



PARISH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

Easter Season
April 19th, 2026

Quotes for reflection:

We may leave our case with the Lord, for He is a better pleader than we are. If we take the matter into our own hands, we shall be likely to mar it; but if we leave it with Him, He will bring forth our righteousness as the light.

—Charles Spurgeon

The best way to get the better of your enemies is to leave them to God. When they contend with you, go and tell your Father. He will plead your cause better than you can yourself. He is a God of recompenses, and He will not suffer the cry of the oppressed to be forgotten.

—Thomas Brooks

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge--
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield thee;
Thou wilt find a solace there.

—Joseph Scriven

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—John 11:25–26

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die.”

Sung Response—Christ Is Risen! Hallelujah, Vs. 1



Christ is ris - en! Hal-le - lu - jah! Ris-en our vic - tor-ious Head!



Sing His prais-es! Hal-le - lu - jah! Christ is ris - en from the dead!



Grate-ful - ly our hearts a - dore Him, as His light once more ap - pears,



Bow-ing down in joy be - fore Him, ris-ing up from grief and tears,



Sing His prais-es! Hal-le - lu - jah! Christ is ris - en from the dead!

CCLI #2844402 Text: James S.B. Monsell, 1863; Music: BEACH SPRING (FOUNT OF GLORY),
attr. B. F. White, 1844, R.W. Thompson, 1854, arr. Gregory Wilbur, 2010.

Call to Worship—based on Psalm 35:1–3, 9–10, 24–28

- Pastor: Contend, Lord, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me. Take up shield and armor; arise and come to my aid.
- All: **Brandish spear and javelin against those who pursue me. Say to me, "I am your salvation."**
- Pastor: Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord and delight in His salvation. My whole being will exclaim, "Who is like You, Lord?"
- Reader 1: You rescue the poor from those too strong for them, the poor and needy from those who rob them.
- Reader 2: Vindicate me in Your righteousness, Lord my God; do not let them gloat over me.
- All: **Let those who desire my vindication shout for joy and gladness; let them always say, "The Lord be exalted, who delights in the well-being of His servant."**
- Pastor: My tongue will proclaim Your righteousness and Your praises all day long!

Congregational Hymn—A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

A musical score for a congregational hymn in 4/4 time. The score is written for a four-part vocal choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The melody is in the soprano part, and the piano accompaniment is in the right hand of the bass staff. The lyrics are in English and are written in a Gothic-style font. The score is divided into four systems, each with a vocal staff and a piano staff. The lyrics are: 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.

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 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—O Lord My God (Psalm 43)



O Lord my God, prove and de - fend my cause;
Why, O my God, have You re - jec - ted me?
Then I will go un - to my God with joy.



save me from the lies of god - less men.
Should I mourn be - cause my foes op - press?
I will praise You once a - gain O God.



Res - cue me, O God; rise and save!
Send forth Your light! Send forth truth!
Why are you cast down O my soul?



You are my God; in You I take my com - fort and re - fuge.
Let them now lead, and bring me un - to Your ho - ly dwelling.
"Hope in your God!" For I will praise my God and sal - va - tion.



A - - - men.

Text: based on Psalm 43:1–5, Nathan George, 2015; Music: Nathan George, 2015.

Scripture Reading—John 15:18–27

[Jesus said], “If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will also keep yours. But all these things they will do to you on account of My name, because they do not know Him who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both Me and My Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’

“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness about Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Congregational Hymn—Ye Servants Of God



Ye ser-vants of God, your mas - ter pro - claim, and pub - lish a - broad His won - der - ful name;
God rul - eth on high, al - migh - ty to save, and still He is nigh, His pres - ence we have;
“Sal - va - tion to God, who sits on the throne!” Let all cry a - loud and hon - or the Son;
Then let us a - dore and give Him His right, all glor - y and power, all wis - dom and might;



The name all vic - tor - ious of Je - sus ex - tol, His king - dom is glor - ious and rules o - ver all.
The great con - gre - ga - tion His tri - umph shall sing, as - crib - ing sal - va - tion to Jes - us, our King.
The prais - es of Je - sus the an - gels pro - claim, fall down on their face - s and wor - ship the Lamb.
All hon - or and bless - ing with an - gels a - bove, and thanks nev - er ceas - ing and in - fi - nite love.



Text: Charles Wesley, *Hymns in Times of Trouble and Persecution*, 1744;
Music: LYONS, Joseph Martin Kraus, 1784.

