

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, November 3rd, 2024
Rev. Gerry Gallant

Shoe Leather Faith
Proper 26
James 5: 19-20

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Bless the Lord at all times;
God's praise will always be on our lips.

Make great the name of God;
We will lift up God's holy name together.

For the Lord is our God, the Lord alone.
**We will love the Lord with heart, mind, strength, and soul,
and praise God now and always.**

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Almighty God, we pray for your blessing
on the church in this place.
Here may the faithful find salvation,
and the careless be awakened.
Here may the doubting find faith,
and the anxious be encouraged.
Here may the tempted find help,
and the sorrowful find comfort.
Here may the weary find rest,
and the strong be renewed.
Here may the aged find consolation
and the young be inspired;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Children's Hymn: "Give Me Oil in My Lamp"

Call to Confession

Prepare the way of the Lord!
Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

*God of grace,
we confess that we have elevated
the things of this world above you.
We have made idols of possessions and people
and used your name for causes
that are not consistent with you and your purposes.
We have permitted our schedules to come first
and have not taken the time to worship you.
We have not always honored those who guided us in life.
We have participated in systems
that take life instead of give it.
We have been unfaithful in our covenant relationships.
We have yearned for, and sometimes taken, that which is not ours,
and we have misrepresented others' intentions.
Forgive us, O God,
for the many ways we fall short of your glory.
Help us to learn to live together according to your ways
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Assurance of Pardon

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Your sins are pardoned.
The penalty is paid.
Let there be to God.

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 the Evil One.
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn #299: "Holy, Holy, Holy" (V 1,2,3)

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;

Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim, falling down before Thee,
which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 119: 57-64

⁵⁷ The Lord is my portion;

I promise to keep your words.

⁵⁸ **I entreat your favor with all my heart;
be gracious to me according to your promise.**

⁵⁹ When I think on my ways,
I turn my feet to your testimonies;

⁶⁰ **I hasten and do not delay
to keep your commandments.**

⁶¹ Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me,
I do not forget your law.

⁶² **At midnight I rise to praise you,
because of your righteous rules.**

⁶³ I am a companion of all who fear you,
of those who keep your precepts.

⁶⁴ **The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love;
teach me your statutes!**

Anthem (Music Ministry): “Hungry I Come”

Prayer for illumination
(Congregant Prepared)

Scripture

James 5:19-20

¹⁹ My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, ²⁰ let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Sermon

D.L. Moody once said that every Bible should be bound in shoe leather to remind Christians that the Word of God was meant to be lived out in every aspect of their lives, not just in churches on Sunday mornings. We are meant to be doers of God's Word not just hearers and studiers.

As we finish up the book of James, I hope you have come to realize that the book of James is talking about just that, about a faith that works. James asks you to self-examine and your faith; Is your faith real? Does your faith work? James is Christianity 101.

Early on in his book, James tells us that just saying you have faith has no meaning. Just calling yourself a Christian does not mean you have authentic, real, or genuine faith. So, James challenges anyone who calls themselves Christian to examine their faith and check its authenticity, and as we finish up our study on the book of James, we are going to look at some of the questions that James asked in comparison to our own faith.

We are going to look at ten questions that are raised in the book of James about our faith. These ten questions will help you determine if your faith is real, if it is genuine, and if you are mature in your faith, or just starting to grow in your faith. I encourage you all to write these questions down if you do not have a handout with them on it, or save them in your phone, take a picture of the slide with the question if you need to, but take these questions seriously and return to them regularly in your life to examine your faith.

The first question is:

How do I respond to trials and testing in my life? (James 1:2-5)

When you face trials and testing in life; do they make you a better person or a bitter person? Do they strengthen your faith, or do they damage your faith in God?

James 1:2-5

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

Count it all a joy. Every trial, every tribulation, every persecution, in all of our suffering we are to count it all as a time of joy. We need to have a joyful attitude even when the world turns against this, because we know that when we face times that are filled with trouble and tribulation it is God at work in us and around us for his Glory. And we have to let God be at work in our life, leading us to places we may not want to go, because he needs to sometimes make us do things we do not, give up things we do not want to give up, so that we can mature in our faith. And finally, we need to pray in those times, seeking God's wisdom.

