

Changing People and Places Through the Power of the Gospel

August 23, 2020

Welcome Guests, Friends & Family!

As a Reformed church, we are part of a long and enduring tradition that places worship as our highest calling. Therefore, we lean heavily on those who have gone before and see the value of creeds, catechisms, responsive readings, and other forms that are part of our heritage. However, our services are not highly liturgical, following a fixed pattern, nor spontaneous, but seek to follow a liturgical pattern that reenacts the gospel and renews us in God's grace. Rather than focusing on getting God to bless us, is focuses on the blessings, promises, and grace that we already have in Christ. Our basic gospel pattern is: We approach God based on His initiation and invitation, we see our sin and confess it, we are assured of forgiveness, we hear the good news, and we respond in faith and obedience.

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REFLECTION | God's people prepare for worship

"I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter...
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbed pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat—and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet—
'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.'"

- from *Hound of Heaven* by Francis Thompson

PRAISE | We praise our merciful & gracious God

The Lord Gathers Us – Worship is dialogical, meaning it is a conversation between God and his people. Just as God is the initiator of grace in the Gospel, he continues to graciously summon his people to worship. We come and are graciously blessed and renewed by him through the Gospel.

Leader: Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,

and his greatness is unsearchable.

One generation shall commend your works to another,

and shall declare your mighty acts.

People: The Lord is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

The Lord is good to all,

and his mercy is over all that he has made.

The Lord upholds all who are falling

and raises up all who are bowed down.

Leader: The Lord is righteous in all his ways

and kind in all his works.

The Lord is near to all who call on him,

to all who call on him in truth.

He fulfills the desire of those who fear him.

Psalm 145:3, 4, 8, 9, 14, 17-19a (ESV)

PRAYER | The first prayer of the service is meant to invoke the presence and favor of the Triune God in the name of Jesus, giving praise, and asking the Holy Spirit to help us put aside all our distractions and worship God in "Spirit and truth."

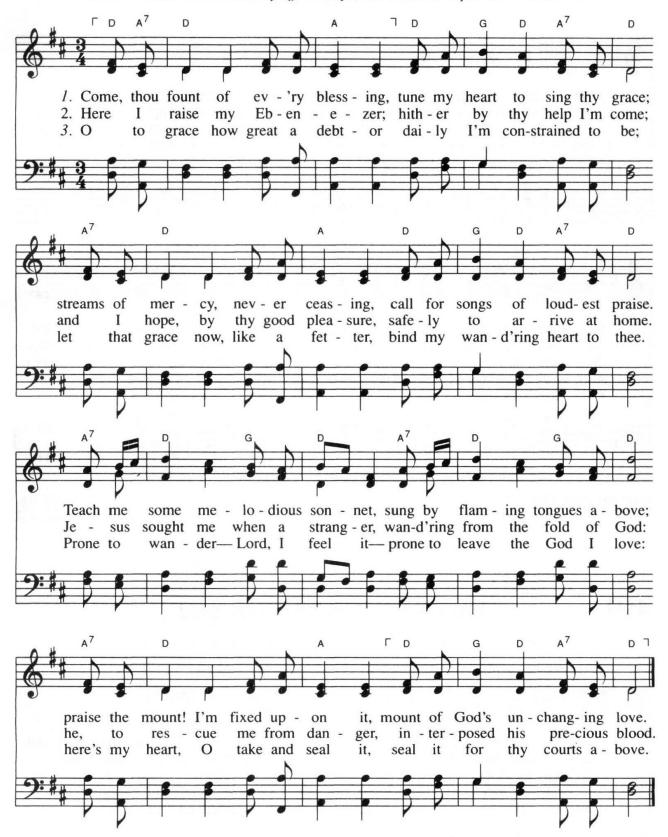
Songs of Praise (below)

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing Cornerstone

457

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Samuel ... named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far has the LORD helped us." 1 Sam. 7:12



Cornerstone

V1/V2/C/V3/C/C



RENEWAL | The Lord forgives his people

Confessing our Sin – Confession is a time when we are truly honest with ourselves and God, and because he knows our every thought, there is no need to pretend. Thus we confess our sin and admit that we're not what we should be, nor what we will be.

