



PARISH

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND COVENANT RENEWAL

Season of Advent

4 December 2022

Old Testament believers fed much on God’s promises. They knew nothing of the great facts which we know about Christ’s life, and death, and resurrection. They looked forward to redemption as a thing hoped for, but not yet seen, and their only warrant for their hope was God’s covenanted word. Let us learn to rest on promises and embrace them as Zechariah did. —J.C. Ryle

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—Ephesians 1:3

Good news. Glad tidings. Great joy. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.”

Sung Response—Good Christian Men, Rejoice, Vs. 1

Good Christ - ian men, re - joice _____ with heart and soul, and voice; _____

Give ye heed to what we say: News! News! Je - sus Christ is born to - day;

Ox and ass be - fore Him bow; and He is in the man - ger now.

Christ is born to - day! _____ Christ is born to - day! _____

Text: Medieval Latin Carol, tr. John Mason Neale, 1853; Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German Melody, 14th century, harm. John Stainer, 1871.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Call to Worship—Psalm 106:1-2, 47-48

Pastor: Praise the Lord!

All: Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!

Reader 1: Who can utter the mighty deeds of the Lord, or declare all His praise?

Reader 2: Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations.

All: That we may give thanks to Your holy name and glory in Your praise.

Pastor: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!

All: Let all the people say, “Amen!”

Pastor: Praise the Lord!

Congregational Psalm—O Sing A New Song To The Lord! (Psalm 98)

O sing a new song to the Lord! For wonders He has done,

For wonders He has done; His right hand and His holy arm

The vic - to - ry have won the vic - to - ry have won,
 The vic - to - ry have won, the vic - to - ry have won,
 The vic - to - ry have won, the vic - to - ry have won,

won, the vic - to - ry have won.
 vic - to - ry have won.
 won, the vic - to - ry have won.
 vic - to - ry have won.

2. The great salvation wrought by Him
 Jehovah has made known.
 His justice in the nations' sight
 He openly has shown.

3. He mindful of His grace and truth
 To Isr'el's house has been.
 The great salvation of our God
 All ends of Earth have seen.

4. Because He comes, He surely comes,
 The judge of Earth to be!
 With justice He will judge the world,
 All men with equity.

Text: based on Psalm 98:1-3, 9, *Book of Psalms for Singing*, 1973;
 Music: DESERT (LYNGHAM), Thomas Jarmon, c. 1803.

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.

Congregational Hymn—See, Amid The Winter's Snow



See, a - mid the win - ter's snow, born for us on earth be - low,
Lo, with - in a man - ger lies He who built the star - ry skies:
Sa - cred in - fant, all di - vine, what a ten - der love was Thine,
Teach, O teach us, Ho - ly Child, by Thy face so meek and mild,



See the ten - der Lamb ap - pears, prom - ised from e - ter - nal years.
He who, throned in height sub - lime, sits a - mid the cher - u - bim.
Thus to come from high - est bliss down to such a world as this!
Teach us to re - sem - ble Thee, in Thy sweet hu - mil - i - ty.



Hail, thou e - ver - bless - ed morn! Hail, re - demp - tion's hap - py dawn!



Sing through all Je - ru - sa - lem, Christ is born in Beth - le - hem.

Text: Edward Caswall, 1851; Music: HUMILITY, John Goss, 1870.

Scripture Reading—Luke 1:5–20

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time."

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Congregational Hymn—Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence



Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on Earth He stood,
Rank on rank the host of Heav - en spreads its van - guard on the way,
At His feet the six - winged ser - aph; cher - u - bim, with sleep - less eye,



Pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed, for with bless - ing in His hand,
Lord of lords, in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
As the Light of light de - scend - eth from the realms of end - less day,
Veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry,



Christ our Lord to Earth de - scend - eth, our full hom - age to de - mand.
He will give to all the faith - ful His own self for heav'n - ly food.
That the pow'rs of Hell may van - ish as the dark - ness clears a - way.
"Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James, 5th century, alt. Gerard Moultrie, 1864;
Music: PICARDY, French Melody, 17th century.

