

WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)



THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

A SERVICE OF THE WORD

JANUARY 22, 2023 10:30AM

Grace Notes

Welcome to WHPC! If you are visiting us today, we are so glad you joined us for worship. If you have not already, please take a moment to record your contact information on the visitor card you will find in the pew and drop it in the offering box or hand it to a greeter at the door. We are always glad to share the great things happening at WHPC!

If you are looking for a new church home and would like to join in fellowship with Westover Hills, please join us in the Parlor (outside the sanctuary doors) and we will gladly share more about life at WHPC or, if you are ready, receive you into membership.

Childcare is available in the nursery. Please check with a greeter.

WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

**Indicates the congregation is invited to stand.*

Bold text indicates unison readings.

WE GATHER AT GOD'S INVITATION

WELCOME & OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISCIPLESHIP Dr. Robert Wm Lowry, Pastor

PRELUDE David Austin, Music Director

CALL TO WORSHIP Liturgist Shirley Garlington

If the human body, body of blood and muscle, is to live, it needs salt.

If the body of Christ, body of peace and justice, is to live, it needs us!

If the earthly creation, bustling and blooming, is to flourish, it needs the sun's light.

If the new creation we are in Christ is to flourish, it needs the Spirit's light!

Jesus says we are salt of the earth, light of the world.

Our faith, our love, our hope —essential as salt and light.

But if salt isn't salty?

It isn't what it's meant to be.

And if a light doesn't shine?

It isn't what it's meant to be.

Jesus says we are salt of the earth, light of the world.

Briny and bright, we are God's faithful people.

We shall be who we are meant to be in Christ: a welcoming oasis, a compassionate community, a justice-making people, giving glory to God!

OPENING PRAYER

God of mystery and of judgment, who has made us to be salt and light in a tasteless, shadowed world, guide us in this time of worship.

Grant us understanding and spiritual discernment so that others may see your good works through us, give you the glory, and be moved to serve you. Amen.

*HYMN OF PRAISE #333 *"Seek Ye First"* LAFFERTY

CALL TO CONFESSION

If we say we are completely put together, the truth is not in us.

But if we confess our distractions, our errors, and our anxieties, God will meet us and renew us. Together let us confess our sins against God and one another.

Grace Notes

Imitating the cadence of the Sermon on the Mount, the Prayer of Confession pairs blessings and woes as a way to compare what draws us near to God vs. what pulls us away.

This chorus from a popular contemporary song is frequently used as a response to all kinds of prayer. Here we use it as a response to confession, but it could as easily be used as part of a pastoral or Eucharistic prayer as well.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION. (IN UNISON)

Blessed are we when we let go of possessions
for the kingdom of God unfolds in open places.

**Woe to us when we gather into barns
for soon this life will be over.**

Blessed are we who know the ache of hunger
for the empty places in body and soul are the fertile soil for new growth.

**Woe to us who fill our lives to capacity
for we fail to recognize what is missing.**

Blessed are we who know sorrow
for the ache of love lost is witness to the seed planted.

**Woe to us who have yet to know the pain of grief
for the fullness of love is woven with sorrow.**

Blessed are we who know scorn
for the rejection of humans keeps us mindful of that beyond.

**Woe to us who depend on the approval of others
for to dance with Spirit appears foolish.**

Blessed are we who live in the harmony of life in the Spirit,
For we will recognize abundance. Amen.

Silence is kept

SUNG RESPONSE *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* CHILDREN PRAYING

Lord, lis-ten to your chil - dren pray - ing.

Lord, send your Spirit in this place. Lord, listen to your chil-dren

pray - ing. Send us love; send us power; send us grace.

Grace Notes

Respectful of individual preferences concerning contact, please extend either a hand or a gesture of peace to your neighbors.

Perhaps the best known of all Jesus' sayings, the Beatitudes (part of the larger Sermon on the Mount in Matthew and Sermon on the Plain in Luke) are a list of ethical statements that communicate how the logic of the kingdom of God works. In each of the sayings, the expected relationship between world condition and outcome is turned on its head.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

...in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

+THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ which passes all understanding be with you all.

And also with you.

WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Matthew 5:1-20

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up a mountain. He sat down and his disciples came to him. He taught them, saying:

"Happy are people who are hopeless, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

"Happy are people who grieve, because they will be made glad.

"Happy are people who are humble, because they will inherit the earth.

"Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they will be fed until they are full.

"Happy are people who show mercy, because they will receive mercy.

"Happy are people who have pure hearts, because they will see God.

"Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children.

"Happy are people whose lives are harassed because they are righteous, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

"Happy are you when people insult you and harass you and speak all kinds of bad and false things about you, all because of me. Be full of joy and be glad, because you have a great reward in heaven. In the same way, people harassed the prophets who came before you.

"You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? It's good for nothing except to be thrown away and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can't be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.

"Don't even begin to think that I have come to do away with the Law and the Prophets. I haven't come to do away with them but to fulfill them. I say to you very seriously that as long as heaven and earth exist, neither the smallest letter nor even the smallest stroke of a pen will be erased from the Law until everything there becomes a reality. Therefore, whoever ignores one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called the lowest in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps these commands and teaches people to keep them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. I say to you that unless your righteousness is greater

Grace Notes

The first three verses of this hymn are written around the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. The final verse expresses gratitude for those who possess and share those virtues.

