

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fort Oglethorpe, Ga. | www.FPFO.org | 706.866.2521 | 1 Harker Road

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP | THE LORD'S DAY | DECEMBER 25, 2022 | 10:45 A.M.

The Announcements

Please submit your prayer requests and/or record your attendance at worship with us:



The Prelude

*The Call to Worship

*The Hymn of Praise No. 208 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

*The Prayer of Adoration

The Presentation of New Member: Robert Bowdoin

- + Biblical Explanation
- + Vows of Membership
- + Prayer
- + Benediction

*The Confession of Faith The Heidelberg Catechism Nos. 48-49

Q. If his humanity is not present wherever his divinity is, then aren't the two natures of Christ separated from each other?

A. *Certainly not. Since divinity is not limited and is present everywhere, it is evident that Christ's divinity is surely beyond the bounds of the humanity that has been taken on, but at the same time his divinity is in and remains personally united to his humanity.*

Q. How does Christ's ascension to heaven benefit us?

A. *First, he is our advocate in heaven in the presence of his Father. Second, we have our own flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that Christ our head will also take us, his members, up to himself. Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth as a corresponding pledge. By the Spirit's power we seek not earthly things but the things above, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.*

O Come, All Ye Faithful

208

Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about. Luke 2:15

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant,
 2. God of God, Light of Light;
 3. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing:

O come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem; come and be - hold him
 lo, he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb: ver - y God, be -
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove; glo - ry to God
 Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry giv'n; Word of the Fa - ther,

REFRAIN

born the King of an - gels;
 got - ten, not cre - a - ted; O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let
 in the high - est;
 late in flesh ap - pear - ing;

us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

~ God Calls His People to Confess Their Sins ~

The Law of GodExodus 20:1–2, 17

And God spoke all these words, saying, “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery...You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s

The Confession of Sin

Our God and our Holy Father, every good and perfect gift comes from above. And you have graciously poured out more than we can imagine.

Our first parents coveted the forbidden fruit and they coveted the exalted wisdom and stature of God. We are just like our first parents. We are prone to be dissatisfied with our possessions, with our spouses, with our coworkers, with our friends, with our bodies and with our allotted situations in life. So we envy the situations of others, and we grumble at the good that they enjoy.

We fill our minds with the things that we do not have, instead of gratefully living in the grace of what we have been given.

Lord, we lack contentment! We need your grace, in order that we might turn away from the idolatry of our covetous hearts. Renew us by the power of your gracious Spirit and conform us to the righteous image of Christ. All to the praise of your glorious grace through Jesus Christ.

The Silent Confession

~ God Assures His People of His Covenant Mercies ~

The Assurance of PardonPsalm 68:19–20

Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation. Our God is a God of salvation, and to GOD, the Lord, belong deliverances from death.

~ God Assures His People of His Covenant Mercies ~

~ We Respond to God’s Grace with Offerings of Ourselves and Our Needs ~

***The Psalm of Thanksgiving No. 103“Come, My Soul, and Bless the LORD”**

The Encouragement to Give.....1 Corinthians 16:2

On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper.

The Great PrayerPastor Ryan Biese

***The Hymn No. 203“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

1. ¹Come, my soul, and bless the LORD, all with - in me bless his name!
 2. He will crown you with his love, with his ten - der mer - cies true,
 3. ⁸For the LORD is slow to wrath, full of mer - cy, full of grace.
 4. ¹¹As the heav'ns are high a - bove all the earth which God has made,

²Come, my soul, and bless the LORD; and for - get not all his grace:
⁵and he fills your life with good; like the ea - gle, youth re - news.
 He a - bounds in stead - fast love, ⁹will not chide for end - less days.
 so to those who fear the LORD is his lov - ing - kind - ness great.

³all your sins the LORD for - gives, all your sick - ness - es he heals.
⁶God, the righ - teous judge, de - fends all op - pressed and bro - ken ones,
 God will not re - tain his wrath, ¹⁰he will not re - pay our sins;
¹²Far as east is from the west, he re - moves so far from us,

⁴He re - deems you from the pit; his com - pas - sion he re - veals.
⁷show - ing Mo - ses all his ways and his deeds to Is - r'el's sons.
 he will nev - er deal with us as our wick - ed - ness de - mands.
 in his great, a - bound - ing love, all our guilt and wick - ed - ness.