Sermon Text—Psalm 35:1–28

- Contend, O Lord, with those who contend with me;
fight against those who fight against me!
- 2 Take hold of shield and buckler
and rise for my help!
- 3 Draw the spear and javelin
against my pursuers!
Say to my soul,
“I am your salvation!”
- 4 Let them be put to shame and dishonor
who seek after my life!
Let them be turned back and disappointed
who devise evil against me!
- 5 Let them be like chaff before the wind,
with the angel of the Lord driving them away!
- 6 Let their way be dark and slippery,
with the angel of the Lord pursuing them!
- 7 For without cause they hid their net for me;
without cause they dug a pit for my life.
- 8 Let destruction come upon him when he does not know it!
And let the net that he hid ensnare him;
let him fall into it—to his destruction!
- 9 Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord,
exulting in His salvation.
- 10 All my bones shall say,
“O Lord, who is like You,
delivering the poor
from him who is too strong for him,
the poor and needy from him who robs him?”
- 11 Malicious witnesses rise up;
they ask me of things that I do not know.
- 12 They repay me evil for good;
my soul is bereft.
- 13 But I, when they were sick—
I wore sackcloth;
I afflicted myself with fasting;
I prayed with head bowed on my chest.
- 14 I went about as though I grieved for my friend or my brother;
as one who laments his mother,
I bowed down in mourning.

- 15 But at my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered;
they gathered together against me;
wretches whom I did not know
tore at me without ceasing;
- 16 like profane mockers at a feast,
they gnash at me with their teeth.
- 17 How long, O Lord, will You look on?
Rescue me from their destruction,
my precious life from the lions!
- 18 I will thank you in the great congregation;
in the mighty throng I will praise You.
- 19 Let not those rejoice over me
who are wrongfully my foes,
and let not those wink the eye
who hate me without cause.
- 20 For they do not speak peace,
but against those who are quiet in the land
they devise words of deceit.
- 21 They open wide their mouths against me;
they say, "Aha, Aha!
Our eyes have seen it!"
- 22 You have seen, O Lord; be not silent!
O Lord, be not far from me!
- 23 Awake and rouse Yourself for my vindication,
for my cause, my God and my Lord!
- 24 Vindicate me, O Lord, my God,
according to Your righteousness,
and let them not rejoice over me!
- 25 Let them not say in their hearts,
"Aha, our heart's desire!"
Let them not say, "We have swallowed him up."
- 26 Let them be put to shame and disappointed altogether
who rejoice at my calamity!
Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor
who magnify themselves against me!
- 27 Let those who delight in my righteousness
shout for joy and be glad
and say evermore,
"Great is the Lord,
who delights in the welfare of His servant!"
- 28 Then my tongue shall tell of Your righteousness
and of Your praise all the day long.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—O Thou In Whose Presence, Vs. 1



O Thou in whose pre-sence my soul takes de-light, on whom in af-flic-tion I call,



My com-fort by day, and my song in the night, my hope, my sal-va-tion, my all.

Text: Joseph Swain, 1791; Music: DAVIS, Freeman Lewis, 1813.

Sermon—*Entrusting Vindication to the Righteous Judge*

—Assistant Pastor, Mike Fennema

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 Psalm 35:1–28

Pastor: O Lord, we come confessing. We have not walked in Your righteousness, nor have we sought the peace of our neighbors.

All: We have returned evil for good and rejoiced when others stumble. We have pride in our hearts and bitterness in our speech.

Pastor: You are the defender of the poor and the rescuer of the needy.

All: Yet we have dug pits for others and turned away from those in distress.

Pastor: Rescue us from the habits that ensnare us. Say to our souls, “I am your salvation.”

All: Let our tongues tell of Your righteousness and our hearts delight in Your mercy.

Assurance of Pardon—Titus 3:4–7; Psalm 35:27–28; Luke 18:27

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Great is the Lord, who delights in the welfare of His servant! My tongue shall tell of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long.

Pastor: This is the promise of God. This is the Word of the Lord.

All: What is impossible with man is possible with God.

Sung Response—Before The Throne Of God Above, Vs. 1

Be-fore the throne of God a - bove I have a strong and per-fect plea.

A great high priest whose name is Love, who ev - er lives and pleads for me.

My name is grav - en on His hands, my name is writ - ten on His heart.

I know that while in Heaven He stands no tongue can bid me thence de - part.

No tongue can bid me thence de - part.

The image shows five staves of musical notation in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 3/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

CCLI #2844402 ©1997 Sovereign Grace Worship; Text: Charitie Bancroft, 1863; Music: Vikki Cook, 1997.

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:

WOMEN



Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly, Lord. Ho-ly, ho-ly, God of pow'r and might,

MEN



Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly, Lord. Ho-ly, ho-ly, God of pow'r and might.



Heav'n and Earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the high - est.



Heav'n and Earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho san-na in the high - est.



Bless-ed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the



Bless-ed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est, Ho



high - est, Ho san-na in the high - est, Ho-san-na in the high - est. A - men.



san-na in the high - est, Ho san-na in the high - est. A - men.

