

Worship at First Presbyterian Church
Sunday, February 2, 2025 at 10 am

*"This is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)*

PRELUDE

WELCOME

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HYMN #379: *MY HOPE IS BUILT ON NOTHING LESS*

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

*On Christ, the solid Rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.*

When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil. *[Refrain]*

His oath, His covenant, His blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay. *[Refrain]*

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh may I then in Him be found,
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne. *[Refrain]*

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRAYERS FOR THE CONGREGATION AND THE WORLD

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

God showed how much he loved us
by sending his one and only Son into the world
so that we might have eternal life through him.

**This is real love—not that we loved God,
but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.**

We know how much God loves us,
and we have put our trust in his love.

**God is love, and all who live in love live in God,
and God lives in them.**

We love each other because he loved us first.

All praise to God, the Father who loves us,
and to the Lord Jesus Christ who gave his life for us.
By God's great mercy we have been born again.

Based on 1 John 4:9–10, 16, 19, and 1 Peter 1:3.

CHOIR: WE THE PEOPLE OF GOD

READING AND PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Sermon: *"God's Love and a Rebirth from Above"*

John 3:1–21

There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee.

² After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you."

³ Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

⁴ "What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?"

⁵ Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. ⁷ So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

⁹ "How are these things possible?" Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰ Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things? ¹¹ I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. ¹² But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

¹⁸ "There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. ¹⁹ And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. ²⁰ All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. ²¹ But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants."

RESPONDING 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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"HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US"

How deep the Father's love for us
 How vast beyond all measure
 That He should give His only Son
 To make a wretch His treasure
 How great the pain of searing loss
 The Father turns His face away
 As wounds which mar the Chosen One
 Bring many sons to glory.

Behold the Man upon a cross
 My sin upon His shoulders
 Ashamed I hear my mocking voice
 Call out among the scoffers
 It was my sin that held Him there
 Until it was accomplished
 His dying breath has brought me life
 I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything
 No gifts no pow'r no wisdom
 But I will boast in Jesus Christ
 His death and resurrection
 Why should I gain from His reward
 I cannot give an answer
 But this I know with all my heart
 His wounds have paid my ransom.

*"How Deep the Father's Love for Us" by Stuart Townend,
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PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON (unison)

**Awesome and compassionate God,
 you have loved us with unfailing, self-giving mercy,
 but we have not always loved you in return.**

You constantly call us, but too often we do not listen.

**You ask us to love,
 but it's so easy to walk away from neighbors in need,
 wrapped in our own concerns.**

**We so easily ignore or condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed.
 We are sinners in need of your forgiveness.**

**God of grace, as you come to us in mercy,
 we admit our sin,
 we repent in spirit and in truth,
 and now we gratefully request your forgiveness
 that we might live as those born anew into your wonderful eternal life.**

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

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Our practice is to eat the bread individually as it is distributed,
and to hold onto the cup until all have received it, and then partake of it in unison.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

Passing the Peace: "May the peace of Christ be with you"

Communion

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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HYMN #371: LIFT HIGH THE CROSS

*Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
Till all the world adore His sacred name.*

Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod,
The Lamb victorious, Christ, the Son of God. *[Refrain]*

Each newborn servant of the Crucified
Bears on the brow the seal of Christ who died. *[Refrain]*

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
Your death has brought us life eternally. *[Refrain]*

So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the Crucified for victory. *[Refrain]*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

CALENDAR

- TODAY** Choir Practice (9:00 in the Parlor)
 Sunday Worship with Communion (10:00 in the Sanctuary)
 Caring Hearts (after the service, in the parlor)
- Tuesday, Feb. 4** Tuesday Crew (9:00–11:30)
 Worship at Channel Point (10:30)
- Wednesday, Feb. 5** Quilting Group (10:30–2:30)
- Saturday, Feb. 8** Creation Station (11:00 – 1:00)
- Sunday, Feb. 9** Sunday Worship (10:00 in the Sanctuary)
 Potluck (after the service)
 Youth Group (3:00 pm)

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