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

A great company of the heavenly host [was] praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." Luke 2:13, 14

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righ - teous - ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
Late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,

with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec - ond birth.

REFRAIN

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King."

SERMON NOTES

I. Introduction

II. Main Argument

A. Shepherds (vv. 8-9)

1. First to Hear (vv. 8-9):

a. Why is it strange that shepherds would be the first to hear?

b. How does this announcement set in motion what Mary anticipated her Son’s work in exalting the humble and bringing down the lofty?

2. Messenger (v. 9)

a. What does the word *angel* mean?

b. How does this announcement vividly fulfill what Isaiah foretold?

B. Announcement (vv. 10-12)

1. Grace (v. 10)

a. What obstacle prevented the shepherds from understanding the message of the angel?

b. What are the usual responses of humans to angels in the Scripture?

c. Why are the shepherds filled with fear?

d. **Application: *The angelic announcement illustrates the gospel message.***

2. A Birth in David’s City (v. 11a)

a. In what sense is it indeed fitting the shepherds are the first to come and worship the newborn Saviour?

b. Joy for all the people

3. Significance of the Birth (v. 11b)
 - a. Why is birth in the *city of David* significant?
 - b. What is God's *hesed* or his *covenant love and faithfulness*?
 - c. Saviour: How does this speak of the cost of God's faithfulness?
 - d. Christ
 - e. The Lord
4. Sign (v. 12): What is remarkable about where the child is?

C. Praise (vv. 13-14)

1. Function

2. Content

a. Glory to God

1) Why do the angels rejoice?

2) **Application: *Spiritual ignorance and darkness result in an inability to enter into the joy of the angels.***

b. Peace on Earth: How is peace restored between God and man?

c. God's Elect: *Those with whom He is pleased...*

III. Conclusion

*The Hymn of Commitment No. 195 "Joy to the World!"

*The Benediction

*The Response No. 735 "The Gloria Patri"

Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Ps. 98:4

♩ D A⁷ D G A

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth re - ceive her
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns: let men their songs em -
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions

D 7

King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 ploy; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

A

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heav'n and na - ture sing,

♩ D D/A A⁷ and D 7

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.
 heav'n and na - ture sing,

Based on Psalm 98
 Isaac Watts, 1719

ANTIOCH C.M.rep.
 George Frederick Handel, 1742
 Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1836

Public Worship: *the foundation of a godly life* | By Pastor Ryan Biese

Historic Reformed Christianity is centered primarily in the Church where God meets with His people in the ordinary means of grace (the word, sacraments, and prayer) and in public worship particularly. This is in contrast to more modern forms of spirituality centered in the individual (e.g. personal experience and devotions).

Reformed Christianity does not neglect the value of private worship, but rather daily family and private worship enrich and prepare us for public worship. During the week, we look back on the last Lord's Day and look forward as we anticipate and prepare for the next Lord's Day with God and His people because the Church and public worship are vital to communion with God and a healthy Christian life.

I. Many Members, yet One Body

In public worship, we have a glimpse of the unity all God's people share in Christ as God's people unite our hearts and minds, voices and words, in the praise of God along with the rest of the congregation through the prayers, songs, and creeds.

While God's people have been in His Word throughout the week in private and family worship, in public worship we not only proclaim but, in a small way, tangibly picture the unity of the body of Christ, which will be made manifest fully only in the New Creation. That is why public worship is the best and most glorious worship of all because it is there the people of God gather and approach their Father together to speak to Him in prayer and to hear Him speaking in the Word and Sacraments.

The Apostle Paul emphasized this in his instructions to Timothy:

Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the presbytery laid their hands on you. (1 Tim. 4:13–14)

The core of Timothy's ministry as a pastor was to be none other than the public reading and preaching of the Scripture.

II. Many Elements, yet One Worship Service

Our *Book of Church Order* reminds us: "A service of public worship is not merely a gathering of God's children with each other, but before all else, a meeting of the triune God with His chosen people." The structure of Reformed worship reflects this.

Historically, Reformed worship features a covenantal liturgy in which God's people dialogue with Him. For example, at FPFO, God calls us to worship, we praise Him.

We confess our faith in God, God confronts us with what He requires, we confess our sin against God, and God assures us of His pardon and covenant mercies.

