

—John Flavel

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP

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

Gospel Invitation—2 Timothy 1:7

For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Sung Response—Come, Christians, Join To Sing, Vs. 1

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: 'Come, Chris-tians, join to sing Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!', 'Loud praise to Christ our King: Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!', 'Let all, with heart and voice, be - fore His throne re - joice;', and 'Praise is His gra - cious choice. Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!'.

Come, Chris-tians, join to sing Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!

Loud praise to Christ our King: Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!

Let all, with heart and voice, be - fore His throne re - joice;

Praise is His gra - cious choice. Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!

Text: Christian H. Bateman, 1843; Music: MADRID, Traditional Spanish melody,
arr. David Evans, 1927.

Call to Worship—based on Psalm 44:4-8, 26

Pastor: You are our King, O God; ordain salvation for Jacob!

All: Through You we push down our foes; through Your name we tread down those who rise up against us.

Reader 1: For we do not trust in the bow; the sword cannot save us.

Reader 2: But You have saved us from our foes and have put to shame those who hate us.

All: In God we have boasted continually, and we will give thanks to Your name forever.

Pastor: Rise up; come to our help! Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love!

Congregational Psalm—Incarnate God! (Psalm 91)



In - car - nate God! the soul that knows Your name's mys - ter - ious pow'r,
In vain the fow - ler spreads his net to draw them from Your care;
No mid-night ter - rors haunt their bed, no ar - row wounds by day;
The an - gels' Lord Him-self is nigh to them that love His name;



Will dwell in un - di - sturb'd re - pose nor fear the try - ing hour.
Your time - ly call in - structs their feet to shun the art - ful snare.
Un - hurt on ser - pents they shall tread, if found in du - ty's way.
Is quick to save them when they cry, and put their foes to shame.



Your wis - dom, faith - ful - ness, and love to fee - ble, frail and worn,
When, like a bane - ful pest - i - lence, sin mows its thou - sands down,
An - gels, un - seen, at - tend the saints and bear them in their arms,
The Lord will an - swer when they call long as they so - journ here,



A shel - ter and a re - fuge prove from e - ne - my and storm.
On ev - 'ry side with - out de - fense His grace se - cures His own.
To cheer the spir - it when it faints, and guard their life from harms.
Be - cause the Lord is their de - fense what have the saints to fear?

Text: John Newton, *Olney Hymnal*, 1779; Music: Nathan George, 2013.

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. In His Word, God particularly calls us to sing psalms: while all Scripture is appropriate for hymns and spiritual songs, there is a specific exhortation for us to use the Psalter as the church's songbook.

Congregational Psalm—Fret Not Yourself (Psalm 37)



Fret not your-self when e - vil seems to pros - per in the land, —
And though he thinks he's root - ed fast, un - yield - ing like a tree, —
Be still be - fore the Lord and wait; de - light in His com - mands.
I have not seen, in youth or age, the right - eous man de - crease.



Nor when the wick - ed _ plots and schemes a - gainst the right - eous man.
The wick - ed one will fade like grass, like smoke caught in a breeze.
And He shall keep your path-way straight, up - hold you with His hand.
The Lord pro - vides a her - i - tage, a fu - ture full _ of peace.



Dwell faith - ful - ly, and trust God will your heart's de - sires ful - fill.
His bow will break, his sword will fail; and just - ice will pre - vail.
A strong - hold sure in _ trou - bled days, the Lord His peo - ple saves.
He is a re - fuge ev - er - more, for all who trust the Lord.

Text: paraphrase of Psalm 37, Elizabeth Dowdell, 2020;
Music: GRAYMERE, Henry C. Haffner and Elizabeth Dowdell, 2020.

Scripture Reading—2 Timothy 1:8-14

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of His own purpose and grace, which He gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Congregational Psalm—O Lord, Teach Me To Follow You (Psalm 27)

The musical score is written for a congregational setting, featuring a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is primarily in the treble staff, with the bass staff providing harmonic support. The lyrics are written below the staves, with line breaks corresponding to the musical phrasing.

O Lord, teach me to fol - low You, in - struct me in Your way,
Give me not to my foes' de - sire; false wit - ness - es a - rise
Oh! What if I had not be - lieved! I am by faith as - sured
With pa - tience wait up - on the Lord, O let your strength be great;

And lead me on a le - vel path be - cause of foes, I pray!
A - gainst me breath - ing vi - o - lence and seek - ing my de - mise.
That in the land of life I'll see the good - ness of the Lord.
And so let cour - age fill your heart as on the Lord you wait.

