



PARISH

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND COVENANT RENEWAL

Epiphany Season
16 February 2025

If I were the devil (please, no comment), one of my first aims would be to stop folk from digging into the Bible... At all costs I should want to keep them from using their minds in a disciplined way to get the measure of its message.

—J. I. Packer

Reading the Bible is important, but we must do more than read it. We must study it... We can't know or trust in the biblical Jesus if we don't understand what Scripture says about Him, from Genesis to Revelation. —R. C. Sproul

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—1 Peter 1:24-25

“All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the Word of the Lord remains forever.” And this Word is the good news that was preached to you.

Sung Response—O Worship The King, Vs. 1

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "O Worship The King, Vs. 1". It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "O wor-ship the King, all glor-ious a - bove, O grate-ful-ly sing His pow'r and His love; Our shield and de-fend-er, the An-cient of Days, pa-vil-ioned in splen-dor, and gird - ed with praise."

Text: Robert Grant, 1833, based on Psalm 104;
Music: LYONS, Joseph Martin Kraus, 1784.

Call to Worship—from Psalm 86:8-13

Pastor: There is none like You among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like Yours.

All: All the nations You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your name.

Reader 1: For You are great and do wondrous things; You alone are God.

Reader 2: Teach me Your way, O Lord, that I may walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name.

All: We give thanks to You, O Lord our God, with our whole heart, and we will glorify Your name forever.

Pastor: For great is Your steadfast love toward us; You have delivered our souls from the depths of Sheol.

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



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.

Copyright © 2009 Crown and Covenant Publications, *Book of Psalms for Worship*.
Text: Psalm 27:11-14; Music: LOUISE, Robert M. Copland, 1972.

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—Who Shall Abide In the Tents Of The Lord (Psalm 15)

Chorus

Who shall a-bide in the tents of the Lord, who shall dwell on His ho - ly hill?

Who shall a-bide in the tents of the Lord, who shall dwell on His ho - ly hill? Fine

Verse

His walk is blame - less; He does what is right His heart shall speak truth to the end;
His eyes look scorn - ful - ly down on the vile, he hon - ors the fear of the Lord;

His tongue tells no lies, His hands do no e - vil He ne - ver brings shame on a friend.
He lends to the poor with-out seek-ing prof-it, when hurt-ing, he still keeps his word.

TO CHORUS
TO CHORUS, THEN BRIDGE

Bridge

He who does this, he who does this he shall ne - ver be moved.

He who does this, he who does this he shall ne - ver be moved.

TO CHORUS

Text: based on Psalm 15:1-5, Henry C. Haffner, 2024; Music: STONE MOUNTAIN, Henry C. Haffner, 2024.

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 56:3-7

Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, “The Lord will surely separate me from His people”; and let not the eunuch say, “Behold, I am a dry tree.” For thus says the Lord: “To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, who choose the things that please Me and hold fast My covenant, I will give in My house and within My walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to Him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be His servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast My covenant—these I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Congregational Hymn—Stricken, Smitten, And Afflicted

Strick - en, smit - ten, and af - flict - ed, see Him dy - ing on the tree!
Tell me, ye who hear Him groan - ing, was there ev - er grief like His?
 Ye who think of sin but light - ly, nor sup - pose the e - vil great,
Here we have a firm foun - da - tion, here the re - fuge of the lost.

'Tis the Christ by man re - ject - ed; yes, my soul, 'tis He, 'tis He!
Friends through fear His cause dis - own - ing, foes in - sult - ing His dis - tress:
 Here may view its na - ture right - ly, here its guilt may es - ti - mate.
Christ the Rock of our sal - va - tion, His the name of which we boast.

'Tis the long ex - spect - ed proph - et, Dav - id's son, yet Dav - id's Lord;
Man - y hands were raised to wound Him, none would in - ter - pose to save;
 Mark the Sac - ri - fice ap - point - ed! See Who bears the aw - ful load!
Lamb of God for sin - ners wound - ed! Sac - ri - fice to can - cel guilt!

By His Son God now has spok - en: 'tis the true and faith - ful Word.
But the deep - est stroke that pierced Him was the stroke that Jus - tice gave.
 'Tis the Word, the Lord's A - noint - ed, Son of Man, and Son of God.
None shall ev - er be con - found - ed who on Him their hope have built.

Text: Thomas Kelly, 1804; Music: O MEIN JESU, ICH MUSS STERBEN, *Geistliche Volkslieder*, 1850.

Reading of the Word—Acts 8:26-40

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place.²⁷ And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship²⁸ and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah.²⁹ And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.”³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”³¹ And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.³² Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth.³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.”

