

Worship at First Presbyterian Church

Sunday, February 16, 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, PASSING THE PEACE, PRAYERS FOR THE CONGREGATION

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.

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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.

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HERE IS LOVE, VAST AS THE OCEAN

Here is love vast as the ocean,
Loving kindness as the flood;
When the Prince of Life, our ransom,
Shed for us His precious blood.
Who His love will not remember?
Who can cease to sing His praise?
He will never be forgotten,
Throughout heaven's eternal days.

On the mount of crucifixion,
Fountains opened deep and wide,
Through the floodgates of God's mercy,
Flowed a vast and gracious tide;
Grace and love like mighty rivers
Poured incessant from above,
Heaven's peace and perfect justice
Kissed a guilty world in love.

Let me all your love accepting,
Love you ever, all my days;
Let me seek your kingdom only
And my life be to your praise;
You alone will be my glory,
Nothing in the world I see;
You have cleansed and sanctified me,
You have loved and set me free.

*"Here is Love" by Robert Lowry, William Edwards, and William Rees,
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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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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 Spirit. 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	Sunday Worship (10:00 in the Sanctuary)
Tuesday, Feb. 18	Tuesday Crew (9:00–11:30) Worship at Channel Point (10:30) Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group (1:00 pm)
Wednesday, Feb. 19	Quilting Group (10:30–2:30)
Thursday, Feb. 20	Deacons' Meeting (2:00 pm) Session (7:00 pm)
Sunday, Feb. 23	Choir Practice (9:00 in the Parlor) Sunday Worship (10:00 in the Sanctuary)
LOOKING AHEAD	March 5: Ash Wednesday Service (6:00 supper, 6:30 service) March 12 – April 9: Lenten Study— <i>Friendly Faith</i> Coffee and Study (1:00 pm) Soup and Study (6:00 pm) March 30: Church Membership Information Meeting

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