Sermon Text—Acts 23:11-35

The following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about Me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.”

¹² When it was day, the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. ¹³ There were more than forty who made this conspiracy. ¹⁴ They went to the chief priests and elders and said, “We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ Now therefore you, along with the council, give notice to the tribune to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case more exactly. And we are ready to kill him before he comes near.”

¹⁶ Now the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, so he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. ¹⁷ Paul called one of the centurions and said, “Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to tell him.” ¹⁸ So he took him and brought him to the tribune and said, “Paul the prisoner called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, as he has something to say to you.” ¹⁹ The tribune took him by the hand, and going aside asked him privately, “What is it that you have to tell me?” ²⁰ And he said, “The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more closely about him. ²¹ But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him, who have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they have killed him. And now they are ready, waiting for your consent.” ²² So the tribune dismissed the young man, charging him, “Tell no one that you have informed me of these things.”

²³ Then he called two of the centurions and said, “Get ready two hundred soldiers, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go as far as Caesarea at the third hour of the night. ²⁴ Also provide mounts for Paul to ride and bring him safely to Felix the governor.” ²⁵ And he wrote a letter to this effect:

²⁶ “Claudius Lysias, to his Excellency the governor Felix, greetings. ²⁷ This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman citizen. ²⁸ And desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their council. ²⁹ I found that he was being accused about questions of their law, but charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment. ³⁰ And when it was disclosed to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering his accusers also to state before you what they have against him.”

³¹ So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³² And on the next day they returned to the barracks, letting the horsemen go on with him. ³³ When they had come to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also before him. ³⁴ On reading the letter, he asked what province he was from. And when he learned that he was from Cilicia, ³⁵ he said, “I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive.” And he commanded him to be guarded in Herod's praetorium.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—How Sweet The Name Of Jesus Sounds, Vs. 1

The musical score is written for two voices, Soprano and Bass, in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and hymn-like, using mostly quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

How sweet the name of Je - sus sounds in a be - liev - er's ear!

It soothes his sor - rows, heals his wounds, and drives a - way his fear.

Text: John Newton, 1779; Music: ST. PETER, Alexander R. Reinagle, 1836.

Sermon—*Family Support*

—Pastor, James Crampton

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 2 Timothy 1:8-12

Pastor: Lord, we come confessing. Because You have given us the Spirit of power, You commanded us not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of His prisoners, but to share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.

All: But we have been ashamed of the testimony of Jesus when it brings suffering for the gospel.

Pastor: O God, You have saved us and called us to a holy calling.

All: But You have not saved us because of our works, but because of Your own purpose and grace, which You gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.

Pastor: That grace has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

All: But we have been ashamed, for we have forgotten whom we have believed. We have not been convinced that You are able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to You.

(Silent prayers of confession)

Sung Response—Kyrie

The musical score is for a Kyrie response, featuring two parts: WOMEN and MEN. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The WOMEN part is written on a treble clef staff, and the MEN part is written on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "Lord have mer-cy — Christ have mer-cy —". The score includes a final line with the lyrics "Lord have mer - cy — Up - on us.".

WOMEN

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

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—2 Timothy 2:8-9, 11-13; Matthew 11:28

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in the gospel, for which Paul suffered, bound with chains as a criminal. But the Word of God is not bound! The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him; if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we are faithless, He remains faithful—for He cannot deny Himself.

Pastor: This is the promise of God.