The Confession of Faith is a creation of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. Part of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary, the Institute is a leading institution of Reformed worship in the world.

than the righteousness of the legal experts and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

SERMON

“Making a New Thing”

Dr. Lowry

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

+HYMN OF RESPONSE “Give Thanks for Those Whose Faith Is Firm”

REPTON



1 Give thanks for those whose faith is firm when all a -
 2 Give thanks for those whose hope is clear, be - yond mere
 3 Give thanks for those whose love is pure, a spar - kling
 4 Give thanks for saints of a - ges past and saints a -

(D) (A) (D) (G) (Em) (A) (F#m)
 E^b B^b E^b A^b Fm B^b Gm



round seems bleak: on God’s good prom - ise they re - ly, so
 mor - tal sight: who seek the cit - y God has planned, the
 pre - cious stone: they show by what they say and do an
 live to - day: though of - ten by this world de - spised, their

(Bm) (G) (Em) (A7) (D)
 Cm A^b Fm B^b7 E^b



while they live and when they die how force - ful -
 true, e - ter - nal prom - ised land, and steer on
 in - ward beau - ty, warm and true, for God’s con -
 hearts by God are rich - ly prized. Give thanks that

(A7) (B) (Em) (G) (A7) (D)
 B^b7 C Fm A^b B^b7 E^b



ly they speak: the strong, who once were weak!
 toward that light, a bea - con ev - er bright.
 cerns they own: God’s love through them is known.
 we may say we share their pil - grim way.

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Our World Belongs to God

**Jesus stays with us in the Spirit,
 who renews our hearts,
 moves us to faith,
 leads us in the truth,
 stands by us in our need,
 and makes our obedience fresh and vibrant.**

Grace Notes

Prayers of/for the People are a common feature in worship. Although the Book of Common Worship includes several iterations of this kind of prayer, many churches have original prayers written for each week or a spontaneous prayer may be offered. There is no single right or wrong way in terms of liturgical theology. Importantly, the prayer should reflect the values of the community of faith and honestly reflect its character.

God often speaks through unusual voices. In the bible, God frequently speaks to the people of Israel through “the nations.”

Here the prayer uses the cultural pressures of our world as places where God’s voice may still be heard.

**The Spirit's gifts are here to stay
in rich variety—fitting responses to timely needs.**

**We thankfully see each other
as gifted members of the fellowship
which delights in the creative Spirit's work.**

**He gives more than enough to each believer
for God's praise and our neighbor's welfare.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

God of true happiness, of light and life:

When we see with the lens of faith,
we behold the wonder of creation.

When we hear when truly listening,
we behold the symphony of your mercies.

When our hearts are open to your grace,
we behold the wonder of harmony in the human family,

When our minds are unmoored from prejudices and assumptions,
we behold the whelming possibilities for this world.

Come then, Holy Spirit, and inhabit our senses,
attend to our prayer, as we seek to see, hear, hope,
and comprehend the promises of God.

The powers and principalities of this world seek to keep us blind to your promise
with smoke screens of fear, division, and rancor;
with myths of scarcity and self-preservation;
with lies of racism, sexism, and fear of the margins.

The stormy chaos of our lives leaves us weary and vulnerable.

Come to us, Spirit of Christ, and give us hope in our time.

Come to us in the voices of neighbors.

Among the pleas for justice, may we hear your prophetic call to action.

Come to us in this culture of violence.

Above cries of anguish of those who mourn, may we hear your call to
give comfort without regard to the cost.

Come to us over the fray of lust for political power.

Lift the voices of your children in positions of influence and power who
speak for the widow, the orphan, the immigrant.

Come to us in the folly of our own faith.

Compel us toward a faith that is broader, deeper, more welcoming, more
generous than we can ever imagine.

Dwell with us, Spirit of Christ, and give us strength for the journey.

In the voices of the sick, the dying, the suffering;
give us hearts of compassion.

In the valleys of darkness and doubt;
give us awareness of your abiding presence.

In the mountain-top seasons when our faith runs deep;
give us humility of spirit.

Grace Notes

The words of this familiar hymn are so well known they seem like they must be biblical. Although the words “standing” and “promises” appear numerous times in scripture, they never appear together.

Another hymn that has a similar biblical sound although its words are not found in scripture is “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less.”

Hymns like these take ideas that communicate the broader themes of scripture’s promises even though they are not explicitly written on the page.

We make all our prayers in the name of the one who is with us and for us today and always, Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now as Christ taught us, we pray and pray boldly saying,

**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, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

WE DEPART IN GOD’S NAME

+PARTING HYMN

“Standing on the Promises of God”

PROMISES

(Refrain on back page)

1 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ my king,
2 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es that can - not fail,
3 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ the Lord,
4 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es I can - not fall,

through e - ter - nal a - ges let his prais - es ring;
when the howl - ing storms of doubt and fear as - sail,
bound to him e - ter - nal - ly by love's strong cord,
lis - tening ev - ery mo - ment to the Spir - it's call,

glo - ry in the high - est, I will shout and sing,
by the liv - ing Word of God I shall pre - vail,
o - ver - com - ing dai - ly with the Spir - it's sword,
rest - ing in my Sav - ior as my all in all,

stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

Grace Notes

Refrain



Stand - ing, stand - ing, stand - ing on the prom - is - es, stand - ing on the prom - is - es,
stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God my Sav - ior;
stand - ing, stand - ing on the prom - is - es, stand - ing on the prom - is - es,
I'm stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

+ CHARGE AND BENEEDICTION

+ POSTLUDE

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Elders will be in the Parlor (outside the sanctuary doors) following worship if you would like to learn more about WHPC or if you are ready to join as part of the congregation.

PLEASE SEE INSERT FOR PASTORAL CARE
CONCEPTS AND CHURCH NEWS.