



FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

695 E. Calvin Street, Fayetteville, AR 72703 • (479) 442-4411 • www.fupcfay.org

March 23, 2025

10:30 a.m.

GATHERING

(Please use this time to prepare reflectively for worship.)

RINGING OF THE BELL

Bo Morton and Lindley Ramsey

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Stewart Smith

PRELUDE

The Church's One Foundation

Xiao Yang, organ

Music by Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864; Arranged by James Mansfield

LENTEN DRAMA

Dave Edmark and Aiden Thompson

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Amanda McDonald

Leader: Lord God, be with us this Sabbath day as we continue our Lenten journey.

People: As we hear Your Word and sing praises in song,

Leader: May we celebrate and give thanks for God's wondrous mercies.

People: As we share in fellowship and focus in prayer,

Leader: May we grow in discipleship and come to know the hope and promise,

People: Of the cross of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Leader: Prepare us now for this time of worship,

People: And may the power and promise of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us.

Unison: Let us worship the living and loving God!

*HYMN #415

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

Glory to God

Words by Joseph Hart, 1759; Music: Walker's *Southern Harmony*, 1835

**Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity, love, and power.**

[Refrain] **I will arise and go to Jesus; he will embrace me in his arms.
In the arms of my dear Savior, O there are ten thousand charms.**

**Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome; God's free bounty glorify,
true belief and true repentance, every grace that brings you nigh. [Refrain]**

**Come, ye weary, heavy laden, lost and ruined by the fall;
if you tarry till you're better, you will never come at all. [Refrain]**

**Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream;
all the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of him. [Refrain]**

LENTEN SYMBOL AND REFLECTION

The Fourth Sunday of Lent – The Crown of Thorns

(Lenten liturgies written by Rev. Dr. David Jones, minister, Presbyterian Church of Canada)

Leader: Today is the third Sunday of Lent. Lent is a time of solemn remembrance and reflection.

People: It is a time to share our faith and to recall the Gospels' accounts of our Lord's last days.

Leader: There is within each of us a desire for power and a longing for prestige.

People: We sometimes make ourselves out to be people we are not.

Leader: All too often we live like we know what we are doing, when we really don't know. We try to be seen, more than we try to see.

People: We hope for the limelight, more than we hope for the light of Christ.

Leader: We pause today to focus on the crown of thorns that was mockingly placed on the head of Jesus.

People: As the crowd stood by and watched they could see His innocence in His eyes.

Leader: And while the pain that Jesus endured is beyond our ability to explain, we remember the honor of His anguish.

People: It is an honor that we, too, hope in faithfulness to achieve as we take up our cross and follow Him.

Leader: Hear now these words from the gospel of Mark:

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

—Mark 15:16-20

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*seated, unison*)

Holy God, we give thanks to You for this Lenten season. It is a much-needed time to concentrate more fully on strengthening our relationship with You. We confess the lack of zeal with which we often approach this relationship. We confess the times when our love of the activities of this world overrides our love of spending time with You. We confess the ways we shut You out of our lives. Help us to resolve anew to grow in our desire to be close to You, for the sake of Christ's work on earth..... (*silent confession*) Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

*RESPONSE #71 (verses 1 and 2)

Surely, It Is God Who Saves Me

Glory to God

Words: The Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer, 1976; Music by Jack Noble White

[Refrain] Surely it is God who saves me; I will trust and not be afraid.

For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and God will be my Savior.

Therefore, you shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation and on that day you shall say, "Give thanks to the Lord and call upon God's name." [Refrain]

Make God's deeds known among the peoples; see that they remember that the Lord is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for God has done great things and this is known in all the world. [Refrain]

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you! And also, with you.

CHILDREN'S SONG #2233

Where Children Belong

Sing the Faith

Words and Music by James Ritchie

This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshiping throng.
Water, God's Word, bread and cup, prayer, and song: this is where children belong.

ANTHEM*Grace*

Chancel Choir

Words by John Newton (adapted); Early American Melody

Xiao Yang, piano

Arranged by Mark Hayes

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound; that saved a wretch, a wretch like me;
 I once was lost, but now am found; I once was blind, but now I see.
 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and that same grace my fear relieved;
 How precious did that grace appear the hour when I first believed!
 Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already safely come;
 this grace hath brought me safe thus far,
 and surely grace will lead me home, I shall go home.
 When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the glorious sun,
 we've no less days to sing God's praise than since the day we first begun.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION****SCRIPTURE READING**

Acts 9:1-20

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶ But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." ⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank. ¹⁰ Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹ The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." ¹³ But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; ¹⁶ I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." ¹⁷ So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, ²⁰ and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

SERMON*The Road to Damascus*

Rev. Stewart Smith

RESPONSE TO THE WORD**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS****OFFERTORY**

Voluntary II: Moderato in G Major
 Music by William Boyce (1711-1799)

Xiao Yang, organ

***RESPONSE 634**

To God Be the Glory

Glory to God

Words by Fanny Jane Crosby; Music by William Howard Doane

**To God be the glory; great things he has 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.**

[Refrain] **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 has done!**

**Great things he has taught us; great things he has 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]**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (From "A Declaration of Faith", Chapter 5- Section 7—PCUSA)

The Spirit created readiness for the gospel where the first Christians least expected it.

The Spirit often thwarted their plans and led them in new directions.

They could not coerce or restrict the Spirit. We affirm the Spirit's freedom.

The Holy Spirit works in the church but not on our terms or under our control.

The Holy Spirit works beyond the church even among those we suspect or scorn. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Amanda McDonald

God, in your grace. **You hear our prayers.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

SENDING

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

***HYMN 182 (verses 1 and 2)**

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

Glory to God

Words by Horatius Bonar; Music: *English County Songs*; Harmony by Ralph Vaughan Williams

**I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one lay down your head upon my breast."**

I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn, and sad;

I found in him a resting place, and he has made me glad.

**I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold, I freely give
the living water, thirsty one; stoop down and drink and live."**

I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream;

my thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in him.

***BENEDICTION**

Participants

Greeters – Jo and Ernie Rothrock

Interim Senior Pastor – Rev. Stewart Smith

Minister of Music/Commissioned Ruling Elder – Isaac Thomas

Choral Interns - Cole Jackson, Jeffrey Kerst, Isabelle Pennick, Verna Labitad, and Will Trotter-Wright

Audio/Visual Team - Christopher Verdery, Connor Button, and Drew Parker

Worship Band: Rob Button, Dennis Brewer, Don Steinkraus, Jeffrey Kerst, Will Sullivan

Director of Christian Education - Kristi Button

Director of Youth and Young Adults Ministries - Amanda McDonald

Membership Coordinator – Amy McCann

Childcare Coordinator – Lee Pendley

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