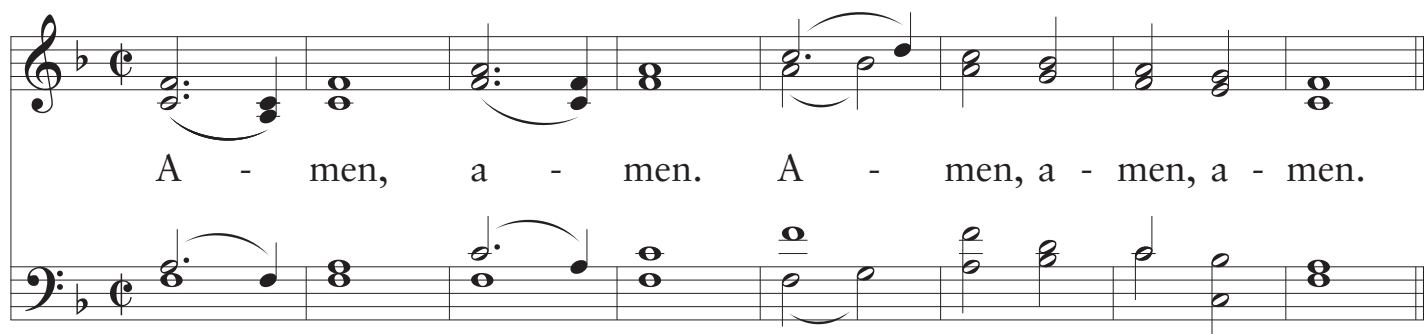
All: This is the Word of the Lord.

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



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

GOD INVITES HIS PEOPLE TO FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM

God feeds the faith of His people by giving them a meal. As God fellowships with them in faith, His people pledge their obedience to God and their love for one another.

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.**

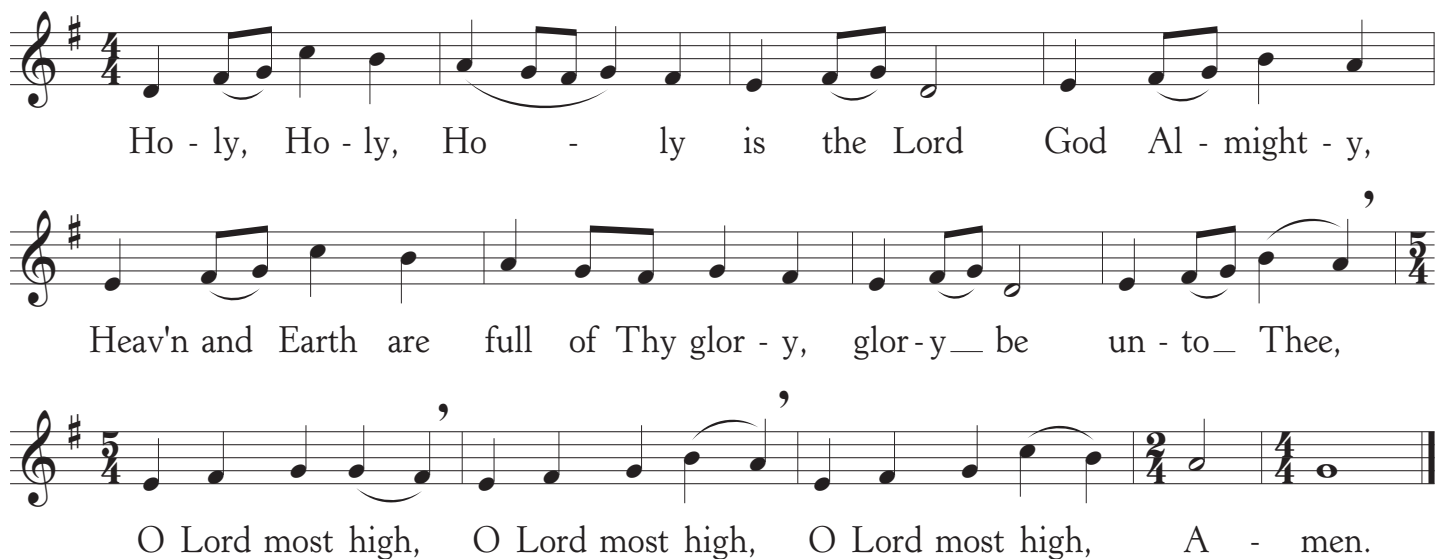
Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

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—God Moves In A Mysterious Way



God moves in a mys - ter - ious way His won - ders to per - form;___
You fear - ful saints, fresh cour - age take; the clouds you so much dread___
His pur - po - ses will ri - pen fast, un - fold - ing ev - 'ry hour;___



He plants His foot - steps in the sea, and rides up - on the storm.___
Are filled with mer - cy, and shall break in__ bless - ings on your head.____
The bud may have a bit - ter__ taste, but sweet will be the flow'r.____



Deep in un - fath - om - a - ble mines of__ nev - er fail - ing skill____
Judge not the Lord by fee - ble sense, but trust Him for His grace;___
Blind un - be - lief is sure to err, and scan His work in__ vain;____



He trea - sures up His bright de - signs, and works His sov' - reign will.
Be - hind a frown - ing pro - vi - dence He hides a smil - ing face.
God is His own in - ter - pre - ter, and He will make it plain.