Reading of the Word—Luke 1:67-80

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying:

⁶⁸ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people ⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, ⁷⁰ as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; ⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, ⁷³ the oath that He swore to our father Abraham, to grant us ⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, ⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. ⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways, ⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to His people in the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high ⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sung Response—Good Christian Men, Rejoice, Vs. 2

Good Christ - ian men, re - joice, _____ with heart and soul and voice; _____

Now ye hear of end - less bliss: Joy! Joy! Je - sus Christ was born for this!

He has op - ened heav - en's door, and man is blest for - ev - er - more.

Christ was born for this! _____ Christ was born for this! _____

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second and third staves have a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: "Good Christ - ian men, re - joice, _____ with heart and soul and voice; _____", "Now ye hear of end - less bliss: Joy! Joy! Je - sus Christ was born for this!", "He has op - ened heav - en's door, and man is blest for - ev - er - more.", and "Christ was born for this! _____ Christ was born for this! _____".

Text: Medieval Latin Carol, tr. John Mason Neale, 1853; Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German Melody, 14th century, harm. John Stainer, 1871.

Sermon—Zechariah's Song: *The Benedictus*

—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—from Psalm 106:3, 6; Revelation 5:5, 9-10; Habakkuk 3:2

Pastor: Lord, we come confessing. Blessed are they who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times!

All: **But we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness.**

Pastor: By Your blood, O Lamb of God, You have ransomed for Yourself a people of Your own possession from every tribe and language and people and nation.

All: **Therefore, You alone are worthy to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!**

Pastor: You are worthy of all worship.

All: **In wrath, remember mercy, O Lord.**

Pastor: Grant us grace and forgive us, we pray.

(Silent Prayers of Confession)

Sung Response—Lamb Of God

UNISON

O Lamb of God, that takes a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us. —

O Lamb of God, that takes a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us. —

O Lamb of — God, that takes a - way the sins of the world,

Slightly faster WOMEN

Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy, Grant us Thy peace,

MEN

Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy peace.

Text: Traditional, based on John 1:29; Music: CLOVERCROFT AGNUS DEI, Henry C. Haffner, 2019.

Assurance of Pardon—1 Peter 1:3–9; Revelation 15:3-4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Pastor: This is the promise of God.

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

Pastor: Great and marvelous are Your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are Your ways, King of the nations.

All: **Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?**

Pastor: For You alone are holy. Amen.

Sung Response—Twofold Amen

A - men, a - men

Text: Traditional; Music: DRESDEN, Johann Naumann, 18th Century.

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:

UNISON



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace to His peo-ple on earth. —

WOMEN



We praise You, we bless You, we wor-ship You, we glo-ri-fy You,

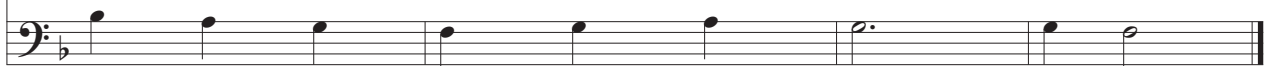
MEN



We praise You, we bless — You, we wor-ship You, we glo-ri-fy You,



We give You thanks for Your great glo - ry.



We give You thanks for Your great glo - ry.

Text: Traditional, based on Luke 2:14; Music: CLOVERCROFT GLORIA, Henry C. Haffner, 2019.

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—Of The Father's Love Begotten



Of the Fath - er's love be - got - ten. Ere the worlds be - gan to be,
O that birth for - ev - er bless - ed! When the Vir - gin full of grace,
He as - sumed this mor - tal bo - dy, Frail and fee - ble, doomed to die,
This is He whom once the si - byls With u - ni - ted voice fore - told,
Christ, to Thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly Ghost, to Thee,



He is Al - pha and O - me - ga, He the Source, the End - ing He.
By the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, Bore the Sav - ior of our race,
That the race from dust cre - a - ted Might not per - ish ut - ter - ly,
Whom the Scrip - tures of the pro - phets Pro - mised in their faith - ful word.
Hymn and chant with high thanks - giv - ing, and un - wear - ied prais - es be:



Of the things that are, that have been, And that fu - ture years shall see,
And the babe, the world's Re - deem - er, First re - vealed his sac - red face,
Which the dread - ful Law had sen - tenced In the depths of hell to lie,
Let the world u - nite to praise Him, Long de - sired, fore - seen of old,
Hon - or, glor - y, and do - min - ion, And e - ter - nal vic - to - ry,



Ev - er more and ev - er - more.