Heavenly Father You have sent us into the world, equipped and strengthened by your Spirit, to proclaim the gospel, to care for the oppressed, to do good, and to be Your agents of healing in a broken world. We confess, however, that we have often been ashamed to speak Your life-giving word to those around us. We confess that we have been reluctant to spend and be spent on behalf of the marginalized and have too often lived lives of self-indulgence. We confess we have been quick to seek comfort for ourselves instead of bringing relief to a world in pain. In all these ways we have grieved Your Spirit. Lord, forgive us and pour out Your grace so that we can walk in the beauty of your ways and bring honor to Your name. Amen.

Private Confession

Words of Encouragement

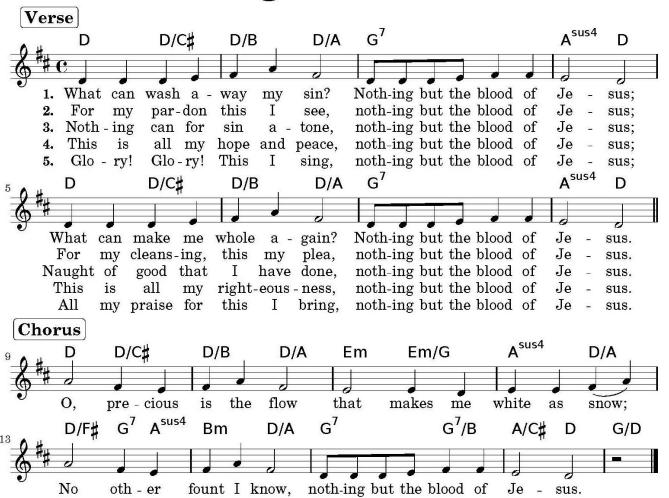
"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us."

Psalm 103:8, 10-12 (ESV)

We Praise Our Merciful and Gracious God

Nothing But The Blood (below)

Nothing But the Blood



PROCLAMATION | God feeds his people

Scripture: Matthew 18:12-14

We believe the Bible is the inerrant word of the true and living God, and our infallible rule for faith and practice.

Sermon: "Hounds of Heaven"

The sermon is meant by God's design to be ancient, timeless truth from his Word, explained, expounded, and applied, so that all who are listening will understand it and be changed by it. It is the way in which God speaks to his church. As J.I. Packer has stated, "God has spoken in the Bible and He has not stuttered."

RESPONSE | We respond with thanksgiving

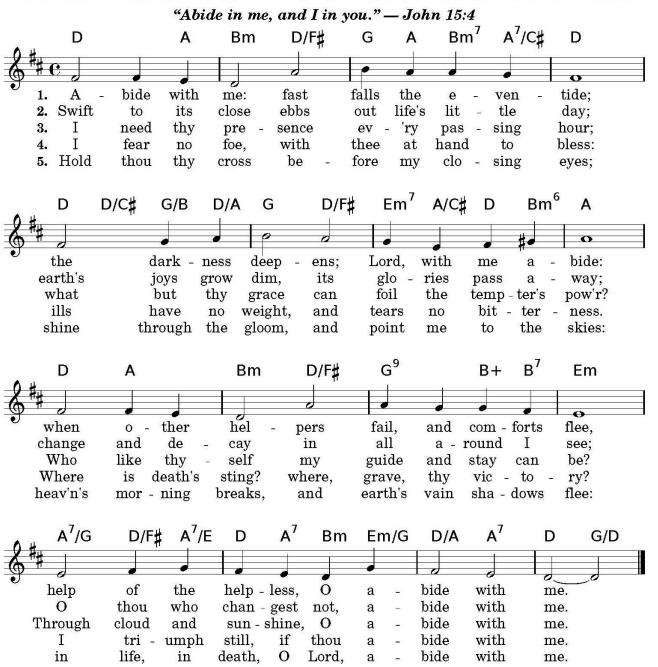
We Give – Our offering is not simply the way our church "pays the bills;" it is an act of worship where we respond to God's grace and generosity and give back to the Lord His resources as tangible evidence of our love for Him.

We are grateful for your ongoing generosity to the church. It is your gifts that sustain our ministry here in Cherry Hill and around the world. Please remember that you can give on line by going to this link. It is a secure and convenient way to continue your financial support.

*We Sing

Abide With Me (below)

Abide with Me: Fast Falls the Eventide



Benediction | *Please stand as you are able*

From the Latin "beneficiary," meaning "to bless," this is the pronouncement of God's blessing as we are sent out into our places of influence.

We Go – Heeding his commission, we go to our places of influence to rescue other wandering and lost sheep like ourselves