A faith that works grows stronger in times of trial. How many of us know someone who said they were a Christian and the moment that something went wrong in their life, a death in the family, a terminal illness, financial ruin came along, or their marriage fell apart, so they turn their back on God. They walk away from their faith, denying God in their life.

The first question we ask is meant to remind us that when we Go through times of trial and tribulation, we get stronger in our faith, not weaker. A pastor once said that 'The same Sun that hardens the wax melts the clay.' The same is true with faith, what causes some to fall away from God brings the faithful closer to God. It's not the trial, it is how we respond that matters. Clay gets harder, wax melts.

Question number two:

**Do I resist temptation?
(James 1:13-18)**

This is a tough one. We all face temptation daily, however, when we are faithful, we have a new nature, we are no longer slaves to sin, even if our flesh is still sinful. It does not mean that you never give in to temptation, it means that you gain a better ability to resist those temptations in your life through the power of the Holy Spirit at work in each of us.

James 1:13-18

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

When we are facing temptation, we need to remember its source, it comes from our sinful nature, never from God. We need to remember the course it will take in our lives; it goes from desire to disobedience, and it results in death. So, we need to remember how temptation is defeated, by trusting in God. All good gifts come from God alone. James says to stop listening to the devil and his temptation in our lives and turn to God alone, remember that God gave us that new nature to free us from the sin of temptation and we need to put that into practice in our lives.

Question number three:

**Am I a doer of the Word?
(James 1:19-22)**

Do I live out the teachings of the Scripture in my life?

James 1: 19-20

¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

James tells us that we are to be swift to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger. How many of us are the exact opposite, slow to hear, swift to speak and swift to anger? That is our human nature. The sign of a true believer is that they embrace the Word of God in the way that they live in this world.

James 1:21-22

²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Faithful believers hear the Word of God, receive it into their hearts humbly, knowing that God knows best, they make it part of their heart, the core of their very being, and then they put God's Word into work in their lives.

A genuine authentic faith is obedient to God's Word, whatever it says.

Question number four:

**Do I show partiality?
(James 2:1-13)**

Do I show respect to people because of worldly attributes?

Christianity is impartial, it is open and loving to all equally.

James 2:1

2 My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

Christians are not to show partiality in this world because God shows no partiality in his Kingdom.

James 2:5

⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?

God loves everyone, regardless of how the world divides people and tries to place those divisions one above or below another. The Church does not do that, it sees everyone as an equal in the eyes of the Lord, because if we start to rank people based on worldly attributes, we are breaking God's law.

James 2:8-10

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

So, James says take this to heart, 'love one another as you love yourself,' understanding that we are all in various stages of our faith development, Some people are old, seasoned veterans of obeying God's Word and others are struggling along with the first steps on their long road.

James 2:12-13

¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

A faith that works does not show partiality to the saint or the sinner but shows the love of God to everyone. If you are a faithful Christian, you love everyone regardless of their social, financial or professional status, regardless of their ethnicity, race or culture, regardless of their faith in other gods, or level of faith in Christ, regardless of their stance on worldly issues, regardless of the sins that they carry with them, you love them, because God loves them.

Question number five:

**Am I able to tame my tongue?
(James 3:2, James 1:26)**

Yes, or No? James tells us that the tongue cannot be tamed, and it cannot be tamed by man, but it can be tamed by God. However, I know that when God came into my heart, he changed my heart which changed my speech. People say whatever is in the well comes up in the bucket, so whatever is in your heart comes out in your speech.

James 3:2

² For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.

This is the mark of spiritual maturity. When you are able to control your tongue, you have attained a higher level of spiritual maturity, because our tongue is a reflection of our hearts.

This is why in James Chapter 1 he said.

James 1:26

²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

As a pastor it is always interesting when I meet with people, particularly gaming online and they are cursing up a storm until someone mentions that I am a pastor, and suddenly they are apologetic. Sometimes they try to explain it away, saying things like, 'that's not like me' or 'I do not know where that came from.' I know where it came from, it came from their heart, they need a new heart, a heart that only faith in Jesus Christ can provide.

