

February 23, 2025
Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

PRELUDE

Bach / Hearn
"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" with "Jesus, Name Above All Names"

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TWO-CENTS-A-MEAL HUNGER OFFERING

OPENING SENTENCES

Take delight in the Lord, who satisfies the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord and trust in God's actions.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for God.

The Lord is our salvation and our refuge in times of trouble.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

+ **HYMN: GTG #240** "Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks!" ALLELUIA NO. 1

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess that we have not followed your ways or trusted your promises. We love only those who love us; we show kindness only to those who are kind to us; we give only when we expect to receive. Forgive us, Lord. Fill our hearts with your selfless love. Change our lives by your matchless grace. These things we pray through Christ our Savior. Amen.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

... spilling out and running over. **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN: GTG #306 "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" DENNIS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

... God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

MESSAGE FOR THE CHILDREN

Debbie Shellenbarger

Children and youth are dismissed to Sunday School

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"What Wondrous Love Is This" WONDROUS LOVE

+ **RESPONSE: GTG #606**

OLD HUNDREDTH

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

+ Those who are able may stand. 1 GTG = *Glory to God* (purple hymnal)

+ **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

+ **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

from *The Confession of Belhar*
(South Africa, 1986)

We believe

that God has revealed God's self as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;
that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;
that God calls the church to follow God in this, for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;
that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;
that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;
that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;
that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;
that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;
that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged;
that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Genesis 45:3-11, 15 O.T. page 33
Joseph forgives his brothers

PSALM

Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40
The lowly shall possess the land

Do not be provoked by evildoers;

do not be jealous of those who do wrong.

For they shall soon wither like the grass,

and like the green grass fade away.

Put your trust in the LORD and do good;

dwell in the land and find safe pasture.

Take delight in the LORD,

who shall give you your heart's desire.

Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD,

and see what God will do.

The LORD will make your vindication as clear as the light

and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently.

Do not be provoked by the one who prospers,

the one who succeeds in evil schemes.

Refrain from anger, leave rage alone;

do not be provoked; it leads only to evil.

For evildoers shall be cut off,

but those who hope in the LORD shall possess the land.

In a little while the wicked shall be no more;

even if you search out their place, they will not be there.

But the lowly shall possess the land;

they will delight in abundance of peace.

The deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O LORD;

you are their stronghold in time of trouble.

You, O LORD, will help them and rescue them;

you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them,

because in you they seek refuge.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 N.T. page 136
The mystery of the resurrection

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 6:27-38 N.T. page 49
Love your enemies

RESPONSE TO SCRIPTURE

Matt. 11:4

Go and tell everyone what you have seen and heard. **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

"Make Us Instruments of Your Peace" arr. Shafferman

SERMON

"The Tough Stuff" Rev. Bill Pinches

+ **HYMN: GTG #756**

"O God of Every Nation" LLANGLOFFAN

+ **CHARGE**

... in the abundance of what we have already received. **Amen.**

+ **BLESSING**

... in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
One God, Mother of us all. **Alleluia!**

CHORAL BENEDICTION

"Love Each Other" Bushong

POSTLUDE

"Morgen!" Strauss / arr. Reger

***You are invited to join us for fellowship and refreshments
after worship in the Memorial Room.***

It is not necessary to remain seated during the postlude.

SERVING US TODAY

Liturgist: Katharine Wise

Greeters: Greg and Suzanne Lang

Next Week's Greeters: Debi and Mike Buchman

Sound: Tami Chapman

Livestream: Tami Chapman

Security: Tim Hammond

Today's flowers are given by Karen O'Malley
in memory of Elizabeth and Charles Neighbor

CHURCH HISTORY IN MINIATURE

#19: James the Just: James, one of Jesus's brothers who came to faith after the resurrection, becomes the first leader of the church in Jerusalem. His justice was appreciated by many.

THE STUDY CATECHISM

Question 45. Why did Jesus have to suffer as he did?

Because grace is more abundant — and sin more serious — than we suppose. However cruelly we may treat one another, all sin is primarily against God. God condemns sin, yet never judges apart from grace. In giving Jesus Christ to die for us, God took the burden of our sin into God's own self to remove it once and for all. The cross in all its severity reveals an abyss of sin swallowed up by the suffering of divine love.

CREDITS

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Mason First Presbyterian Church

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Office hours: Monday to Thursday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

MINISTERS

All Members

STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Bill Pinches

Parish Associate: Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Charlie Herrick

Spiritual Growth Director: Lori Filka

Sanctuary Choir Director / Bell Choir Director: Deb Melse

Office Manager: Jessica Tessman

Financial Secretary: Jess Weber

Choral Music Accompanist: Le Ji

Sexton: Eric VanDyke

Office Assistant: Nancy Sue MacDonald

Adult Spiritual Growth Coordinator: Michelle Mackey

Child Care: Jill Castle, Hannah Koutz, Jasmine Leffew, Violet Mackey, Sam Pinches, Lucy Simons, Keren Tayong

ELDERS

Class of 2025: Doreen Chapman, Mary Garland Jackson, Greg Lang, Monte Shuck (*Recording Clerk*).

Class of 2026: Bruce Archer (*Clerk*), Ginnie Gibson, Jane Hamelink, Tim Hammond

Class of 2027: Travis Archer, Dan Baker, Evelyn Tayong, Steve Sowles

DEACONS

Class of 2025: Marge Clarke, Julie Dart, Tom Seely (*Moderator*).

Class of 2026: Ron Dlouhy (*Treasurer*), Bill Leutscher, Sandy Leutscher, Nancy Sue MacDonald (*Secretary*), Laurie McGonigal

Class of 2027: Donna Archer, Rick Cote, Debbie Johnson, Issie Nielsen

EVENTS THIS WEEK

Today	Annual Meeting of the Congregation	11:15 am
	Adult Class (<i>The False White Gospel</i>)	11:30 am
	Adult Sunday School (Brené Brown)	11:30 am
Tuesday	Baby Shower for Jessica Tessman	7:00 pm
Wednesday	Lunch Packing for Advent House	10:15 am
	Prayer Fellowship (<i>in the Chapel</i>)	12:00 pm
	Wonderful Wednesday	4:00—6:00 pm
	Wednesday Night Dinner	6:00 pm
	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:30 pm
	Choir Rehearsal	7:10 pm
Friday	Church Office closed / Pastor's Sabbath	
Saturday	Yarners	10:00 am

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

Feb. 23: David Torrey Sr.

Mar. 1: Ray Strayer

Mason First Presbyterian Church

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Love Your Enemies
a portion of a street artist initiative
Ithaca Green Building Alliance (Ithaca, New York), 2008

"As you have done to the least of these, you have done to me."
(Matthew 25:31-46)