

**EPIPHANY 3C**  
**January 26, 2025**



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**PERRY, FL**

# GATHERING

P -PR. RUTH ELSWOOD, L- LITURGIST, **BOLD -ALL**

**PRAYER** (TO BE PRAYED SILENTLY UPON ENTERING THE SANCTUARY)

We pray: **Eternal God, you have called us to be members of one body. Join us with those who in all times and places have praised your name, that, with one heart and mind, we may show the unity of your church, and bring honor to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**PRELUDE**      *“He is With Me”*                      John W. Peterson Arr. by Fred Bock

**INTROIT**      *“My Life is in You”*                      Words and Music by Daniel Gardner

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/PASSING OF FRIENDSHIP PADS/SESSION SHARING**

*We stand.*

## CALL TO WORSHIP

L      This day is holy to the Lord our God. **Let us come ready to see, hear, and experience the Word of God.**

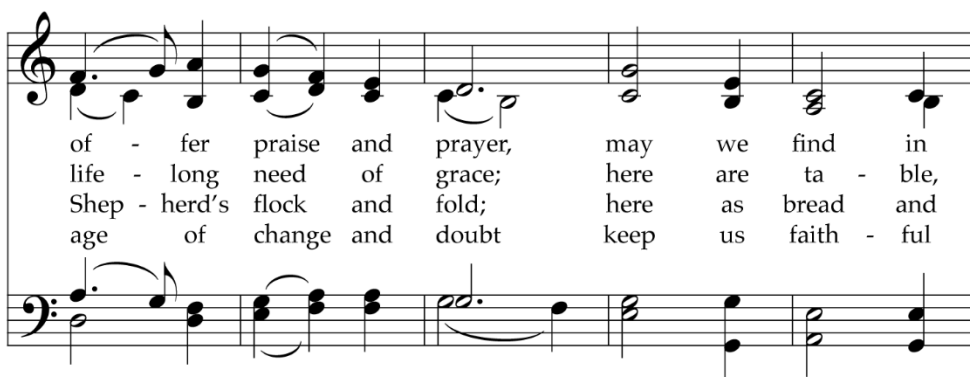
Let us come together to worship the God of joy, strength, and love. **The joy of the Lord is our strength.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

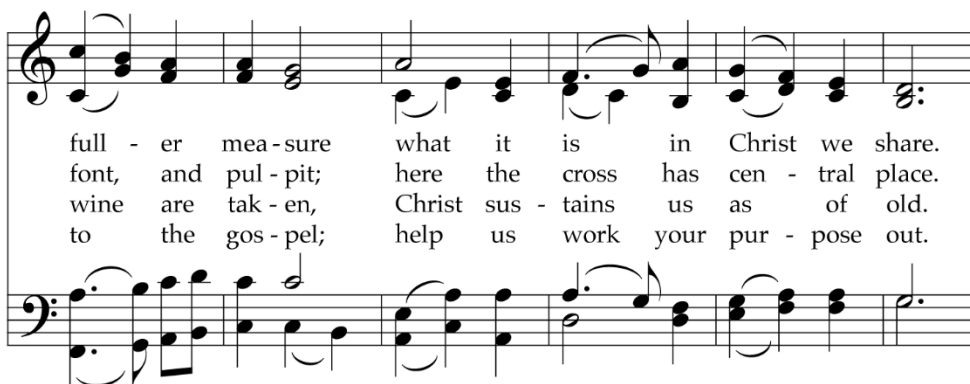
P      We pray: Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to  
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our  
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the  
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an



of - fer praise and prayer, may we find in  
 life - long need of grace; here are ta - ble,  
 Shep - herd's flock and fold; here as bread and  
 age of change and doubt keep us faith - ful



full - er mea - sure what it is in Christ we share.  
 font, and pul - pit; here the cross has cen - tral place.  
 wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.  
 to the gos - pel; help us work your pur - pose out.