We respond in praise and thanks to Him in song and then by offering monetary gifts to His church and then in prayer we offer our needs and concerns to Him.

The climax of Reformed worship is when God speaks to His people through the reading and preaching of His word. In the reading and preaching of Scripture, God is

proclaimed before the people: who He is and what He is done, as Christ is set before us in all the glory of His law and gospel.

The preaching of Scripture is followed by the Lord's Supper. The Supper is a visible word that speaks to Christ's commitment to His people. In coming to the Lord's Table, God's people are responding to His word, especially in the preaching, regarding their need of His grace and mercy, which are signified and sealed at the Lord's Table.

Each element of a Reformed worship service works together. Reformed worship is not simply a lecture preceded by a few hymns and preliminary exercises. Nor is Reformed worship a concert followed by a pep talk or a TED Talk. Reformed worship is God meeting with His people, speaking with and to His people, and blessing them in the means of grace. Thus there is unity in the elements of worship as they build upon one another and culminate in God making Himself known to His people in the public reading and preaching of Scripture.

This is why it is so vitally important to be present and actively involved in the whole of the worship service. We trust that the Holy Spirit makes use of all the means of grace in the elements of the worship, so we ought to seek Him diligently in them.

III. Two Elements, One Supper

The whole of the worship service culminates in the preaching of the Word, and our first response to the Word is to commune with and feed upon Christ by faith at His table in the bread and wine. Both elements of the Supper are vital to communing with Christ at the table, which was one of the key issues in the Reformation.

We do not fully understand the Lord's Supper, but it is nonetheless a means by which God communicates His grace toward us. In the bread, Christ's broken body is signified and sealed, and Christ testifies of His purpose and ability to sustain His people forever. In the wine, Christ's blood shed for us is signified and sealed unto us even as He testifies to the joy and abundance we have now as we await the fullness at His return. By His Spirit, Christ uses both elements in the Supper to nourish the faith of His people in this sacred meal.

The Apostle Paul instructs us that we are to come to the Lord's Table prepared, having examined ourselves and able to discern by faith the Lord's Body. Our Catechism (WSC 97) provides an outline to help guide this self examination, but the preparation for the Lord's Supper does not end with the call to worship, but all of the elements of the worship service are part of that vital preparation.

Since the core of our preparation for the Supper is to examine ourselves to *discern the Lord's body*, it is fitting that preparation culminates within the context of worship with the Body of Christ. The unity of Christ with His people is nowhere more clearly expressed than in public worship as His people unite under the means of grace to bless, praise, and thank our God while we commune with Him and His people.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR DECEMBER 25, 2022

- + Sunday school and Midweek activities are on break December 18-January 4, 2023.
- + The Lord's Supper will be observed as part of Morning Worship on January 1. A fellowship meal will follow morning worship next week. During morning worship, Miss Audrey Schoeffler will be baptized.
- + On Jan. 8, 2023 FPFO & MTW Missionary TE David Stoddard will be preaching in morning worship and giving an update on his work in Berlin in Sunday school.

Keep Up With the Worship & Work of the Church

- + Sign up for text message alerts and updates by texting *FPFO* to 84576.
- + To subscribe to the prayer list, please contact the church secretary: office@fpfo.org.
- + Contributions may be received by placing your offering in the plates, mailing a check to the church office, or online: [FPFO.org/give](https://fpfo.org/give).

Joint Worship at Cornerstone OPC 1813 Long Street, Chattanooga

December 25 | 6:00 p.m.

Pastor Ryan Biese, Preaching
Luke 2:28-25, "Simeon's Song"

FPFO Weekly Activities Schedule

The Lord's Day

9:30 a.m. Fellowship Time
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
10:45 a.m. Morning Worship
5:00 p.m. Sermon Broadcast
WAAK 94.7 FM
6:00 p.m. Evening Worship
(excluding First Sundays)

Wednesday

9:00 a.m. Ladies' Prayer Meeting
5:55 p.m. Covered-Dish Supper
6:45 p.m. Prayer Meeting
6:30-7:30 p.m. *KidsQuest* (children)
6:45-7:30 p.m. Classes & Studies
The Life of David (young men)
Gospel of John (young women)

Children are always welcome in worship, but a nursery is also available for children 3 and under.

Dec. 25: E. Tuggle & A. Wilson

Jan. 1: M. L. Wilson & A. Bowers