Some even claim Christianity as their faith, to which James would ask: Can fresh and salt water come from the same source? God changes you; he changes your heart and that changes your speech. Again, it is not instantaneous, it takes time, but there should be evidence of change in your life.

Cursing, gossip, backbiting, slander, cutting and critical comments all should be slowly disappearing from your life if your faith is real. A faith that works has power over the tongue.

Question number six:

**Do I follow worldly wisdom or Godly wisdom in my life?
(James 3:13-18)**

Who am I listening to in my life? What process do I use for making decisions?

James 3:13-18

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. ¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile

practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Are your decisions focused on yourself, focused on getting all you desire? Do they result in others suffering? Do they cause strife in your relationships? Are they fueled by jealousy, want or envy?

Or are they something different? Do they focus on serving God in this world? Do they bring glory to His name and His kingdom? Do they bring people to Him, because they are naturally curious why you are so different from others in this world? Are they pure, peaceable, fruitful? Are they without hypocrisy or partiality? A faith that is at work in your life produces peace.

There will be disagreements, there will be problems in the life of a Christian. If we are walking under Godly wisdom, however, we will find peace in those times, recognizing that it is sometimes our own selfishness that is causing the issue, and finding ways to walk in Godly wisdom through them.

Question number seven:

Do I humbly submit myself to God's will and God's plans and God's purpose for my life?

(James 4: 15-16)

Am I willing to set aside my own desires to obey God?

James 4:15-16

¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." ¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

God willing. God willing, it needs to be a way that we live not just words that we say. It means that we do not make a bunch of plans and then tell God to make it happen. Instead, we need to start with, 'If God wills.' We do not know what will happen tomorrow any more than we know what will happen a year from now or an hour from now. Remember life is like a mist, and we should keep that in mind. 'if God wills'

A faithful Christian says, 'Lord I will go where you want me to go, I will do what you want me to do. I will say what you want me to say, and I will be what you want me to be.'

And when you hand your life over to the Lord in that way, he will use you to glorify his kingdom. For many of you it will be doing exactly what you are doing now, teachings, working in factories or retail, farming, computer programing, whatever profession, or field you work in God put you there to Glorify His name. The only change might be the outlook you have on that role in your life, or it could be a call to do something vastly different.

Are you willing to take all of your life goals, plans and ambitions and place them at the feet of Jesus, to go where he will send you? Are you willing to let him have his way in your life?

A faith that works submits itself to God, living according to God's will.

Question number eight:

**Do I patiently await the Lord's return?
(James 5:7)**

Am I patient? Am I enduring? Can I do it until Christ's return.

James 5:7

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

Can I live the life of the patient farmer, working and waiting? Can I live the life of the witnessing prophet, bringing the Word of God truthfully into the lives of those around me even when I am rejected and persecuted for my faith? Can I be like Job, enduring suffering, pain, trials, and tribulations without wavering in my faith? Until the Lord's return or my death, whichever may come first!

Question number nine:

**Am I prayerful until the Lord's return?
(James 5:13)**

Am I praying, is it a central part of my walk of faith?

James 5:13-15

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Are you praying when you are sad? Are you praying when you are glad? Are you praying when you are physically ill, or in time of spiritual darkness? Praying continuously as Paul tells us. Praying until the return of Jesus Christ is what James says. Praying in all seasons of my life when things are good and when things are difficult. Praying by both talking to God and listening to God in my life.

Which brings us to today's Scripture and the last two verses of the book of James.

James 5:19-20

¹⁹ My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, ²⁰ let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Question number ten:

Do I seek the lost?

These two verses have a complex meaning. James is talking hypothetically, saying if someone was to wander from the truth who was a Christian, someone who backslide in their faith, fallen away, that we should seek them out and bring them back to the faith.