## CALL TO CONFESSION

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life. **Amen.**

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*(silence for reflection)*

**Waiting God, change and challenge are always difficult. We are more inclined to turn our backs on opportunities of service than pitch in to affect the needed changes that will promote healing and wholeness. Forgive us when we give lip service to you and then slip into inaction. Give us courage to be willing disciples. Help us to be people of promise and hope. In Jesus' Name, we offer this prayer.**

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Jesus has opened the doors for service to each one of us. We have been freed from our fears and doubts. Rejoice! In Jesus' name, we are forgiven and healed. **Amen.**

## GLORIA PATRI

Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the  
Son, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the be -  
gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be,  
world with - out end. A - men, a - men.

## PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

L We pray: **Lord**, through your **Word** always make us alert, and by your **Word** strengthen us to stand before the Son of Man. Amen.

*We sit.*

**FIRST READING****Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10**

L 1 All the people [of Israel] gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. 2 Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. 3 He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. 8 So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. 10 Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**SECOND READING****1 Corinthians 12:12-31a**

L 12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many members, yet one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22 On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; 24 whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, 25 that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets,

third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31a But strive for the greater gifts.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*We Stand.*

## **GOSPEL**

**Luke 4:14-21**

P The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter:  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

4 Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. 15 He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

20 And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”



The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*We sit.*

**PSALM**                      **Psalm 19**      *(we say responsively by whole verse)*

P      <sup>1</sup> The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

<sup>2</sup> **Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.**

<sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;

<sup>4</sup> **yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,**

<sup>5</sup> which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

<sup>6</sup> **Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hidden from its heat.**

<sup>7</sup> The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple;

<sup>8</sup> **the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes;**

<sup>9</sup> the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

<sup>10</sup> **More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.**

11 Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

12 **But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults.**

13 Keep back your servant also from the insolent; do not let them have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.

14 **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.**

*We sit.*

**SERMON                      A Prayerful Psalm                      Pr. Ruth Elswood**

*We stand.*

**SERMON HYMN                      O, the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus!**

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system contains three verses of lyrics. The second system continues the lyrics. The music features various note values, rests, and triplets. The piano accompaniment is primarily block chords and simple rhythmic patterns.

1. O the deep, deep love of Je - sus! Vast, un - mea - sured,  
2. O the deep, deep love of Je - sus! Spread his praise from  
3. O the deep, deep love of Je - sus! Love of ev - 'ry

bound - less, free; roll - ing as a might - y o - cean  
shore to shore; how he lov - eth, ev - er lov - eth,  
love the best: 'tis an o - cean vast of bless - ing,

in its full-ness o - ver me. Un - der - neath me, all a - round me,  
 chang-eth nev - er, nev - er - more; how he watch-es o'er his loved ones,  
 'tis a ha - ven sweet of rest. O the deep, deep love of Je - sus!

is the cur - rent of thy love; lead - ing on - ward,  
 died to call them all his own; how for them he  
 'Tis a heav'n of heav'ns to me; and it lifts me

lead - ing home - ward, to thy glo - rious rest a - bove.  
 in - ter - ced - eth, watch - eth o'er them from the throne.  
 up to glo - ry, for it lifts me up to thee.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

L Let us confess the faith of our baptism, saying: **I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth**

on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the † resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

*We sit or stand.*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

L *(brief silence)* God of suffering service, grant to your church faithful leaders who have the hearts of servants, and who will gently lead your people into love for you and service to their neighbors. Hear us, O God; **your mercy is great.**

God of gentle justice, raise up servant leaders in every nation who will govern with truth and guide their people with fairness and equity. Hear us, O God; **your mercy is great.**

God of tender compassion, hear the cries of all who suffer and who are contending with sickness and disease especially those on our prayer list and those we name before you now, aloud upon our lips or silently within our hearts. *(pause)* Lay upon them your gentle hand of healing. Hear us, O God; **your mercy is great.**

