

# THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The First Presbyterian Church  
of Howard County

*Seventh Sunday After Epiphany  
February 23, 2025*

*10:30 a.m. In-person & Livestream Service*

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## GATHER

*Let all enter the sanctuary in a spirit of prayer.  
Words in **bold** are read by the congregation.*

*\*Those who are able may stand*

*Please remember to turn your cell phones to silent.*

*This worship service is being livestreamed to the internet,  
and you may appear on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.*

*For our online congregation - Let us know you are here! Post a greeting!  
And remember that you can place a request in the Prayer Journal  
in the comments on both You Tube and Facebook Live.*

### Prelude

There is a Balm in Gilead

*Traditional, arr. R. Wilson*

### Lighting the Christ Candle

Whenever we light this candle, we proclaim:

**Christ is the light of the world and the center of our lives.**

### Call to Worship

Do not fret because of the wicked;  
do not be envious of wrongdoers,  
**for they will soon fade like the grass,  
and wither like the green herb.**

Trust in the Lord, and do good;  
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.

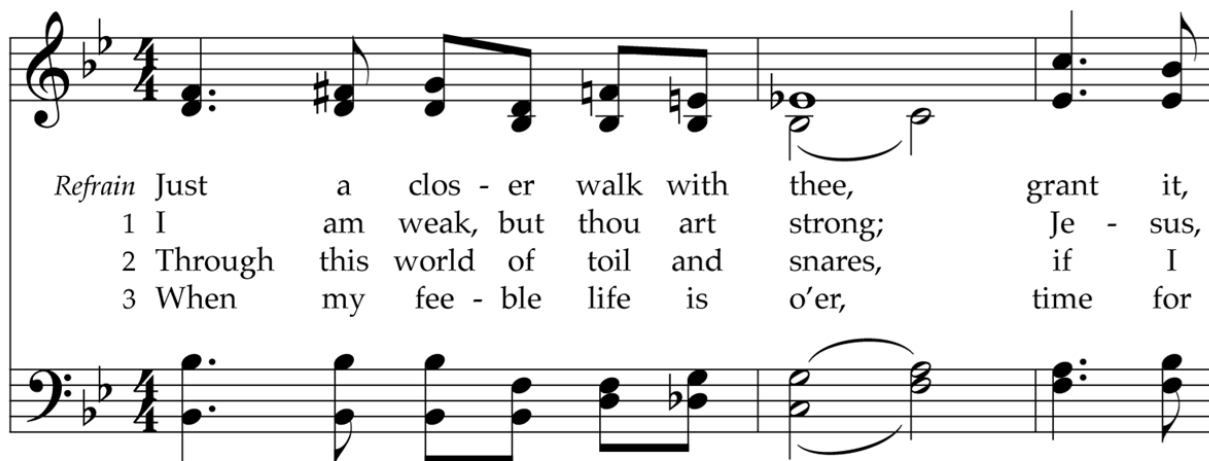
**Take delight in the Lord,  
and God will give you the desires of your heart.**

### \* Hymn 835

Just a Closer Walk with Thee  
*(see next page for hymn)*

*Closer Walk*

# Just a Closer Walk with Thee 835



*Refrain* Just a clos - er walk with thee, grant it,  
 1 I am weak, but thou art strong; Je - sus,  
 2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I  
 3 When my fee - ble life is o'er, time for



Je - sus, is my plea, dai - ly walk - ing close to  
 keep me from all wrong; I'll be sat - is - fied as  
 fal - ter, Lord, who cares? Who with me my bur - den  
 me will be no more; guide me gent - ly, safe - ly



thee: let it be, dear Lord, let it be.  
 long as I walk, let me walk close to thee. *Ref.*  
 shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. *Ref.*  
 o'er to thy shore, dear Lord, to thy shore. *Ref.*

The chromatic musical style of this anonymous short hymn suggests that it probably dates from the early 20th century. It also seems to owe much of its popularity to radio broadcasts and recordings as well as to evangelistic meetings and singing conventions of that era.

## Prayer of Confession

Holy One, we are weary, we often believe we are alone, and we feel caught on a treadmill we can't get off. We're running a race -- but we don't know where the finish line is, or have any idea what the prize is for completing the race. We have taken our eyes off you, the one who designed the course and sets the pace. Rather than setting our sights on you, rather than determining our priorities through our faith, we have allowed ourselves to be led by the values of the society, and whatever new shiny thing grabs our attention. Forgive us for our lack of faith. Help us to turn back to you -- the source of our existence and our strength. Trusting in your providence, confident you will carry us in times of sorrow, assured you will provide all the strength we need. Amen.

