



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

February 2, 2025

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“For you can work hard all your life, do a lot of good, and build up a whole business empire, but you have no control over what happens when you die. Your successor may be an idiot who squanders it all and who didn’t work for it or deserve it in the first place! And where’s the sense in that?”

—CHRISTOPHER WRIGHT

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Lord God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many great dangers, that because of our frailness we cannot always stand uprightly: Grant us such health of body and soul, that we may well pass and overcome all those things which we suffer for sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 1:4-10

PSALM: Psalm 71:1-6

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

GOSPEL: Luke 4:21-30

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Instrumental Prelude

Caroline Drexler

I Will Sing of My Redeemer

Rowland H. Prichard · Arr. Robert Harkness

I will sing of my Redeemer
And His wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross He suffered
From the curse to set me free.

*Sing, oh sing, of my Redeemer,
With His blood, He purchased me.
On the cross He sealed my pardon,
Paid the debt, and made me free.*

I will tell the wondrous story
How my lost estate to save,
In His boundless love and mercy
He the ransom freely gave. *Chorus*

I will praise my dear Redeemer;
His triumphant power I'll tell,
How the victory He giveth
Over sin, and death, and hell. *Chorus*

I will sing of my Redeemer
And His heav'nly love for me;
He from death to life hath brought me,
Son of God, with Him to be. *Chorus*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 92

LEADER It is good to give thanks to the LORD,

PEOPLE **To sing praises to your name, O Most High;**

LEADER To declare your steadfast love in the morning,

PEOPLE **And your faithfulness by night,**

LEADER For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your
work;

PEOPLE **At the works of your hands I sing for joy.**

LEADER How great are your works, O LORD!

PEOPLE **Your thoughts are very deep!**

HYMN

How Marvelous (I Stand Amazed)

Charles H. Gabriel · Chris Tomlin · Arr. John Wasson

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

*Singin' how marvelous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful!
Is my Savior's love for me!*

He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them His very own;
He bore the burden to Calvary,
And suffered and died alone. *Chorus*

When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me. *Chorus*

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Father, we come to you today as people who need to be redeemed. We need to be made whole. We confess that we need you to heal us for we cannot heal ourselves. Forgive our wandering hearts. We run after acceptance, prestige, wealth, order, pleasure, and novelty in a desperate effort to heal our hearts. None of these can redeem us; none of these can make us whole. Yet we are slow to learn. Forgive our faithless hearts. We have looked for redemption everywhere but in you. We have not looked there because we doubt your goodness. Now, Father, accept our confession and receive us gladly. We ask this not based upon our deserving it, nor even upon the honesty of our confession, but for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

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

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

LEADER The peace of the Lord be with you always.

ALL **And also with you.**

HYMN

Living Hope

Phil Wickham

How great the chasm that lay between us,
How high the mountain I could not climb.
In desperation, I turned to Heaven,
And spoke Your Name into the night.
Then through the darkness, Your lovingkindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul.
The work is finished, the end is written:
Jesus Christ, my Living Hope.

Who could imagine so great a mercy?
What heart could fathom such boundless grace?
The God of Ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame.
The Cross has spoken, I am forgiven;
The King of Kings calls me His Own.
Beautiful Savior, I'm Yours forever,
Jesus Christ, my Living Hope.

Hallelujah! Praise the One Who set me free!
Hallelujah! Death has lost its grip on me!
You have broken every chain;
There's salvation in Your Name:
Jesus Christ, my Living Hope.

Then came the morning that sealed the promise:
Your buried body began to breathe.
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared, "The grave has no claim on Me!"
Then came the morning that sealed the promise:
Your buried body began to breathe.
Out of the silence, the Roaring Lion
Declared, "The grave has no claim on Me!"
Jesus, Yours is the victory. *Chorus*

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
The only Son of God,
Eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
True God from true God,
Begotten, not made,
Of one Being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
By the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was
made man.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead,
And His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN

All preschool and elementary age children are invited to the front of the church and will be dismissed to Children's Church with their teachers where they will read, sing, learn, and play in an environment suited to their language and style. Alternatively, children are always welcome to remain in the sanctuary to worship alongside the adults for the duration of the service.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world. Please submit prayer requests to centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest.

OFFERING

*If you are our guest today, please feel no obligation to give. For members and regular attenders of Central, give generously as you are able. We give because all we have has been graciously given to us by God. Our offerings express our joyful dependence upon God and our commitment to join God in his work of renewal. You can give online by texting **centralchurchnyc** to **833-737-6262** or visiting **centralchurchnyc.org/give**.*

OFFERTORY

Somebody to You

Rachael Lampa · Andrew Ripp · Ethan Hulse

They say you're only as good as your last success,
and failure's not an option.
Maybe that's why I'm exhausted,
Held so tight to their applause that
When it stopped, I thought that yours would too,
'Til you said my heart to you's worth everything.

*Don't gotta be somebody
when I'm already somebody to you.
Got nothing to prove anymore,
so there's nothing to lose anymore.
You're gonna keep on loving me
for more than just the things that I do.
I'll sing it 'til there's no doubt,
nobody can count me out,
'Cause I'm already somebody to you.
I'm already somebody to you.*

I release my reputation,
the name that I was making for myself,
For a story only you can tell.
If you said I was to die for
Then I don't have to strive for your attention,
'Cause my heart is worth nothing less than everything. *Chorus*

There's so many stars in your sky
But I'm never lost in your eyes
I'm still the one you see, and you see
A promise that can't be broken
The one you've already chosen
As I'm learning to believe, yeah. *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

Ecclesiastes 2:18-26

The passage can be found on page 554 of the pew Bible.

¹⁸I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, ¹⁹and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. ²²What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? ²³For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

²⁴There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, ²⁵for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

SERMON

Ecclesiastes: The Enigma of Life Under the Sun | **The Question of Achievement**

Rev. Jason Harris

THE THANKSGIVING

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.

PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

We do not presume to come to this, your Table, O Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but solely in your great mercy. We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under your Table, but you are the same Lord who always delights in showing mercy. Grant us, therefore gracious Lord, that we who now receive these gifts of bread and wine, according to our Savior's Word, may share in the body and blood of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, that we may dwell in him forever and he in us. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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.

*Communion is served with wine and gluten-free bread.
Individually wrapped wafers and grape juice are available at
each station.*

COMMUNION HYMN

O Praise the Name

Dean Usher · Marty Sampson · Benjamin Hastings

I cast my mind to Calvary,
Where Jesus bled and died for me.
I see His wounds, His hands, His feet.
My Savior on that cursed tree.

His body bound and drenched in tears,
They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb.
The entrance sealed by heavy stone,
Messiah still and all alone.

*O praise the Name of the Lord our God!
O praise His Name forever more!
For endless days we will sing Your praise,
O Lord, O Lord our God!*

Then on the third at break of dawn,
The Son of Heaven rose again.
O trampled death where is your sting?
The angels roar for Christ the King! *Chorus*

He shall return in robes of white,
The blazing sun shall pierce the night.
And I will rise among the saints,
My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face. *Chorus*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

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

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

Members of our prayer team will be available immediately following the service at the front of the sanctuary to pray confidentially for you about any need or concern you might have. We encourage you to avail yourself of this opportunity to receive prayer. ☞