

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ABERDEEN

October 29, 2023 at 10 am

*"Saul [Paul] is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings,  
as well as to the people of Israel." (Acts 9:15)*

## PRELUDE

## WELCOME

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### HYMN #260: "A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD"

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A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;  
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:  
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:  
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;  
Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us:  
The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,  
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth:  
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;  
The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still,  
His kingdom is forever.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS, PASSING THE PEACE, PRAYERS FOR THE CONGREGATION

### CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

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In love and joy God calls us together.

**And so we meet on this day that the Lord has made  
as friends, as neighbors, as sisters and brothers in Christ.**

Called together by God, we bring our offerings to God:

**Our songs, our prayers, our minds, our hearts, our lives.**

Grateful for this opportunity to give and receive,  
let us worship God.

\* *Please stand if you are able*

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**HYMN #485: "TO GOD BE THE GLORY"**

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To God be the glory, great things He hath done!  
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,  
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,  
And opened the life gate that all may go in.

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
Let the earth hear His voice!  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
Let the people rejoice!*

*O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,  
And give Him the glory: great things He hath done.*

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,  
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;  
But purer, and higher, and greater will be  
Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see. *[Refrain]*

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**PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON (unison)**

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**Loving and Gracious God:  
We come to you today only too aware of:  
your glory and our failure to notice and care,  
your holiness and our fallenness,  
your perfection and our sinfulness.**

**Forgive us:  
for failing to notice you,  
for failing to care for your creation as you call us to,  
for our daily failure to obey you,  
for failing to live as fully committed disciples of Jesus.**

**Draw us, Lord, to yourself.  
Give us a vision for life connected to you—  
a life that encompasses our whole being.**

**Thank you for your love for us,  
your grace toward us,  
your salvation through Christ, our Savior and Lord,  
in whose name we pray,  
Amen.**

*After corporate prayer we will have a few moments of silence for personal confession.*

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**"IN CHRIST ALONE"**

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In Christ alone my hope is found;  
He is my light, my strength, my song.  
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground:  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.  
What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease:

My Comforter, my All in All,  
Here in the love of Christ I stand.  
In Christ alone who took on flesh,  
Fullness of God in helpless babe.  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
Scorned by the ones He came to save.  
Till on that cross as Jesus died,  
The wrath of God was satisfied,  
For every sin on Him was laid,  
Here in the death of Christ I live.  
There in the ground His body lay,  
Light of the world by darkness slain.  
Then bursting forth in glorious Day,  
Up from the grave He rose again.  
And as He stands in victory,  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,  
For I am His and He is mine,  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

## THE READING AND PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE

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Sermon: *"A Man and a Mission"*

### Acts 9:1-30

Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's disciples. So he went to the high priest.<sup>2</sup> He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.

<sup>3</sup> As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him.<sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"

<sup>5</sup> "Who are you, lord?" Saul asked.

And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!"<sup>6</sup> Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

<sup>7</sup> The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone's voice but saw no one!<sup>8</sup> Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus.<sup>9</sup> He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink.

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord!" he replied.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord said, "Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now.<sup>12</sup> I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again."

<sup>13</sup> “But Lord,” exclaimed Ananias, “I’ve heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! <sup>14</sup> And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name.”

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said, “Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. <sup>16</sup> And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name’s sake.”

<sup>17</sup> So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” <sup>18</sup> Instantly something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. <sup>19</sup> Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength.

Saul stayed with the disciples in Damascus for a few days. <sup>20</sup> And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is indeed the Son of God!”

<sup>21</sup> All who heard him were amazed. “Isn’t this the same man who caused such devastation among Jesus’ followers in Jerusalem?” they asked. “And didn’t he come here to arrest them and take them in chains to the leading priests?”

<sup>22</sup> Saul’s preaching became more and more powerful, and the Jews in Damascus couldn’t refute his proofs that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. <sup>23</sup> After a while some of the Jews plotted together to kill him. <sup>24</sup> They were watching for him day and night at the city gate so they could murder him, but Saul was told about their plot. <sup>25</sup> So during the night, some of the other believers lowered him in a large basket through an opening in the city wall.

<sup>26</sup> When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the disciples, but they were all afraid of him. They did not believe he had truly become a disciple! <sup>27</sup> Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus and how the Lord had spoken to Saul. He also told them that Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in Damascus.

<sup>28</sup> So Saul stayed with the apostles and went all around Jerusalem with them, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. <sup>29</sup> He debated with some Greek-speaking Jews, but they tried to murder him. <sup>30</sup> When the believers heard about this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus, his hometown.

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## **WE RESPOND TO GOD’S LOVE WITH OUR OFFERINGS**

*The metal basket in the offering plate is for gifts to support our deacons’ provision of care, support, and financial assistance to those in need.*

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### **DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts;  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER**

\* *Please stand if you are able*

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***"JESUS, ALL FOR JESUS"***

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Jesus, all for Jesus,  
All I am, and have, and ever hope to be;  
Jesus, all for Jesus,  
All I am, and have, and ever hope to be.  
All of my ambitions, hopes, and plans,  
I surrender these into Your hands;  
All of my ambitions, hopes, and plans,  
I surrender these into Your hands.  
*For it's only in Your will that I am free;  
For it's only in Your will that I am free.*

*(x2)*

Jesus, all for Jesus,  
All I am, and have, and ever hope to be.

*"Jesus, All for Jesus" by Jennifer Atkinson and Robin Mark.  
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**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

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Office Hours: 10 am – 2 pm (Monday, Wednesday – Friday)

WEBSITE: ABERDEENPRES.ORG

### CALENDAR

- TODAY** Sharing Table (before and after the service)
- Tuesday, Oct 31** Tuesday Crew (9:00–11:30)  
Worship at Channel Point (10:30)
- Wednesday, Oct 25** *Jesus (and the Gospels) in 3D*  
Coffee and Study (1:00 pm)  
Soup and Study (6:00 for a meal together; study at 6:30)
- Next Sunday, Nov 5** Choir Practice (9:00 in Parlor)  
Communion (10:00 worship service)
- Save the Date** Sunday, Nov 19: Thanksgiving Potluck after the service  
Saturday, Dec 8: Christmas Open House (6:30 pm)