## Assurance of Grace

\* **Response of Praise 582** (*singing together*)

*Glory to God (Vasile)*

1 Glo - ry to God, whose good - ness shines on me,  
2 World with - out end, 7 with - out end. A - men.

and to the Son, whose grace has par - doned me,  
World with - out end, 7 with - out end. A - men.

and to the Spir - it, whose love has set me free.  
World with - out end, 7 with - out end. A - men.

As it was in the be - gin - ning, is now and ev - er shall be. A - men.

\* **Sharing the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

*(We share peace with a nod or a bow, perhaps with hand on heart or folded hands, or with the ASL sign for peace. If worshipping from home, greet each other by sending a text, a wave or comment on Facebook or YouTube.)*

\* **Response of Peace AAHH 568** (*singing together*)

Sandra A. Taybron

The musical score is written on three staves in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "I will do a new thing in you; I will do a new thing in you; What - ev - er you ask for, what - ev - er you pray for, noth-ing shall be de-nied," sa-ith the Lord; sa-ith the Lord! Lord! The score includes first and second endings for the final phrase.

**Words of Welcome**

*Newcomers please leave us your address and contact information on the Visitor Card in the pew rack! Place the Visitor Card in the offering plate.*

**ENCOUNTER**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**First Lesson:** Psalm 37:1-11

- <sup>1</sup>Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers,
- <sup>2</sup>for they will soon fade like the grass, and wither like the green herb.
- <sup>3</sup>Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.
- <sup>4</sup>Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.
- <sup>5</sup>Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.
- <sup>6</sup>He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday.
- <sup>7</sup>Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.
- <sup>8</sup>Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
- <sup>9</sup>For the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.
- <sup>10</sup>Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.
- <sup>11</sup>But the meek shall inherit the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

The Word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Children's Prayer and The Lord's Prayer**

*Afterwards, children ages 4-7 may go with Ms. Kathy Moore to Godly Play.*

*Parents can pick up their children following worship.*

*Older children, grades 2-5, may go with Ms. Virginia Callegary to The Worship Bridge. They will return to the sanctuary later in the worship service.*

*(It is the church's policy to not put images of children on the livestream.)*

**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.**

### **Second Lesson: Luke 6:27-38**

<sup>27</sup>“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup>If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. <sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup>Do to others as you would have them do to you. <sup>32</sup>“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup>If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup>If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. <sup>35</sup>But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. <sup>36</sup>Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

<sup>37</sup>“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup>give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

For the Word of God in Scripture,  
For the Word of God among us,  
For the Word of God within us,

**Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon**

Absolutely Relevant

*Kenneth Page*

*(after the sermon, we observe a time of silence and prayer)*

## RESPOND AND SERVE

### \* Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God, whose love we know  
in the beauty of his world,  
in daily bread,  
in the kindness of human hearts,  
and most clearly in Jesus of Nazareth.

We believe that Jesus is the Christ, whose touch of grace  
makes our eyes to see,  
our ears to hear,  
strengthens us to do all things in him,  
and delivers us from death to life.

We believe in the Holy Spirit  
in whose power there is peace,  
in whose presence there is joy,  
and in whose promise we dare to be more.

### \* Hymn 792

There Is a Balm in Gilead  
*(see next page for hymn)*

*Balm in Gilead*

## There Is a Balm in Gilead 792

*Refrain*

There is a balm in Gil-e-ad to make the wound-ed whole;

*Fine*

there is a balm in Gil-e-ad to heal the sin-sick soul.

1 Some-times I feel dis-cour-aged, and think my work's in vain, but  
 2 Don't ev - er feel dis-cour-aged, for Je-sus is your friend, and  
 3 If you can-not preach like Pe - ter, if you can-not pray like Paul, you can

*to Refrain*

then the Ho-ly Spir - it re-vives my soul a - gain. There is a  
 if you lack for knowl-edge, he'll not re-fuse to lend. There is a  
 tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all." There is a

This African American spiritual offers a long-delayed answer to the prophet Jeremiah's question, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" (Jeremiah 8:22). No earthly remedy can compare with the healing that comes from a sense of God's presence; nothing else can heal "the sin-sick soul."