There is something that we need to understand in this, once you are born again, once you are saved you cannot be unsaved. However, people can have highs and lows in their faith, we are always moving forwards or backwards in our faith, which is why this verse stands important, some believers may go through times of spiritual darkness which we are meant to help bring them out of. People can wander from their fellowship with God, and we are called to bring them back into fellowship with God and God's people. This is actually a key argument against online ministry, to many people believe that they can find God on YouTube alone, and in doing so they can fall away from God, and they do not have the fellowship of other believers to help them maintain their relationship with God.

When someone has fallen from faith, we need to be praying for them. Too many times the church does the opposite, it gathers together in gossip and slander, it criticizes them, it judges them, instead we should be praying for them. Remember that people might say that you cannot talk to them about God, but they cannot stop you from talking to God about them.

Anytime someone tells you that they do not want to talk about God with you, talk to God about them.

I have heard people say I know all about God, I use to be a Christian. That is not possible, if you were a Christian, you are still a Christian, you may not live like one, you may not want to be one, but you are still one. You can dishonor God, you can live an unGodly life, but you still belong to God.

Or they may never have been a Christian at all, and only professed faith in words but never in action. And James is talking about these people too. People who are living in Apostasy, people who may have heard the truth and denied it for some reason.

We do not know people's hearts. Remember that the Wheat and Tares grow together and look identical until the time of the harvest. So, we are called to be witnessing to everyone, sharing the truth of God's Word and praying that the Holy Spirit is taking root in their lives.

When people fall away from God in belief or behavior, we are to lovingly tell them the truth and bring them back, and if they are God's children, they will recognize the truth and come back.

When we do this, we save a soul from death, we save them from the sins of this world. There is no sin and no number of sins in this world that cannot be covered in the forgiveness of the blood of Christ.

So how do we do this?

We love them and we care for them. We love the lost and those who are wandering from the truth of God's word. We love the saint who is still a sinner because our Lord Jesus Christ does the same for us.

We pray for them. We pray that their faith will not fail if they are Christian. We pray that the Holy Spirit would plant a spark of faith in their hearts if they are not Christians. We get down on our knees and pray, the same way Elijah prayed fervently, unceasingly, for the people who are not yet Christian, that they would find the truth of their Salvation, and we do not ever stop praying for them.

We need to be like Jesus seeking out the one lost sheep. We need to be out there living out the Great Commission every day of our lives, Seeking out the unchurched. Do not go asking people to church who are already at churches elsewhere, got out there are find people who have no church, have no faith, and invite them here to find the love of God within this community.

We restore the lost.

Galatians 6:1

6 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Those of us who are more spiritually mature, those of us who have managed to hand over apportion of our lives to the Lord are called to help those who are still struggling along in their faith.

We are called to restore them to the truth of God's Word. How? In the spirit of meekness and humility. Humbly and gently. Understanding that without the grace of God that could be you. We do it in humility and love because if we did not have the Holy Spirit in us, if we had not already lived out the path of life that God lead us along, we could be facing the same challenges in our faith.

We do not go to them acting superior in any way. We go to them lovingly because if it was not for God's grace it could be us who had fallen.

We go to them in humility and acknowledge our own brokenness, we weep with those who weep and show them the love of Christ as we invite them into his family.

This is one of the greatest calls upon the church today. Too often we cast out the fallen, we strike them from our presence. Instead, we should be reaching out to them, loving them the same way that Jesus Christ did, calling them to repent, change their ways and walk alongside their Lord and Saviour.

Perhaps as you go through these ten questions you will discover that you have drifted away from Christ, even if you come every Sunday, but your heart is just not with God. Maybe you are only going through the motions because coming to church is something your family has always done. Maybe this is God's call upon your heart to come back to the Lord.

If you are here this morning and you are a Christian and you discover you are not walking with Jesus in your life. You are a Christian, but you have fallen away from Christ. You do not read your Bible anymore, you do not pray anymore, you do not have his peace, joy, and love in your heart. You are struggling with self-interest and self-promotion, your following worldly wisdom and have strife, envy, and jealousy in your heart. COME BACK!

Turn back to Jesus TODAY. Confess your sin to him and he will forgive you for all your sins and he will cleanse you of your unrighteousness.

