



158th Meeting of Palo Duro Presbytery

First Central Presbyterian Church

Abilene, Texas

April 26 & 27, 2024

BETTER TOGETHER for Christ

GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN PRAISE AND CONTEMPLATION

PRELUDE "Gather Us In" Rebecca Groom te Velde (405), 2002

GREETING, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND POEM (insert)
"The Invention of Fractions" by Jessica Goodfellow, 2007

* **CALL TO WORSHIP** from Psalm 105

Leader: O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. Glory in his holy name, let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

People: **Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually. Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he has uttered. God is here to meet us this day: glorify God's majestic name!**

Leader: God welcomes us as His children: We trust God's steadfast love and faithfulness! Our God wishes to embrace us and enlist us for service. Our hearts rejoice in God's willingness to accept us as we are. Our God wishes to receive us, blameless and holy, into the realm of heaven.

People: **God's mercy inspires us to holiness and leads us to lives of grace. Be enlightened and empowered in God's Spirit. Our thoughts and words shall honor Christ our Lord!**

* **HYMN OF PRAISE** "Holy, Holy, Holy" #1

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, hear our prayer. You are our Lord who is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Jesus Christ, the only son of our Heavenly Father, comes to us. Forgive us when we are slow to offer grace and mercy in our own lives. We aim; we often fail to resemble you or follow you. Forgive our sins. And yes, Lord we want to see you, to know you and to be your disciples. We pray silently to you.

A Moment of Silent Personal Confession. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Assurance of God's Grace:

Leader: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me even though they die, will live." John 11:25

Body of Christ: **Because of God's great love for us in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

* **GLORIA PATRI** #581

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.*

Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:40-42

Choral Anthem

“A Hymn of Praise to the Creator”

by Eric H Thinman, 1953

MEDITATING ON AND RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Hebrews 10:23-25: "Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Bible Text and Proclamation

with Rev. Dr. Janice Six, HR

“BETTER TOGETHER for Christ”

* **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (The Confession of 1967, 9.09 and 9.10)**

God’s reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures describe in various ways. It is called the sacrifice of a lamb, a shepherd’s life given for his sheep, atonement by a priest; again, it is ransom of a slave, payment of debt, vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty, and victory over the powers of evil. These are expressions of a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory in the depths of God’s love. They reveal the gravity, cost and sure achievement of God’s reconciling work. The risen Christ is the Savior for all. Those joined to him by faith are set right with God and commissioned to serve as his reconciling community. Christ is head of this community, the church, which began with the apostles and continues through all generations. Amen.

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS, PASTORAL PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Traditional)

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 glory forever. Amen.

SHARING TITHES AND OFFERINGS: Wildfire relief in support of immediate mission efforts with FPC Canadian and FPC Borger

OFFERTORY

“There Is a Balm in Gilead”

Arranger and Flutist Alex Carpenter

* **DOXOLOGY**

#606

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

May we offer our gifts, not with grumbling under our breath about what you might do with them, but with thanks that you will use them to bring healing, hope, grace, and peace to all whose lives need these. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Leader: From the prophet Isaiah 25:6-9: On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines. And God will remove from this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples; God will swallow up death forever.

People: **The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces and take away the disgrace of the people from the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day: This is our God, our salvation; this is the Lord for whom we have waited. Let all be glad and rejoice.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, eternal God, that you have fed us in this sacrament. Fill us with a vision of your new creation where all may have life abundantly together for Jesus Christ, the bread of life. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

*** CLOSING HYMN:** "For Everyone Born" #769, stanza 1,2 and 5

*** BENEDICTION AND BLESSING**

*** POSTLUDE:** "When in Our Music God is Glorified" Gordon Young, 1994

Cover art: Holding high the cross of Jesus on a remote Texas hill by the intention and hands of believers who stabilize it with wire to welcome all who come our way. Jesus is the consummate host, the manifestation of God's hospitality with outstretched arms. It's how he lived, and it's how he died.

Helping in Worship: Organist Larry Wolz, Rev. Dr. Janice Six, HR, Rev. Dr. Cliff Stewart, Rev. Grace Sosa, Rev. Carlo Sosa-Ortiz, Elder Nancy Lewis Means, Rev. Dr. Scott Campbell

***Please stand as you are able.**

The Invention of Fractions

*God himself made the whole numbers: everything else
is the work of man.*

—Leopold Kronnecker

God created the whole numbers:
the first born, the seventh seal,
Ten Commandments etched in stone,
the Twelve Tribes of Israel —
Ten we've already lost —
forty days and forty nights,
Saul's ten thousand and David's ten thousand.
'Be of one heart and one mind' —
the whole numbers, the counting numbers.

It took humankind to need less than this;
to invent fractions, percentages, decimals.
Only humankind could need the concepts
of splintering and dividing,
of things lost or broken,
of settling for the part instead of the whole.

Only humankind could find the whole numbers,
infinite as they are, to be wanting;
though given a limitless supply,
we still had no way
to measure what we keep
in our many-chambered hearts.