³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—O Lord Most High (Psalm 9), Vs. 4

All they, O Lord, that know Your name, place their trust in the Word of truth,
 For You have ne - ver turned a - way from those who tru - ly seek for You.
 Hope of the poor, to You we cry! A-rise, O Lord, de-fend the weak!
 Sing Praise to the Lord en-throned on High! De-clare to all His might-y deeds!

Text: Psalm 9:10-11, *The Psalter*, 1912; Music: Nathan George 2013.

Sermon—Do You Understand?

—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 Isaiah 1:2-4

Pastor: Lord, we come confessing. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken. You have reared and brought up children.

All: **But we have rebelled against You.**

Pastor: The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but we do not know. Your people do not understand.

All: **We are a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, children who deal corruptly! We have forsaken the Lord.**

(Silent prayers of confession)

Sung Response—Kyrie

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—Isaiah 53:1, 4-5; Matthew 28:19-20

Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed.

Pastor: This is the promise of God.

All: **This is the Word of the Lord.**

Pastor: Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

All: **Thanks be to God, our refuge, our strength, and our redeemer.**

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.



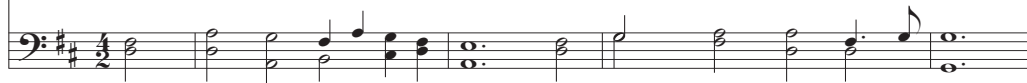
Who trusts in God's un - chang - ing love builds on the rock that naught can move.
Nor doubt our in - most wants are known to Him who chose us for His own.
God nev - er yet for - sook in need the soul that trust - ed Him in - deed.

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

Congregational Hymn—Light Of The Anxious Heart



Light of the anx - ious heart, Je - sus, Thou dost ap - pear,
Joy - ous is he with whom, God's Word, Thou dost a - bide,
Bright - ness of God a - bove, un - fath - om - a - ble grace,



To bid the gloom of guilt de - part, and shed Thy sweet - ness here.
Sweet light of our e - ter - nal home, to flesh - ly sense de - nied.
Thy pres - ence be a fount of love with - in Thy cho - sen place.



Text: Bernard of Clairvaux, 12th century. tr. J. H. Newman, 1836; Music: SELMA, Robert A. Smith, 1825.

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.*

Congregational Hymn—Jesus Loves Me, This I Know

Je - sus loves me, this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so.
Je - sus loves me, this I know, He loved child - ren long a - go.
Je - sus loves me, He will stay close be - side me all the way;
Je - sus loves me He who died heav - en's gate to o - pen wide.

Lit - tle ones to Him be - long; they are weak, but He is strong.
In His arms for all to see, say - ing, "Let them come to Me."
He's pre - pared a home for me, and some - day His face I'll see.
He will wash a - way my sin, let His lit - tle child come in.

Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me!

Yes, Je - sus loves me! The Bi - ble tells me so.

Text: Anna Bartlett Warner, 1859; Music: JESUS LOVES ME, William Bradbury, 1861.

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—Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. *Amen.*

Sung Response—Gloria Patri

Glor - y be__ to the Fath - er, and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost;

As it was in the be - gin - ning, is__ now, and ev - er shall be,

World__ with - out end. A - men. A - - - men.

Text: Lesser Doxology, 2nd century; Music: Nathan George, 2015, harm. Henry C. Haffner, 2015.

Announcements

Worship Notes:

*Q. Where do you learn how to love and obey God? A. In the Bible alone.
—Children’s Catechism*

What a tremendous blessing we have in the Scriptures! In the Bible, we find all that is necessary for the knowledge of God and the salvation of our souls. This morning, we begin with a reminder from 1 Peter that “the Word of the Lord remains forever.” We respond by singing the Scriptures, asking the Lord to “instruct us in [His] way,” and inquiring “Who shall abide in the tents of the Lord?” The Scriptures answer us with the story of the Ethiopian eunuch, who is converted after reading from the prophet Isaiah. Later psalms and hymns in the service urge us to “place [our] trust in the Word of truth,” and to “trust His Word, though undeserving.” We’ll confess that “Joyous is he” who abides with God’s Word, and that we rest securely in the love of Jesus because “the Bible tells me so.” I pray that this morning’s service would drive us all back to the Scriptures, where, like the eunuch in Acts 8, we are certain to find the “long expected prophet” who is the “true and faithful Word.” —Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Official, Spirit, Read, Understand, Lamb, Jesus, Good News, Baptize
Keystone Verse: Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. (Acts 8:35)



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Elder Emeritus
Steve Nelson

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