

The Order for the Worship of God
The Lord's Day
April 28, 2024
10:15 a.m.

Reflection

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free?'" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

(John 8:31-36)

Out of my bondage, sorrow and night, Jesus, I come; Jesus I come.
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light, Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of my sickness into Thy health, out of my wanting and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin and into Thyself, Jesus, I come to Thee.

Jesus, I Come to Thee, by William Sleeper

WE ENTER GOD'S PRESENCE WITH THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

The Welcome and Announcements — Rev. Alex Woods, Associate Pastor

The Peace — Because Jesus Christ has purchased our peace with God through his death on the cross and his resurrection from the grave, we greet and welcome each other with the peace of Christ.

The Call to Worship God — from Psalm 100 — Bob Berry, Ruling Elder

Leader: Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

All: Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Leader: Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

All: For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

All Praise to God Who Reigns Above

Johann J. Schutz, 1675

All praise to God, who reigns above, the God of all creation,
The God of wonders, pow'r, and love, the God of our salvation!
With healing balm my soul he fills, the God who every sorrow stills,
To God all praise and glory!

I cried to him in time of need: Lord God, O, hear my calling!
For death he gave me life indeed and kept my feet from falling.
For this my thanks shall endless be; O thank him, thank our God, with me,
To God all praise and glory!

The Lord forsaketh not his flock, his chosen generation;
He is their refuge and their rock, their peace and their salvation.
As with a mother's tender hand he leads his own, his chosen band,
To God all praise and glory!

Then come before his presence now and banish fear and sadness;
To your Redeemer pay your vow and sing with joy and gladness:
Though great distress my soul befell, the Lord, my God, did all things well,
To God all praise and glory!

The Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

WE CONFESS TOGETHER WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Apostles' Creed

Leader: Christian, what do you believe?

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended into hell.*
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic** church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*“he descended into hell” refers to the righteous wrath of God that Jesus endured in our place when he suffered and died on the cross.

**“catholic” refers to the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ.

The Gloria Patri

(Glory to the Father)

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.

WE REPENT OF OUR SINS AND RECEIVE GOD'S MERCY

The Call to Confession — Romans 6:20-23

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Public Confession of Sin

Heavenly Father,

You say, "Little children, guard yourselves from idols," but we haven't.

You say, "Do not let the sun go down on your anger," but we have.

You say, "Keep your lives free from the love of money," but we don't.

You say, "Do not be wise in your own eyes," but we are.

You say, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love," but we're not.

Please forgive our many sins against you and others — the ones we know and the ones we don't. Thank you that because of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection in our place, you do not treat us as our sins deserve. Thank you for covering your sinless Son with our guilt and shame and covering us with his perfect righteousness. Thank you for removing our sins from us as far as the east is from the west, remembering them no more. Enable us by your gracious Holy Spirit to live in the joy and freedom of your love for us in Christ, now and always. Amen.

The Promise of Forgiveness in Jesus Christ — Romans 8:1-4

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Leader: Hear and believe and rejoice in the good news of the gospel: Through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, you are free from the condemnation of the law and the power of sin and death. God accepts you and loves you as much as he loves and accepts his own Son, Jesus Christ!

All: Praise God for our freedom in Christ!

Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

John Newton; Chris Tomlin

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now I'm found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

(Chorus)

My chains are gone. I've been set free
My God, my Savior has ransomed me
And like a flood, His mercy reigns
Unending love, amazing grace

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures. (Chorus)

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow.
The sun forbear to shine
But God, Who called me here below
Will be forever mine; Will be forever mine.
You are forever mine.

The Prayers of God's People

**Parents are welcome to take their children, infants up to age 4,
to the nursery for the remainder of the service.**

WE HEAR GOD SPEAK IN HIS WORD

The Sermon
Galatians: The Gospel of Freedom in Jesus Christ
“For Freedom Christ Has Set Us Free”
Galatians 5:1-15

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. ²Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. ³I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. ⁴You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

⁷You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion is not from him who calls you. ⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. ¹¹But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. ¹²I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

The Big Idea: Jesus Christ has liberated us from the bondage of sin and death to live in the freedom of a relationship with God. This freedom is to be embraced, guarded, and exercised through faith in the power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Embrace Your Freedom in Christ (1, 13)

2. Guard Your Freedom in Christ (1-12)

3. Exercise Your Freedom in Christ (5-6, 13-15)

Questions for personal reflection and family/Community Group discussion:

1. How did God use the means of corporate worship to minister to you? What encouraged you? What caused you to be in awe of God? What convicted you and challenged you?
2. How do people in our western/American culture define freedom? How does Paul define freedom in Galatians?
3. What are some ways you can embrace/enjoy/live your freedom in Christ?
4. According to vv2-12, why does our freedom in Christ need to be guarded? How do we do that?
5. If we are already righteous in Christ, then what does Paul mean by the phrase, “the *hope* of righteousness”, in v5? What difference would it make in our lives now if we thought more deeply about our future hope?
6. Why should our freedom in Christ lead to a life of love for each other and our neighbors?
7. How does this passage speak to the problem of divisions in the church? What’s the cause and what’s the remedy?
8. Think about a particular sin struggle in your life: How does embracing and guarding and exercising your freedom in Christ undermine the motivation to sin?

WE COMMUNE WITH JESUS CHRIST IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The Session of St. Petersburg Presbyterian Church welcomes to the Lord's Table all those who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and are baptized members in good standing of a Christian church where the gospel is loved and proclaimed. We do not come to this meal as those who are righteous in ourselves, but as those who know that our standing before the Father is completely dependent upon his grace, given to us through faith in Jesus Christ, who is the Reality pictured for us in the sign of this meal.

The Words of Institution —from 1 Corinthians 11

The Giving and Receiving of the Bread and Cup

Please wait until all have been served, so we may eat and drink together

Please note: The cup trays contain grape juice on the outer ring and wine on the inner rings.

Jesus, I Come

Words: William Sleeper. Music: Greg Thompson

Out of my bondage, sorrow and night, Jesus, I come; Jesus I come.
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light, Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of my sickness into Thy health, out of my wanting and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin and into Thyself, Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of my shameful failure and loss, Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross, Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of earth's sorrows into Thy balm, out of life's storms and into Thy calm,
Out of distress into jubilant psalm, Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of unrest and arrogant pride, Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come.
Into Thy blessed will to abide, Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of myself to dwell in Thy love, out of despair, into raptures above,
Upward forever on wings like a dove, Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of the fear and dread of the tomb, Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into the joy and light of Thy home, Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of the depths of ruin untold, into the peace of Thy sheltering fold,
Ever Thy glorious face to behold, Jesus, I come to Thee.

WE RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL WITH SACRIFICIAL GENEROSITY

Worshipping God through Our Financial Giving — Because God has lavished us generously with the riches of his grace in Jesus, we give our money willingly, joyfully, and sacrificially for the spread of the gospel in our city and around the world. The cash offering this morning is designated for the Deacon's Fund, which helps our Deacons provide financial assistance to our members and others in need.

And Can It Be?

Charles Wesley, 1738

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood
Died He for me who caused His pain? For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love how can it be, that Thou my God shouldst die for me?
Amazing love how can it be, that Thou my God shouldst die for me?

He left His Father's throne above — so free, so infinite His grace —
Emptied Himself of all but love, and bled for Adam's helpless race
Tis mercy all, immense and free, for, O my God, it found out me!
Tis mercy all, immense and free, for, O my God, it found out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray. I woke the dungeon flamed with light
My chains fell off my heart was free. I rose went forth and followed Thee!
My chains fell off my heart was free. I rose went forth and followed Thee!

No condemnation now I dread; Jesus and all in Him is mine.
Alive in Him my living Head, and clothed in righteousness divine.
Bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown through Christ my own.
Bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown through Christ my own.

WE ARE SENT INTO THE WORLD TO MAKE DISCIPLES

The Benediction — Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to him, who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

The Dismissal — Having been renewed by the liberating power of God's grace in the gospel, let us go from here to live as free people, serving one another in love!

All: Thanks be to God!

Please remain for refreshments and conversation in the fellowship hall.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to SPPC



If you are a first-time guest with us, we are so glad you are here! Please let us know of your visit by scanning the QR code, or by completing one of the guest cards found in the chair pockets and placing it in the offering basket at the conclusion of the service. More information about our church can be found at www.stpetepca.org.

Missionary of the Month

Our missions prayer focus for April is New Hearts Outreach in Tampa. New Hearts is a Christ-centered ministry to people struggling with sexual and drug addictions. Pray for Mark Culligan and his staff, that God would use them to bring about gospel transformation in the lives of people for His glory.

SPPC Short-Term Mission Trip

Join us for a short-term mission trip Monday, June 3rd through Friday, June 7th in Mullins, South Carolina. Mission to North America works with Mullins Presbyterian Church to do an annual Mission Mullins service project. There is still time to go if you let Bob Berry know by emailing him at bberry1349@aol.com this week.