Text: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 4th century, tr. John Mason Neale, 1851 and H. W. Baker, 1859;
Music: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM, plainsong, 13th century.

Congregational Hymn—On Christmas Night All Christians Sing



On Christ - mas night all Christ - ians sing, to hear the news the an - gels bring,
Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Re - deem - er made us glad,
When sin de - parts be - fore His grace, then life and health come in its place,
All out of dark - ness we have light, which made the an - gels sing this night,



On Christ - mas night all Christ - ians sing, to hear the news the an - gels bring,
Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Re - deem - er made us glad,
When sin de - parts be - fore His grace, then life and health come in its place;
All out of dark - ness we have light, which made the an - gels sing this night:



News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.
When from our sin He set us free, all for to gain our li - ber - ty?
An - gels and men with joy may sing, all for to see the new - born King.
"Glo - ry to God and peace to men, now and for ev - er - more. A - men."

Text: Traditional English Carol; Music: SUSSEX CAROL, Traditional English Carol,
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1912.

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.

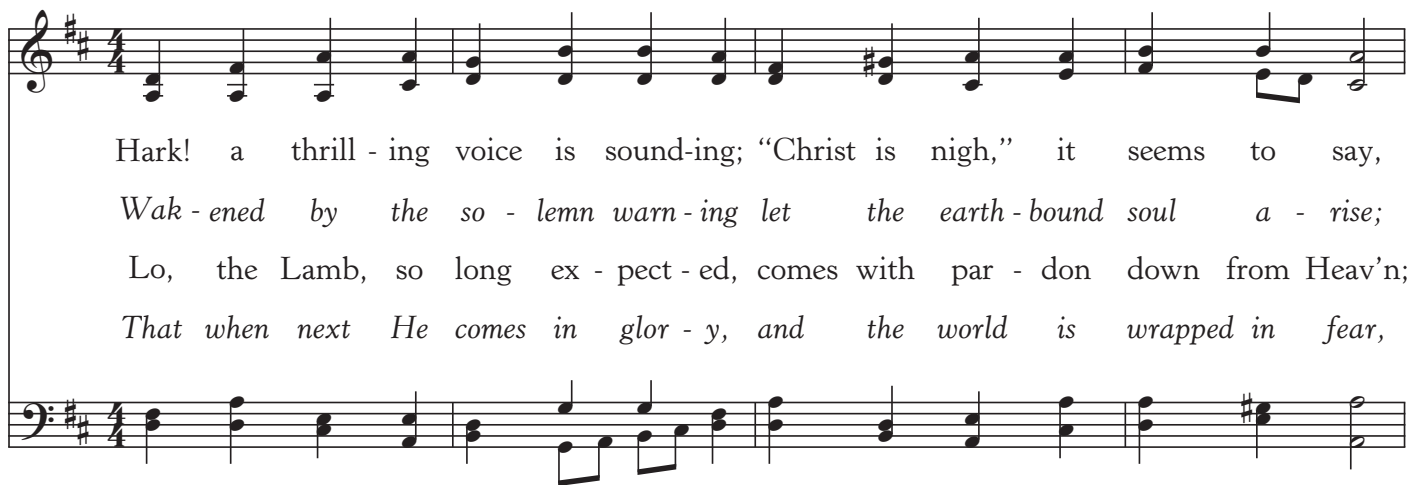
Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