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—What A Friend We Have In Jesus



What a Friend we have in Je - sus, All our sins and griefs to bear!
Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
 Are we weak and heav - y la - den, cum-bured with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - ery-thing to God in prayer!
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged, take it to the Lord in prayer.
 Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our Ref - uge— take it to the Lord in prayer.



O what peace we of - ten for - feit, O what need-less pain we bear,
Can we find a friend so faith - ful? *Who will all our sor - rows share?*
Do thy friends de-spise, for-sake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer;



All be - cause we do not car - ry ev - ery-thing to God in prayer!
Je - sus knows our ev - ery weak - ness, take it to the Lord in prayer.
 In His arms He'll take and shield thee, thou wilt find a sol - ace there.

Text: Joseph M. Scriven, 1855; Music: ERIE, Charles C. Converse, 1868.

Congregational Psalm—My Shepherd Will Supply My Need (Psalm 23)



My_ shep - herd will sup - ply my need: Je - ho - vah is His name;____
When I walk through the shades of_ death Thy pre - sence is my stay;____
The sure pro - vi - sions of my God at - tend me all my days;____



In_ past - ures fresh He makes me feed, be - side the liv - ing stream.____
One word of_ Thy sup - por - ting breath drives all my fears a - way.____
O_ may Thy house be my a - bode, and all my work be praise.____



He brings my wand-'ring spir - it_ back when I for - sake His ways,____
Thy hand, in_ sight of all my foes, doth still my ta - ble spread;____
There would I_ find a set - tled rest, while oth - ers go and come;____



And leads me, for His mer - cy's sake, in_ paths of truth and grace.____
My cup with bless - ings ov - er - flows, Thine oil a - noints my head.____
No more a_ strang - er, nor a_ guest, but like a child at home.____

Text: paraphrase of Psalm 23, Isaac Watts, 1719;
Music: RESIGNATION, *The Southern Harmony*, 1835.

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 Psalm—Be My Contender In The Strife (Psalm 35)



Be my con - ten - der in the strife, O Lord my strong de - fen - der be____
My foes re - joice at my dis - may, but You, O Lord, have seen it all;____
I look to You, my God, my Lord; my right - eous judge, to You I pray;____
Yes, let the Lord be mag - ni - fied, be - cause Your ser - vants You have blessed____



Your migh - ty shield pro - tect my life, Your spear con - front my en - e - my____
O be no long - er far a - way, nor si - lent when to You I call.____
Let not my foes cry out with scorn and laugh with joy at my dis - may.____
And from the morn - ing to the night, I dai - ly praise Your right - eous - ness____



A - mid the con - flict, O my Lord, Your pre - cious pro - mise let me hear____
O vin - di - cate me from Your throne, O Lord, my right - eous cause main - tain;____
Give woe and shame to those whose spite would see my right - eous cause des - troyed;
My soul is joy - ful in the Lord, in His sal - va - tion I re - joice;____



That faith - ful, re - as - sur - ing word: "I am your Sav - ior, do not fear."____
You are my Lord and God a - lone; a - wake, and make Your just - ice plain.____
But those who in the good de - light, let them be glad and shout for joy.____
To Him my heart will praise ac - cord and bless His name with thank - ful voice.____

Text: paraphrase of Psalm 35:1–28, *The Psalter*, 1912, alt. 2016;
Music: WEST HARPETH, Henry C. Haffner, 2016.

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—Numbers 6:24–26

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. *Amen.*

Sung Response—Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above ye heav'nly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. A-men.

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

Announcements

Worship Notes:

This morning's service was designed to focus on the theme of God's saving help in times of difficulty. Psalm 35, in which David cries out to the Lord, "rise for my help," can be found throughout the service. It is not only today's sermon text, but portions of it can be found in the Call to Worship, Confession of Sin, and Assurance of Pardon, and we will sing a paraphrase of it (*Be My Contender In The Strife—Psalm 35*) as the closing hymn. Other psalms and hymns in this morning's service describe God as our helper amid the flood of mortal ills (*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*), a ruler who is "almighty to save" (*Ye Servants Of God*), and a refuge to call upon in affliction (*O Thou In Whose Presence*). He is faithful to save us from the lies of godless men (*O Lord My God—Psalm 43*), to provide solace when friends despise and forsake us (*What A Friend We Have In Jesus*), and to bless us in the sight of all our foes (*My Shepherd Will Supply My Need—Psalm 23*). As we face difficulties in our lives, I pray this extended meditation on Psalm 35 will encourage us to follow David's example, crying out to the Lord who "deliver[s] the poor from him who is too strong for him."

—Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Contend, Salvation, Rescue, Deliver, Poor, Rejoice, Vindicate, Righteousness, Lord

Keystone Verses: Then my tongue shall tell of Your righteousness and of Your praise all the day long. (Psalm 35:28)