God of all goodness, guide the work of our congregation, that a pervasive unity of purpose would guide all discernments, ministries, and missions. Hear us, O God; **your mercy is great.**

God of comforting hope, tend to those who are grieving, that their mourning may be tempered with joy. Bring us at length, with all our blessed dead, to the joy of your heavenly realm. Hear us, O God; **your mercy is great.**

P Holy One, we thank you for the gift of the Bible, for its psalms and poems, myths and stories, histories, teachings, and prophecies. May the Holy Spirit who called out those ancient writings continue to call us out today, that our lives may reflect the first sermon of Jesus, our crucified and risen Christ, who brings good news to the poor and lets the oppressed go free. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

L As Christ has taught us, so we boldly pray: **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.**

## **THE PEACE**

P The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

*We sit.*

## **OFFERTORY**

L With gladness, let us present the offering of our life and labor to the Lord.

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM** "*Assurance Medley*" Arr. by Russell Mauldin

## DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise \*him, all crea- tures  
here be- low; praise \*him a- bove, ye heaven-ly host; praise  
Fa- ther, Son, and Ho- ly Ghost. A- men.

*We stand.*

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

L God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. **Amen.**

## CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

P The Spirit of the triune God ✠ bless us with joy, anoint us with compassion, and send us in love. **Amen.**

*Refrain*

All things bright and beau-ti - ful, all crea-tures great and small,

all things wise and won - der - ful, the Lord God made them all.

1 Each lit - tle flower that o - pens, each lit - tle bird that sings,  
 2 The pur - ple - head - ed moun-tain, the riv - er run - ning by,  
 3 The cold wind in the win - ter, the pleas - ant sum - mer sun,  
 4 God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell

God made their glow - ing col - ors; God made their ti - ny wings.  
 the sun - set, and the morn - ing that bright - ens up the sky:  
 the ripe fruits in the gar - den, God made them ev - ery one.  
 how great is God Al - might - y, who has made all things well.

## DISMISSAL

L        Go in peace. Live in hope. **Amen.**

**POSTLUDE** *"I Just Keep Trusting My Lord"*        J.W. Peterson Arr. by F. Bock

**Leading Worship:** Rev. Pr. Ruth Elswood; Shona Whiddon, Liturgist; Leah Metzger, Accompanist & Director

## Notes & Announcements

- **Session** meeting Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm
- **Ushers** for February 2nd: Bobby Harper, Martha Davis, Mike Perrine, Marcy Fletcher, Robin Walker
- **Liturgist** for February 2nd: Amalia Barrett
- FPC **website** [www.firstpresperry.org](http://www.firstpresperry.org)
- Send **prayer requests** to [prayer@firstpresperry.org](mailto:prayer@firstpresperry.org) or contact Jeanne Hilgendorf

### Session Committee leaders

Administration-Bobby Harper, Michael McMillan

Christian Education-Martha Davis

Clerk-Cindy Brown

Congregational Care-Nancy Bell

Fellowship-Juanita Ratliff

Finance-Cindy Brown

Mission/Outreach-Jamie Poppell

Worship/Music-Marilyn Culpepper, Zachary Wiggins



## FPC PRAYER LIST

*TOGETHER, WE PRAY FOR:*

*CHUCK ECKEL*

*SANDI HILGENDORF*

*TEACHERS*

*MARGIE RAWLS*

*BLUE CREEK CHURCH*

*PRESBY BIBLE STUDIES AND*

*SUNDAY SCHOOL*

*SUPPER TEAMS*

*JOHN DAVID & HARRIET BRYANT*

*THE HOMELESS*

*HELBERG & MARNE'S SISTER*

*CULBREATH'S*

*CHERYL RICKETSON, REHAB*

*RITA BENOIT, OPTIONS*

*RON POPPELL, ONGOING*

*PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING FOR OUR CHURCH.*