## Concerns and Remembrances

### Prayers of Gratitude and Concern

#### Concluding Prayer *(together)*

God of grace, we offer our gratitude for all those who have given us the gift of new life. We thank you for those who have let us trust their faith when ours was full of doubts. We thank you for those who have been a beacon of hope when we were hopeless. We are grateful for those who have shown us a light when we were surrounded in darkness. For all those we name in our hearts who have sowed your grace and kindness and love in our lives, we offer profound gratitude. In these moments of prayer, we ask that you would help us do likewise. You have lavished your love upon us, O God; let our lives reflect your love through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

#### The Offering

##### Offertory Anthem

My Lord, What a Morning  
The Handbell Choir

*Traditional, arr. Karissa Dennis*

#### \* Doxology AAHH 172 *(singing together)*

*Donnie Harper, arr. By Stephen Key*

Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him!  
Glo - ry! Glo - ry! In all things give Him glo - ry.

Je - sus, bless-ed Sav - ior He's wor-thy to be praised.

Verse 1  
1. From the ris - ing of the sun un - til the go - ing down of the

same, He's wor - thy, Je - sus is wor - thy, He's wor - thy to be praised. **D.C.**

#### \* Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication



# SEND AND BLESS

**This Week at First Presbyterian Church**

**Moment for Mission**

March Food Drive for HCC

**Moment for Mission**

PNC

\* **Hymn 246**

Christ Is Alive!  
*(see next page for hymn)*

*Truro*



# Christ Is Alive!

246

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. The cross stands  
 2 Christ is a - live! No lon - ger bound to dis - tant  
 3 In ev - ery in - sult, rift, and war where col - or,  
 4 Wom - en and men, in age and youth, can feel the  
 5 Christ is a - live, and comes to bring good news to

emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with  
 years in Pal - es - tine, but sav - ing, heal - ing,  
 scorn, or wealth di - vide, Christ suf - fers still, yet  
 Spir - it, hear the call, and find the way, the  
 this and ev - ery age, till earth and sky and

prais - es ring. Love, drowned in death, shall nev - er die.  
 here and now, and touch - ing ev - ery place and time.  
 loves the more, and lives, where e - ven hope has died.  
 life, the truth, re - vealed in Je - sus, freed for all.  
 o - cean ring with joy, with jus - tice, love, and praise.

In 1968 Easter fell ten days after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and this text was written to express an Easter hope while mindful of that terrible event. Buoyed by a triple-arched tune, it affirms the presence of a wounded, risen Christ with all who suffer.

\* **Benediction**

\* **Response #834** *(singing together)*

*Precious Lord*

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand; lead me on, help me

The first system of music consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is primarily in the bass clef, with some chords in the treble clef.

stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.

The second system continues the melody from the first system. It features a more active bass line with eighth and sixteenth notes, and some chords in the treble clef.

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the

The third system continues the melody. The bass line remains active with eighth notes, while the treble clef provides harmonic support with chords.

light; take my hand, pre-cious Lord, lead me home.

The fourth system concludes the piece. The melody in the bass clef ends with a final chord in the treble clef.

**Postlude**

**I'm Gonna Sing/Ain-a-That Good News**

*Traditional, arr. L. Shackley*



## WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in the worship, education, mission and common life of First Church.*

### During Today's Worship

**If your infant or child needs care** during the worship service, you may leave the Sanctuary and return as you wish. Child care for infants and children under four years old is available all morning. We have a texting system to alert you if you are needed while in the worship service. The ushers will be glad to help you.

Flash photography during worship is not permitted. Please, no food or drink in the Sanctuary.

### If you are new to First Presbyterian Church

**Communion** is served on the first Sunday of each month.

**Disabled persons entrance** is through the Main Entrance in the rear of the building.

**We invite you to become a member** of First Presbyterian Church. Please speak with Pastor Ken or call the church office to set a time to meet.

### Interested in the mission and activities of First Presbyterian Church?

Visit the church's website, [www.firstpreshc.org](http://www.firstpreshc.org) for more info.

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## The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County

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*Ministers: All members of the congregation*

Kenneth Page, Interim Pastor  
Virginia Callegary, Director of Christian Education  
Dr. Margaret McGillivray, Director of Music Ministries  
Megan Bondhus, Church Administrator  
Pat Travers, Bookkeeper  
Woodrow Collins, Church Sexton  
Kathy Moore, Godly Play Coordinator  
Marla Youkers, Nursery Coordinator  
Sarah Reinhardt, Nursery Assistant

The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County is a congregation of the Presbytery of Baltimore in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

✦ We are an Earth Care Congregation ✦

✦ We are a Matthew 25 Congregation ✦

*Inspirit Counseling Services at First Presbyterian Church*

Meredith Barger 410-433-8861 x104 | John Michalczyk 410-433-8861 x115