Text: William Cowper, 1774, alt. 2019; Music: ELKINS, Henry C. Haffner, 2019.

Congregational Hymn—Christ Our Hope In Life And Death



What is our hope in life and death? Christ a-lone, Christ a-lone.
What truth can calm the trou-bled soul? Christ a-lone, Christ a-lone.
Un - to the grave, whatshall we sing? "Christ, He lives; Christ, He lives!"



What is our on - ly con - fi - dence? That our souls to Him be-long.
Where is His grace and good-ness known? In our great Re-deem-er's blood.
And what re - ward will hea - ven bring? Ev - er-last - ing life with Him.



Who holds our days with - in His hand? Who comes, a - part from His com-mand?
Who holds our faith when fears a - rise? Who stands a - bove the storm - y trial?
There we will rise to meet the Lord, then sin and death will be de - stroyed,



And what will keep us to the end? The love of Christ, in which we stand.—
Who sends the waves that bring us nigh un - to the shore, the rock of Christ?
And we will feast in end-less joy, when Christ is ours for - ev - er more.—

Chorus



O sing ha - le - lu - jah! Our hope springs e - ter - nal;



O sing ha - le - lu - jah! Now and ev - er we con-fess: Christ our hope in life and death.

CCLI #2844402; Text and Music: Keith Getty, Matt Boswell,
Jordan Kauflin, Matt Merker and Matt Papa, 2020.

GOD’S PEOPLE GRATEFULLY RESPOND WITH THEIR PETITIONS, TITHES & OFFERINGS, AND PRAISE

Praying, serving, and giving are essential aspects of worship, moving our faith from our heads and hearts into our lives and callings. Offering boxes for both tithes and alms are located in the foyer.

Pastoral Prayer

Corporate Prayer—*The Lord’s Prayer*

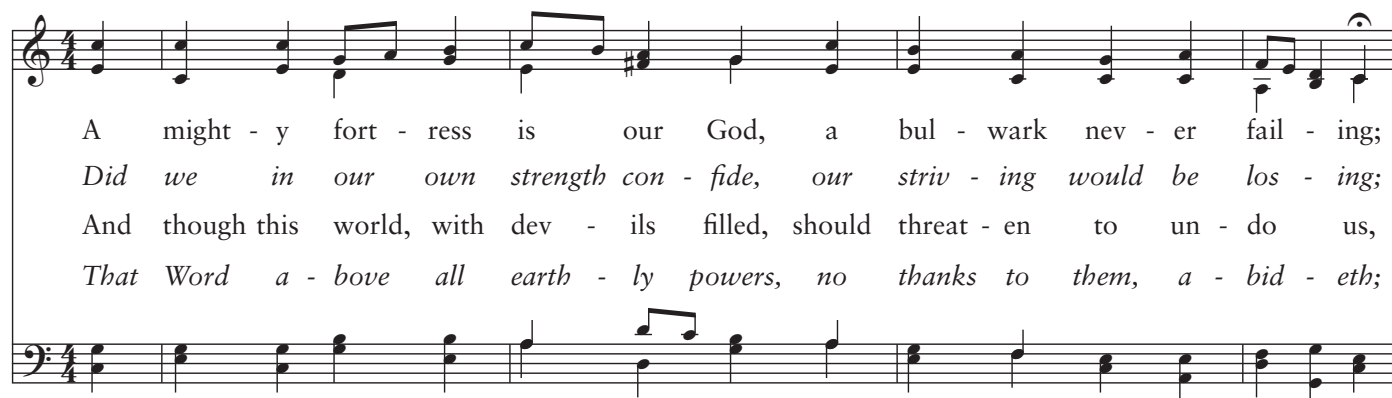
Our Father, who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done,
On Earth as it is in Heaven.

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.

