



CENTRAL  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

# PREPARATION

January 10, 2021

The First Sunday after the Epiphany

## WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“We are entering a new day, new terrain and a new adventure. We are not alone. The Spirit of God goes before us. The mission of Christ will not fail. A day will come when the ‘kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever’ (Revelation 11:15). The next steps are going to be demanding. More than anything, this moment requires [us] to embrace an adventure-or-die mindset, and find the courage and develop the capacity for a new day. We are heading into uncharted territory and are given the charge to lead a mission where the future is nothing like the past.”

— TOD BOLSINGER

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

Lord, we beseech you mercifully to receive the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that we may both perceive and know what things we ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfill them; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Genesis 1:1-5

PSALM: Psalm 29

SECOND READING: Acts 19:1-7

GOSPEL: Mark 1:4-11

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

## WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

*In Scripture, the Call to Worship comes from God. We need to be called because it is not our natural response to come to God. God takes the initiative, moves towards us with grace, and invites us to worship him.*

### Isaiah 60

LEADER The sun shall be no more your light by day,  
nor for brightness shall the moon give you light;

PEOPLE **But the LORD will be your everlasting light,  
and your God will be your glory.**

LEADER Your sun shall no more go down,  
nor your moon withdraw itself;

PEOPLE **For the LORD will be your everlasting light,  
and your days of mourning shall be ended.**

LEADER Your people shall all be righteous;  
they shall possess the land forever,

PEOPLE **The branch of my planting, the work of my hands,  
that I might be glorified.**

## HYMN

### Jesus Shall Reign

Isaac Watts · John Hatton

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
Does its successive journeys run;  
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,  
'Til moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made,  
And praises throng to crown His head;  
His name like sweet perfume shall rise  
With ev'ry morning sacrifice.

People and realms of ev'ry tongue  
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;  
And infant voices shall proclaim  
Their early blessings on His name.

Let ev'ry creature rise and bring  
Honors peculiar to our King;  
Angels descend with songs again,  
And earth repeat the loud Amen!

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Aware of God's holiness and our sinfulness, the Prayer of Confession invites us to honestly confess our sins. We are free to confess even our most grievous faults because no matter how deep our sin may be, God's grace in Jesus Christ is deeper still. Confession both acknowledges our need for grace and celebrates its abundant provision in Christ.*

Heavenly Father, we lower our heads before you and we confess that we have too often forgotten that we are yours. Sometimes we carry on our lives as if there was no God and we fall short of being a credible witness to you. For these things we ask your forgiveness and we also ask for your strength. Give us clear minds and open hearts so we may bear witness to you in our world. Remind us to be who you would have us to be regardless of where we are or what we are doing. Hold us to yourself and build our relationship with you and with those you have given us to love and serve. We ask this not upon our deserving it, nor even the honesty of our confession, but because of Jesus, who suffered, died, and rose for us. Amen.

## SILENT CONFESSION

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*The Words of Assurance should be received with gratitude and joy because these words of Scripture assure us that God has promised to forgive and restore those who confess their sins through the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.*

### Ezekiel 36:25-26

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean. I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

**LEADER** Hear and receive the good news of the gospel:  
in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**ALL** **Thanks be to God!**

## HYMN

### The Power of the Cross

Keith Getty · Stuart Townend · Arr. Dan Galbraith

Oh, to see the dawn of the darkest day,  
Christ on the road to Calvary.  
Tried by sinful men, torn and beaten, then  
Nailed to a cross of wood.

*This, the pow'r of the cross.  
Christ became sin for us.  
Took the blame, bore the wrath,  
We stand forgiven at the cross.*

Oh, to see the pain written on Your face,  
Bearing the awesome weight of sin.  
Ev'ry bitter thought, ev'ry evil deed,  
Crowning Your bloodstained brow. *Chorus*

Now the daylight flees, now the ground beneath  
Quakes as its Maker bows His head.  
Curtain torn in two, dead are raised to life,  
"Finished!" the vict'ry cry. *Chorus*

Oh, to see my name written in Your wounds,  
For through Your suffering, I am free.  
Death is crushed to death, life is mine to live,  
Won through Your selfless love.

This, the pow'r of the cross.  
Son of God slain for us.  
What a love, what a cost,  
We stand forgiven at the cross.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world.  
Please let the prayer ministry know of your prayer requests by visiting [centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest](http://centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest).*

## OFFERING

*Please text [centralchurchnyc](http://centralchurchnyc.org) to 77977 or visit our website in order to give electronically.*

## OFFERTORY

### Psalm 34 (Taste and See)

Shane & Shane

I sought the Lord  
And He answered me  
And delivered me  
From every fear

Those who look on Him  
Are radiant  
They'll never be ashamed  
They'll never be ashamed

This poor man cried  
And the Lord heard me  
And saved me from  
My enemies

The Son of God  
Surrounds His saints  
He will deliver them  
He will deliver them

*Magnify the Lord with me  
Come exalt His name together  
Glorify the Lord with me  
Come exalt His name forever*

Taste and see  
That the Lord is good  
Oh bless us here  
Who hides in Him

Oh fear the Lord  
Oh all you saints  
He'll give you everything  
He'll give you everything *Chorus*

Let us bless the Lord  
Every day and night  
Never ending praise  
May our incense rise *Chorus*

## THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye Heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE READING

*The Word of God is the primary means by which God speaks to us and the ultimate authority for what we believe and how we live. All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.*

### 1 Peter 1:1-2

<sup>1</sup>Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup>according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

LEADER    The word of the Lord.

ALL        **Thanks be to God!**

## SERMON

*The Spirit makes the reading and preaching of God's Word a powerful means of challenging, comforting, and strengthening God's people and awakening people to new faith.*

### ***A Better Resistance | When All the Maps Are Wrong***

Jason Harris

## THE THANKSGIVING

*From the earliest days of the church a prayer of Thanksgiving preceded Holy Communion. The Thanksgiving includes the "Sursum Corda" which means "Lift up your hearts" or literally, "Hearts lifted," in Latin. The Thanksgiving bids us to acknowledge our absolute dependence on the God who desires to commune with us.*

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

## CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

*Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is the family meal of baptized Christians. We invite all to partake of this sacrament who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to use the prayers printed below and spend this time in reflection or prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the church. For health reasons, an individually packaged wafer and cup can be found in the pew for those who wish to participate in the Lord's Supper. Once consumed, please place empty cups in the back of the pew.*

*We take it as a sign of a healthy congregation to have regular attenders who love our community but who do not profess faith in Christ and so refrain from receiving the elements. If you are a Christian and have not yet been baptized, please talk with our pastors. We would be honored to baptize you.*

*Children are welcome to partake of communion. To receive the Lord's Supper, a child must have been baptized and been formally received as a communing member by the Session of this church or the governing body of the church to which you belong.*

### **Prayer for Those Searching for Truth**

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so.

If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

### **Prayer of Belief**

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

### **Prayer of Commitment**

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*We sing the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray to our Heavenly Father.*

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, Amen.

## BENEDICTION

*We begin our worship with God's gracious invitation, and we conclude with God's blessing, his good word. It is appropriate to look up and open our palms as we receive the Benediction to symbolize how Jesus Christ lifts our heads and to demonstrate our eagerness to receive God's blessing.*

## DISMISSAL

*God never draws us into relationship with himself without also sending us out into the world to be his representatives and ambassadors.*

LEADER     Let us go forth to serve the world as those who  
                 love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL            **Thanks be to God!**