Or maybe you are in that second group. You confess with your lips that you are Christian, but you know in your heart that you are not born again if you were to die right now that you would not go to heaven. Maybe you are going through the motions, maybe you believe in God, but do not trust him as your Lord and Saviour. Maybe you intellectually have accepted God, but you have not put your faith in him. DO SO RIGHT NOW!

Do not leave here today without knowing that you are saved, that if you died this very moment you would go to heaven. Make sure you know and understand that Jesus Christ went to the cross for your sins, he died and was buried, and he rose again, and if you turn to him, if you turn from your sinful nature, if you trust in him, you will be forgiven and you will have the hope of heaven as a child of God.

Brothers and Sisters, we need shoe leather faith, we need to get out into our community and bring the love of God to the lost. We need to pray for and witness to the unchurched in our community, inviting them into the fellowship of this church community and into fellowship with God so that they too can find peace and joy in the hope of Salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us Pray,
For Obedience and Love
 O Lord,
 you command me to ask,

grant that I may receive what you give.
 You have told me to seek,
 let me be happy in finding.
 You have bidden me to knock,
 I pray, open for me.
 Graciously direct and govern all my thoughts and actions,
 that, for the future,
 I may serve you
 and entirely devote myself to obeying you.
 Accept me,
 and draw me to yourself,
 that I may henceforth be yours
 by obedience and love,
 since I am already yours,
 as your creature.
 Yours, O Lord,
 you live and reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

Source:

Augustin of Hippo

Hymn #385: "Near The Cross"

Jesus, keep me near the cross,
 There a precious fountain;
 Free to all, a healing stream,
 Flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

Refrain:

In the cross, in the cross
 Be my glory ever,
 Till my raptured soul shall find
 Rest beyond the river.

Near the cross! O lamb of God,
 Bring its scenes before me;
 Help me walk from day to day
 With its shadow o'er me. [Refrain]

Near the cross! I'll watch and wait,
 Hoping, trusting ever;
 Till I reach the golden strand,
 Just beyond the river. [Refrain]

Communion

Invitation to the Table

As we prepare to celebrate holy communion, let us remember that Scripture calls us to examine ourselves before God. We are taught that eating and drinking unworthily brings judgment upon ourselves (1 Cor. 11:28-29). Let us therefore ask God for the proper spirit in which to celebrate the sacrament.

Let us Pray,

Almighty God, before whom can be neither secret thought nor hidden deed, grant us your Spirit that we may know our hearts, our lives, and our inmost thoughts as you know them.

Grant us your grace that we may repent sincerely of all sin, find peace with you through our Lord Jesus Christ, and grow in assurance of salvation in him.

May the celebration of our Savior's infinite love in his redeeming death bring joy to us and glory to you. **Amen.**

The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you;
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts;
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God;
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy
to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.
In your wisdom, you made all things
and sustain them by your power.
You formed us in your image,
setting us in this world to love and to serve you,
and to live in peace with your whole creation.
When we rebelled against you
refusing to trust and obey you,
you did not reject us,
but still claimed us as your own.
You sent prophets to call us back to your way.

Then in the fullness of time,
 out of your great love for the world,
 you sent your only Son to be one of us,
 to redeem us and heal our brokenness.
 Therefore we praise you,
 joining our voices with choirs of angels,
 with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
 and with all the faithful of every time and place,
 who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest.
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty,
 and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.
 In Jesus, born of Mary, your Word became flesh
 and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.
 He lived as one of us, knowing joy and sorrow.
 He healed the sick,
 fed the hungry,
 opened blind eyes,
 broke bread with outcasts and sinners,
 and proclaimed the good news of your kingdom to the poor and needy.
 Dying on the cross,
 he gave himself for the life of the world.
 Rising from the grave,
 he won for us victory over death.
 Seated at your right hand,
 he leads us to eternal life.
 We praise you that Christ now reigns with you in glory,
 and will come again to make all things new.
 Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
 we take from your creation this bread and this wine
 and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising,
 as we await the day of his coming.
 With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
 to be a living and holy sacrifice,
 dedicated to your service

Christ is the bread of life:

**When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory**

Gracious God,
pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break
and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
that we may be one with all who share this feast,
united in ministry in every place.
As this bread is Christ's body for us,
send us out to be the body of Christ in the world

In union with your church in heaven and on earth,
we pray, O God, that you will fulfill your eternal purpose
in us and in all the world.