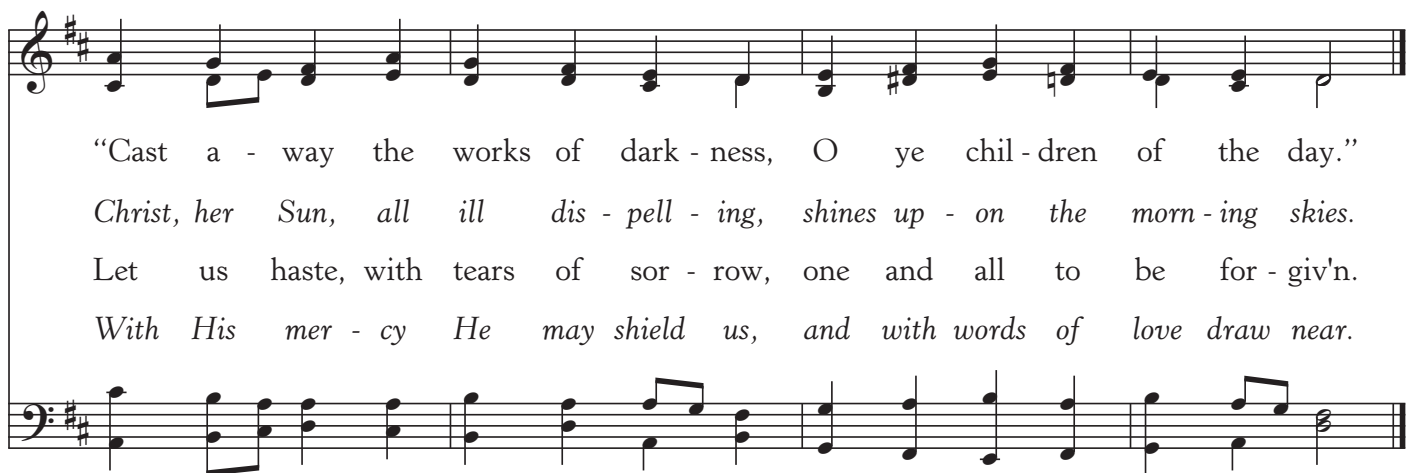
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. *Amen.*

Congregational Hymn—Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding



Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing; "Christ is nigh," it seems to say,
Wak - ened by the so - lemn warn - ing let the earth - bound soul a - rise;
Lo, the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, comes with par - don down from Heav'n;
That when next He comes in glor - y, and the world is wrapped in fear,



"Cast a - way the works of dark - ness, O ye chil - dren of the day."
Christ, her Sun, all ill dis - pell - ing, shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
Let us haste, with tears of sor - row, one and all to be for - giv'n.
With His mer - cy He may shield us, and with words of love draw near.

Text: Latin hymn, 5th century, tr. Edward Caswall, 1849;
Music: MERTON (MONK), William H. Monk, 1850.

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—Good Christian Men, Rejoice, Vs. 3

Good Christ-ian men, re - joice with heart and soul and voice!

Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace! Je - sus Christ was born to save;

Calls you one and calls you all, to gain His ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Text: Medieval Latin Carol, tr. John Mason Neale, 1853; Music: IN DULCI JUBILO, German Melody, 14th century, harm. John Stainer, 1871.

Announcements

Worship Notes:

Just as we saw in Mary's song last week, Zechariah's song from Luke 1:67-80 draws heavily from the language of the Old Testament. Zechariah remarks that the "horn of salvation" (a reference to Psalm 18:2) was promised "by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old," a sentiment echoed in many Christmas hymns. *See, Amid The Winter's Snow* refers to Jesus as the "Lamb" who was "promised from eternal years," *Of The Father's Love Begotten* points out that His coming was promised by the "Scriptures of the prophets," and *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding* calls Him the "Lamb, so long-expected." This last hymn has a further connection to Zechariah's song: the "thrilling voice" of the title, who cries out "Christ is nigh" and "cast away the works of darkness," is John the Baptist, the child who is prophesied to "go before the Lord to prepare His ways" in Luke 1:76. Another striking aspect of Zechariah's story is the movement from silence to song. After we hear the angel tell him, "You will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place" (Luke 1:20), we respond with the awe-filled hymn *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*. But before the end of the service, we'll also hear that "all Christians sing" because of a different angelic message—the angels at Bethlehem. —Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Magnifies, Rejoices, Savior, Humble, Holy, Mercy, Forever

Keystone Verse: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people. (Luke 1:68)



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Phil Hutcheson Steve Nelson

Deacons

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Jimmy Allen (on sabbatical)

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