

PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Order of Worship

MAY 26, 2024

WELCOME

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP*

adapted from Psalm 40.1-6

Minister: I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the mud and mire, and he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.

All: Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust. Many, O my God, are the wonders you have done. Your plans for us are too numerous to list. You have no equal. If I tried to recite all of your wonderful deeds, I would never come to an end of them!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND ADORATION*

HYMN*

All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above | No. 4

MIT FREUDEN ZART

Stanzas 1, 2, and 5 (alt)

All praise to God, who reigns above, the God of all creation,
The God of wonders, pow'r, and love, the God of our salvation!
With healing balm my soul he fills, the God who every sorrow stills.
To God all praise and glory!

What God's almighty pow'r hath made his gracious mercy keepeth,
By morning dawn or evening shade his watchful eye ne'er sleepeth.
Within the kingdom of his might, lo, all is just and all is right.
To God all praise and glory!

We, who confess Christ's holy name, to God give thanks and glory!
We, who the Father's power proclaim, to God give thanks and glory!
All idols underfoot be trod, the Lord is God! The Lord is God!
To God all praise and glory!

CONFESSION OF FAITH

adapted from the Heidelberg Catechism, Questions 27-28

Minister: Christian, what is the Providence of God and how should it comfort the Lord's people?

All: **The Providence of God is the almighty and ever-present power of God by which He upholds and governs heaven and earth and all its creatures. Through His governance, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty—all are not left to chance but are directed by His fatherly hand. What this means for us is that we may be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity, and maintain trust in our faithful God and Father. It confirms that no creature shall separate us from His love, ensuring that all circumstances are under His sovereign care for our ultimate good.**

SONG OF PRAISE

The Perfect Wisdom of Our God

Getty, Townend

The perfect wisdom of our God,
Revealed in all the universe:
All things created by His hand,
And held together at His command.
He knows the mysteries of the seas,
The secrets of the stars are His,
He guides the planets on their way,
And turns the earth through another day.

The matchless wisdom of His ways,
That mark the path of righteousness,
His word a lamp unto my feet,
His Spirit teaching and guiding me.
And oh, the mystery of the cross,
That God should suffer for the lost
So that the fool might shame the wise,
And all the glory might go to Christ!

Oh grant me wisdom from above,
To pray for peace and cling to love,
And teach me humbly to receive
The sun and rain of Your sovereignty.
Each strand of sorrow has a place
Within this tapestry of grace,
So through the trials I choose to say:
“Your perfect will in your perfect way.”

PUBLIC CONFESSION OF SIN

Minister: Let us confess our sins before our righteous and holy God.

All: Heavenly Father, we confess that we frequently love the things of this world more than we love You. Our minds harbor sinful thoughts, and our words often reflect this sinfulness. Our hearts cling to the transient—things that rust, break, and decay—rather than to Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. Father, grow and sanctify us by your Spirit and give us the strength, will, and desire to obey and trust you from the heart. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

PRIVATE CONFESSION OF SIN

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Ephesians 2:8-9

Hear the promises of God to those who truly repent of their sins and trust in Christ: For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Children's Time

After the intercessory prayer, children in kindergarten through 3rd grade and their teachers may exit the sanctuary through the north doors of the sanctuary. Teachers will return with the children after the sermon. Parents may meet them by the north entrance, or children may join their parents at their seats.

SCRIPTURE READING*

Acts 7.1-16, 30-33, 48-50

¹ Then the high priest asked Stephen, "Are these charges true?" ² To this he replied: "Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Harran. ³ 'Leave your country and your people,' God said, 'and go to the land I will show you.'

⁴ "So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Harran. After the death of his father, God sent him to this land where you are now living. ⁵ He gave him no inheritance here, not even enough ground to set his foot on. But God promised him that he and his descendants after him would possess the land, even though at that time Abraham had no child. ⁶ God spoke to him in this way: 'For four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated. ⁷ But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves,' God said, 'and afterward they will come out of that country and worship me in this place.' ⁸ Then he gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.

SCRIPTURE READING* (CONT.)

⁹ “Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him ¹⁰ and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt. So Pharaoh made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.

¹¹ “Then a famine struck all Egypt and Canaan, bringing great suffering, and our ancestors could not find food. ¹² When Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our forefathers on their first visit. ¹³ On their second visit, Joseph told his brothers who he was, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph’s family.

¹⁴ After this, Joseph sent for his father Jacob and his whole family, seventy-five in all. ¹⁵ Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our ancestors died. ¹⁶ Their bodies were brought back to Shechem and placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought from the sons of Hamor at Shechem for a certain sum of money.

³⁰ “After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near Mount Sinai. ³¹ When he saw this, he was amazed at the sight. As he went over to get a closer look, he heard the Lord say: ³² ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.’ Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look.

³³ “Then the Lord said to him, ‘Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.

⁴⁸ “However, the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands. As the prophet says:

⁴⁹ “ ‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be? ⁵⁰ Has my hand not made all these things?’ (NIV)

SERMON

**Stephen’s Strategic Reversal:
Turning the Tables**

Rev. David Rea

HYMN OF RESPONSE*

He Will Hold Me Fast

Merker

When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast.
When the tempter would prevail, He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold through life’s fearful path,
For my love is often cold. He must hold me fast.

Chorus:

He will hold me fast. He will hold me fast.

For my Savior loves me so, He will hold me fast.

HYMN OF RESPONSE* (CONT.)

Those He saves are His delight, Christ will hold me fast.
Precious in His holy sight, He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost. His promises shall last.
Bought by Him at such a cost, He will hold me fast.

Chorus

For my life He bled and died, Christ will hold me fast.
Justice has been satisfied. He will hold me fast.
Raised with Him to endless life, He will hold me fast,
'Til our faith is turned to sight, when He comes at last!

Chorus

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S TABLE

All those who trust in Christ alone for their salvation, are baptized, and belong to a Bible believing church are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper together, feeding on the grace of God by faith. If you have not put your trust in Christ, please allow the elements to pass you by and take this opportunity to meditate on the meaning of the Gospel.

A word to parents: Baptized children are invited to the table after they have made a profession of faith and been received as communing members by the Session of the church to which their parents belong.

Please hold the bread, and we will partake together. Please drink the cup as you receive it.

The outer ring is grape juice and the inner rings are wine.

During the bread

Holy Spirit

Getty, Townend

Holy Spirit, living Breath of God,
Breathe new life into my willing soul.
Bring the presence of the risen Lord
To renew my heart and make me whole.
Cause your word to come alive in me,
Give me faith for what I cannot see,
Give me passion for your purity.
Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me.

During the bread (cont.)

Holy Spirit, come abide within,
May your joy be seen in all I do—
Love enough to cover ev'ry sin
In each thought and deed and attitude,
Kindness to the greatest and the least,
Gentleness that sows the path of peace.
Turn my striving into works of grace.
Breath of God, show Christ in all I do.

Holy Spirit, from creation's birth,
Giving life to all that God has made,
Show your power once again on earth,
Cause your church to hunger for your ways.
Let the fragrance of our prayers arise.
Lead us on the road of sacrifice
That in unity the face of Christ
Will be clear for all the world to see.

During the cup
Instrumental

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

CLOSING HYMN*

Doxology | No. 733

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below:
Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise him above, ye heav'nly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
Alleluia, alleluia!

BENEDICTION*

Numbers 6:24-26

Minister: 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.