Keep us faithful in your service
until Christ comes in final victory,
and we shall feast with all your saints
in the joy of your eternal realm.
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father,
now and forever.

Amen.

Let us together confess the faith of the church at all times and in
all places:

The Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**

**and he will come again 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.**

Communion

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread,
and after giving thanks to God,
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat.
This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it,
do this in remembrance of me.

Holy God, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead,
proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand,
awaiting his coming in glory,
and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us,
this bread and this cup,
we praise you and we bless you.

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Taking of the bread

Take and eat.
This is the body of Christ, which is [given] for you.
Do this, remembering him.

Drinking of the cup

This cup is the new covenant
sealed by Christ's blood,
which was shed that the sins of many
might be forgiven.

Drink from it, all of you

Prayer after Communion

Gracious God,
 you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth.
 You have fed us with the bread of life,
 and renewed us for your service.
 Help us who have shared Christ's body and received his cup,
 to be his faithful disciples
 so that our daily living
 may be part of the life of your kingdom,
 and our love be your love
 reaching out into the life of the world;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Invitation to Offering

Offering

Offertory Prayer
(Congregant Prepared)

Closing Hymn #211: "O the Deep, Deep Love if Jesus"

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
 Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free!
 Rolling as a mighty ocean
 In its fullness over me.
 Underneath me, all around me,
 Is the current of Thy love;
 Leading onward, leading homeward
 To my glorious rest above.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
 Spread His praise from shore to shore!
 How He loveth, ever loveth,
 Changeth never, nevermore;
 How He watches o'er His loved ones,
 Died to call them all His own;
 How for them He intercedeth,
 Watcheth o'er them from the throne.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
 Love of every love the best;
 'Tis an ocean vast of blessing,
 'Tis a haven sweet of rest.
 O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
 'Tis a heav'n of heav'ns to me;
 And it lifts me up to glory,
 For it lifts me up to Thee.

Pastoral Prayer

Enduring God,
 we thank you today for your faithfulness to us
 and to the tradition that has shaped us as disciples of Jesus.
 Thank you for your living Word which continues to reveal him,
 and for the gift of your Spirit to help us interpret your wisdom
 in the midst of challenging times.

Eternal God,
 we give you thanks for people in our lives and across the ages
 who have shown us your loving kindness through their witness to Christ
 in so many different situations.
 Inspire us by their examples and show us how we, too, can live out our faith
 in the midst of challenging times.

Loving God,
 You keep calling us to care for those in need and show hospitality to strangers in our
 midst.
 Thank you for your persistent love which continues to comfort and challenge us all.
 Open our hearts and eyes so that we can see how to offer that love to others
 in the midst of challenging times.

Living God,
 You bring new life to the discouraged and those facing danger and death.
 Thank you for signs of hope which break into pressures of the pandemic
 and its consequences for so many,
 in the midst of challenging times.

Creating God,
 we praise you for the beauty of this world and the rhythms of nature which sustain us.
 Give us courage to act on behalf of your creation where it is stressed or broken,
 and nurture our commitment to act as your stewards within creation
 in the midst of challenging times.

Wise God,
hear us in this time of silence as lay before you the people and places on our hearts this day.

In Jesus name we pray. **Amen**

Benediction

Someone asked Jesus,
“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”
Jesus replied:
“ ‘Love the Lord your God
with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your mind.’
This is the first and greatest commandment.
And the second is like it:
‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’
All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”
May our Lord Jesus Christ,
the one who came with grace and truth,
also fill your hearts with grace and truth,
as you serve him lovingly in the days ahead.
And may the joy of the Lord—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—
be with you and strengthen you each day in your service. **Amen.**