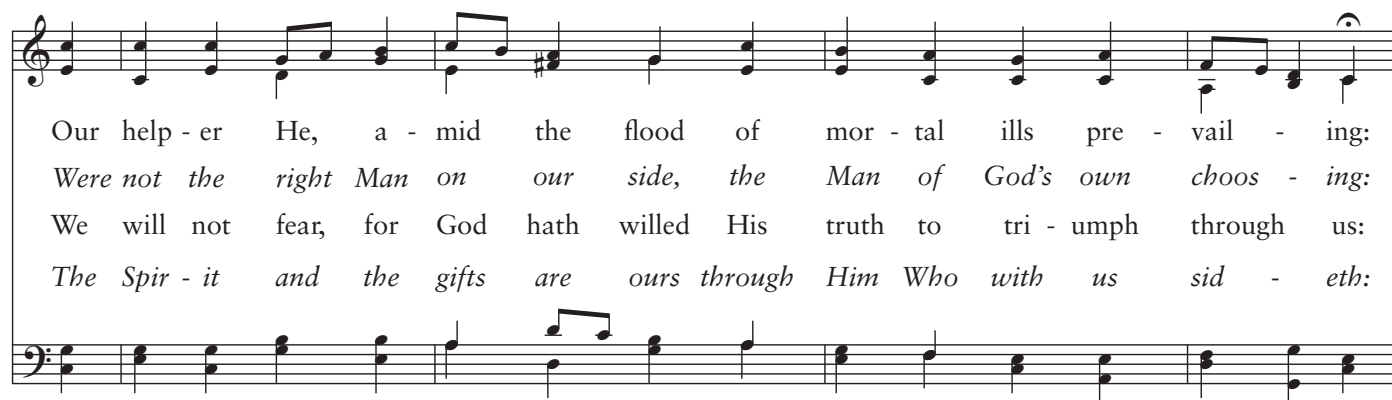
For Thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

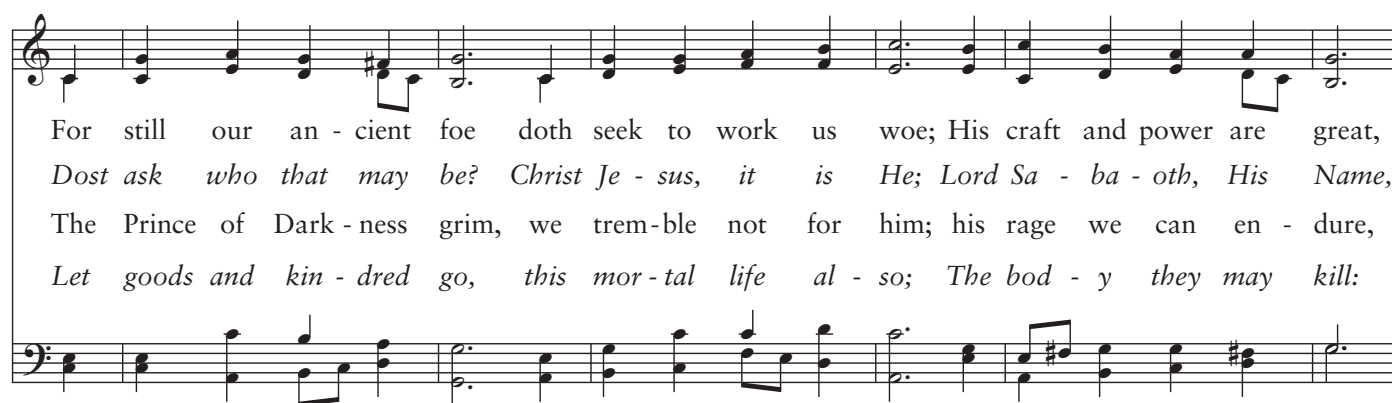
Congregational Hymn—A Mighty Fortress Is Our God