Membership Matters



If you are interested in becoming a member of SPPC, or want to learn more about the Christian faith and the ministries of our church, then join us for “Membership Matters” on May 3-4. This is a Friday evening (dinner included) and Saturday morning seminar. **Please register by this Wednesday** by scanning the QR code or by contacting Pastor Alex at a.woods@stpetepca.org.

THIS WEEK AT SPPC

Sunday (April 28)

- 8:30 a.m.** Congregational Prayer — meets in classroom by fellowship hall
- 9:00 a.m.** Bible Classes for all ages
- 10:15 a.m.** Corporate Worship

Monday (Office closed)

Tuesday

- 6:30 p.m.** Jenkins Community Group — 4541 52nd Ave N. (727) 452-8715
- 7:30 p.m.** James Club — A Christ-centered outreach ministry for those struggling with alcohol and drug addictions. Meets in the fellowship hall.

Wednesday

- 5:15 p.m.** Higgins Community Group — 3201 2nd St. N. (727) 249-2588
- 6:30 p.m.** Harding Community Group—1541 Eden Isle Blvd. NE (727) 434-9048
- 7:00 p.m.** Shadle Community Group — meets in the fellowship hall (610) 217-8718

Friday

- 7:00 a.m.** Men’s Bible Study — meets in the fellowship hall
- 6:00 p.m.** Membership Matters — meets at the Harding’s 1541 Eden Isle Blvd. NE.

Saturday

- 8:30 a.m.** Membership Matters — meets in the fellowship hall

SPPC Community Bible Reading Calendar

Monday, April 29	1 Samuel 20-22	Luke 15
Tuesday, April 30	1 Samuel 23-25	Luke 16
Wednesday, May 1	1 Samuel 26-28	Luke 17
Thursday, May 2	1 Samuel 29-31	Luke 18
Friday, May 3	2 Samuel 1-3	Luke 19
Saturday, May 4	Psalm 52-54	

Ministry Leadership

Pastor	Rev. Dr. David Harding	727-434-9048
Associate Pastor	Rev. Alex Woods	813-385-6141
Ruling Elders	Bob Berry	407-920-7412
	Derik Jenkins	727-452-8715
Deacons	John Howat	727-504-0587
	Robert Jones	901-864-8877
	Dave Shadle	610-217-8718
Administrative Assistant	Debbie Wade	727-386-2032
Children and Youth	Derik Jenkins	727-452-8715
Community Groups	Alex Woods	813-385-6141
Finance Team	Bill Brannan	813-220-4969
Hospitality Team	Linda Berry	407-797-3129
James Club	Kyle Krueger	727-364-7355
Men's Ministry	Dave Harding	727-434-9048
Mercy Ministry	Dave Shadle	610-217-8718
Missions Team	Bob Berry	407-920-7412
Safety Team	Alex Rogers	813-327-2571
Sound/Video Team	Brad Grabill	727-560-8960
Women's Ministry	Lynn Harding	727-709-5740
Worship/Music Team	Donna Grabill	727-415-3735

Supported Missionaries & Agencies

Esaie and Natacha Etienne	Mission to the World	Dominican Republic
Peter and Lauren Dishman	Mission to the World	Bogota, Columbia
Susan Newkirk	Mission to the World	Cape Town, S. Africa
David and Erin Pervis	Mission to the World	Athens, Greece
Nate and Erin Taylor	Mission to the World	Glasgow, Scotland
Derrick and Katie	Serge	North Africa
Marcelo and Claudia Carvalho	World Evangelization for Christ (WEC)	Amazon, Brazil
Srikanth and Pushpa Kota	Presbyterian Church, India (PCI)	Telangana, India
Christina Schrader	Wycliffe Bible Translators	Vancouver, BC
Chuck and Sheree McArthur	Equipping Leaders Int'l (ELI)	Jacksonville, FL
Bruce and Ann McDowell	Santiago Theological Seminary	Santiago, DR
Aldo and Abby Mondin	Reformed University Fellowship	USF, Tampa
Becca Romano	Reformed University Fellowship	USF, Tampa
Wright and Elizabeth Busching	University PCA Church Plant	Tampa
Maggie Harlan	Young Life	St. Petersburg
Kelly Potilechio	Young Life	St. Petersburg
Mark Culligan	New Hearts Outreach	Tampa
Carole Alexander	Next STEPP Pregnancy Center	St. Petersburg
New Life Solutions Pregnancy Center		St. Petersburg
Kairos Prison Ministry		Zephyrhills
Covenant Theological Seminary		St. Louis
Reformed Theological Seminary		Orlando/Charlotte
Florida Church Planting Network		