

**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
**MARCH 5, 2025**



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

# GATHERING

P-PASTOR, L-LITURGIST, **BOLD-ALL**

## PRELUDE AND SILENT MEDITATION

*We rise.*

### PSALMODY | Psalm 51

*(We sing both verses of GTG 471 as our Psalm response)*

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.  
Or The Lord is my song; the Lord is my praise:

When I call, an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer. O  
all my hope comes from God. The Lord is my song; the

Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.  
Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

P <sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. <sup>4</sup> Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgement. <sup>5</sup> Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

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Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

<sup>6</sup> You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.<sup>7</sup> Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. <sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. <sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

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Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.  
Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

<sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.  
Or The Lord is my song; the Lord is my praise:

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all my hope comes from God. The Lord is my song; the

Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.  
Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

<sup>13</sup> Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup> Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

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Or The Lord is my song; the Lord is my praise:

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all my hope comes from God. The Lord is my song; the

Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.  
Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

<sup>15</sup> O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. <sup>16</sup> For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased. <sup>17</sup> The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.  
Or The Lord is my song; the Lord is my praise:

When I call, an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer. O  
all my hope comes from God. The Lord is my song; the

Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.  
Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

<sup>18</sup> Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,  
<sup>19</sup> then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

L We pray – Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the bread of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## WORD

*Be seated.*

### FIRST READING | Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

L Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, “Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

Holy Wisdom. **Holy Word.**

### SECOND READING | 2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10

L We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, “At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.” See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of



salvation! 3We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Holy Wisdom. **Holy Word.**

*We rise.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** (*sung 3 times*)



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

**GOSPEL READING | Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

P The Holy Gospel according to St Matthew the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. “So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. “And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. “And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

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

*Be seated.*

**SERMON “You already know” John David Bryant, Pastor**

*We rise.*

**HYMN**

**'Lord, Who Throughout these Forty Days'**

**GTG 166**

1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us did fast and  
2 As you with Sa - tan did con-tend and did the vic-tory  
3 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through this Pas-sion-  
4 A - bide with us, till when this life of suf - fering shall be

pray, teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.  
win, O give us strength to per - se - vere, in you to con-quer sin.  
tide, yes, ev - er - more, in life and death, O Lord, with us a - bide.  
past, an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.

**INVITATION TO LENT**

P Dear friends in Christ, every year we celebrate Christ's death and resurrection. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration. In order that our Lent may be a time of renewal and growth we begin this season by remembering our need for repentance and for the forgiveness of God proclaimed by Jesus Christ.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ to rend your hearts and not your garments, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, self-denial, and giving to those in need, and by reading and meditating on the word of God.

## CONFESSION OF SIN

P Let us pause and in silence call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

L [*Silence*] We have not loved you with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have been deaf to your call to serve. We have been unfaithful, proud, and hypocritical. Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have been self-centered and have taken advantage of others. Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have been envious of those more fortunate than ourselves. Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have loved worldly goods and comforts too much. We have been dishonest in daily life and work. Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have neglected prayer and worship and have failed to commend the faith that is in us. Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have been blind to human need and suffering, and indifferent to injustice and cruelty. Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have thought uncharitably about others, and we have been prejudiced towards those who differ from us. Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

[*Silence*] We have wasted and polluted your creation and lacked concern for those who come after us. Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

P [*Silence*] Together we pray – **Merciful God, we have sinned in what we have thought and said, in the wrong we have done and in the good we have not done. We have sinned in ignorance: we have sinned in weakness: we have sinned through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry. We repent and turn to you. Forgive us, for our Savior Christ’s sake, and renew our lives to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*We sit.*

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P We pray – Loving God, you create us from the dust of the earth; may these ashes be for us a sign of our penitence and our mortality, and a reminder that only by the cross do we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

*(Those who wish to receive ashes come forward. Pr. Bryant applies ashes to the forehead of each person with these words: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. As we received ashes and return to our places, Leah Metzger & Kristie Harper sing, “Lord, Have Mercy”)*

L Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,  
**that we may show forth your glory in the world.**  
By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,  
**bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

P Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keeps us in (+) eternal peace. **Amen.**

*We sit.*

## PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

P God of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ you promise to hear us when we pray to you in faith with thanksgiving.

L [*Silence*] Lord to whom we belong in life and death, our only comfort, we come before you aware of our failings and awed by your grace. We are dust and to dust we shall return. The ashes on our forehead remind us of our frailty, our finitude and our sin. The shape of the cross they make tell of our Savior whose sacrifice conquered death, allowing us to sing praises even on our way to the grave.

As we journey through these 40 Lenten days, may the relentless gift of the Holy Spirit drive us where we most need to go to follow Christ more closely. If we find ourselves in the wilderness, afraid and tempted, deliver us from evil and send angels to tend to us. When we doubt and turn back, fall asleep and deny, forgive us as Christ forgave those who knew not what they did. If we succumb to our basest instincts, bullying and taunting any of your beloved children, stop us cold, remove the scales from our eyes and make of us new creations in Christ, eager to imitate the One with whom you are well pleased.

Alpha and Omega, our beginning and our end, we need to sense your close and abiding presence this day when we feel keenly how deeply we have grieved you through what we have done and through what we have left undone. We know that what pleases you is a contrite heart. We know that Jesus came to save sinners. We know that you do not reject a returning prodigal child. We know that through the gift of your Son you have reconciled the world.

P [ *Silence*] Merciful God, you look with compassion on all who turn to you. Hear the prayers of your people. Grant that what we have asked in faith we may by your grace receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*We sit.*

## OFFERING

L As God's gifts to us do more than we now know and move further into our world than we can now imagine, may our generosity now rise to the surface as we give and share.

*We rise.*

## OFFERTORY

## DOXOLOGY

GTG 606

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings 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.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

L God of the Cross, in losing our lives we find them in you. In sharing our money and time, we receive the blessings of your Kingdom. Use these gifts toward your holy work of peace, justice, and service in the world. **Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to 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 and ever. Amen.**

## SENDING

### BLESSING

P May God the Father, who does not despise the broken spirit, give to you a contrite heart. May Christ, who bore our sins in his body on the tree, heal you by his wounds. May the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth, speak to you words of pardon and (+) peace. **Amen.**



SENDING HYMN

‘The King of Love My Shepherd Is’ GTG 802

1 The King of love my shep-herd is, whose good - ness  
 2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow my ran - somed  
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in  
 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill with thee, dear

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
 soul he lead - eth, and where the ver - dant  
 love he sought me, and on his shoul - der  
 Lord, be - side me; thy rod and staff my

I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.  
 pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.  
 com - fort still, thy cross be - fore to guide me.

DISMISSAL

L Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Amen.**