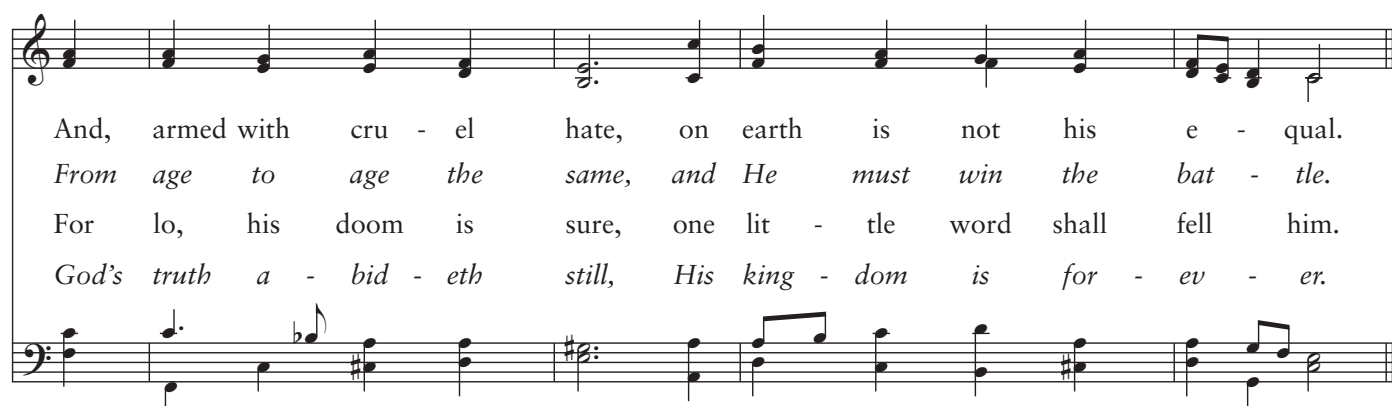
A might - y fort - ress is our God, a bul - wark nev - er fail - ing;
Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be los - ing;
And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat - en to un - do us,
That Word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a - bid - eth;



Our help - er He, a - mid the flood of mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing;
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choos - ing;
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to tri - umph through us:
The Spir - it and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sid - eth:



For still our an - cient foe doth seek to work us woe; His craft and power are great,
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus, it is He; Lord Sa - ba - oth, His Name,
The Prince of Dark - ness grim, we trem - ble not for him; his rage we can en - dure,
Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor - tal life al - so; The bod - y they may kill:



And, armed with cru - el hate, on earth is not his e - qual.
From age to age the same, and He must win the bat - tle.
For lo, his doom is sure, one lit - tle word shall fell him.
God's truth a - bid - eth still, His king - dom is for - ev - er.

Text: paraphrase of Psalm 46, Martin Luther, 1529, tr. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853;
Music: EIN'FESTE BURG, Martin Luther, 1529.

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—from 2 Corinthians 13:14

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. *Amen.*

Sung Response—Unto Christ Who Loved Us



Un-to Christ, who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

And has made us kings and priests un - to God and His Fa - ther:

Un-to Him be glo-ry and do-min-ion for - ev-er and ev-er. A - men.

The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes. The first staff ends with a double bar line. The second staff ends with a double bar line. The third staff ends with a double bar line.

CCLI #2844402 ©1936 Oxford University Press; Text: Revelation 1:5-6;
Music: UNTO HIM WHO LOVED US, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1936.

Announcements

Worship Notes:

This morning's sermon text from Acts tells the story of the Jews' plot to assassinate Paul in prison and God's providential deliverance of his servant into the hands of Felix the governor. God saving His people from the clutches of their enemies is a theme that comes up again and again in the Scriptures. This morning's Call to Worship from Psalm 44 reminds us of times in history that the Lord has "saved us from our foes and have put to shame those who hate us." We'll sing from several psalms, calling God "a refuge from enemy and storm," and encouraging one another not to fear "when the wicked plots and schemes against the righteous man." Like Paul, who is told in a vision to "take courage, for ... you must testify also in Rome," so we sing from Psalm 27, "let courage fill your heart as on the Lord you wait." Hymns like *How Sweet The Name Of Jesus Sounds*, *God Moves In A Mysterious Way*, and *Christ Our Hope In Life And Death* speak of Jesus holding our faith when fears arise, driving away our fear, and imparting fresh courage in the face of dreaded storm clouds. We leave the service with a final reminder from Luther's paraphrase of Psalm 46, *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*: though foes may seek our harm, we can trust that our God is faithful to help us amid any number of trials. "The body they may kill," but "God's truth abideth still."

—Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Courage, Testify, Plot, Oath, Kill, Charge, Accuse, Governor

Keystone Verses: The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome." (Acts 23:11)