

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
January 03, 2016



Gathering: *God of grace upon grace, we gather to offer you glory and praise.*

Bless us at the beginning of this year and guide us day by day.

Hymn: Amazing Grace how sweet the sound (1-3) 670

Prayer of Confession: (God welcomes our prayers as we look deep within for everything seeking to separate us from God's love.) *O God, Searcher of all our hearts, you have formed us as a people and claimed us for your own. As we come to acknowledge your*

sovereignty and grace, and to enter anew into covenant with you, reveal any reluctance or falsehood within us. *Let your Spirit impress your truth on our inmost being, and receive us in mercy, for the sake of our Mediator, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever. O righteous God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, see me as I fall down before you. Forgive my unfaithfulness in not having done your will, for you have promised mercy to me if I turn to you with my whole heart. God requires that you shall put away all your idols. I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, covenanting with you that no known sin shall be allowed in my life.*

Hymn: Amazing Grace how sweet the sound (1-3) 670

John 1: 1-18 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Hymn: Give us Grace, O God (1-2)

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Continuing the Conversation: Kathryn Huey,

Grace brings us home: What does it mean to you, that "from his fullness, we have all received, grace upon grace"? What, then, is grace? God's grace has brought us light, has brought us truth, has brought us home. Coming home is a profound human experience, loaded with feeling. However, it's possible for a person to live at home, but feel as if they are in exile. There are members of our communities who may feel that they are in exile, right in our midst, and it can make a tremendous difference to them that God took on human flesh and shared in our own experiences of suffering and death. God is still speaking to us today, calling us to seek out the lost, the alienated, the excluded, the exiles in our own time and place. How can the church be a home for them? How are you and your congregation reaching out and bringing home the alienated, the excluded and the exiles in your neighborhood, and in the world?

How does Jesus embody "grace and truth"?

What does the phrase 'From his fullness we have all received'?

The hymn invites us to experience grace, to *see hear feel be* – how is this part of your life? Where do you experience the grace of God in your life?

Hymn: Give us Grace, O God (3-4)

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Prayers of Intercession: *Gracious God, We place ourselves in your presence. Our minds and our spirits are cluttered. Help us make space for you. Help us to be fully present here, now. We release to you all that we have done today— whether for good or for ill. We release all that we feel like we should have done today, but did not do. We release all of the people who weigh on our hearts and minds this day. We release our fears. We release our anxiety. We release our impatience. We release our pride. All of the thoughts, all of the feelings that pull us away from you, O God, we release. [silence] And now with open hearts we receive what you offer us now:*

We receive the gift of this space and this time and the beginning of this New Year. We receive the gift of being with each person here. We receive the Spirit's presence within us for guidance and healing. We receive the sacred words that will be spoken and thought. We receive the holy touch of hand and heart. We receive the silence. We receive You. Fill us now with the peace of your deep, abiding presence. We offer all of ourselves to you, our One God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. Amen

Prayer of Thanksgiving: **Invitation:** *We come to the table - all of us welcome. We invite God to be part of us - all of us breaking bread together. We prepare to remember Jesus - all of us touched by the Spirit of truth. We hope to be empowered by our feast - all of us with the glorious light of Christ shining in us.*

Hymn: Here is bread

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Communion

Prayer following communion

Generous God, with these hands you give us, we have held gifts from you. With these arms you give us, we stretch to gather in the lost and alone. With these eyes you give us, we see opportunities to share your good news. With these hearts you give us, we pray for strength and healing for others. You have given us what we need to be your disciples; we give to you all that we are to praise your name. Use these gifts and your people to spread the saving love of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: Now thank we all our God

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Blessing: A new year here and God is with us.

In loving and in carrying, in hoping and expecting,

God is with us and never lets us go.

God live in us, God live with us, God live through us.

God keep us faithful through the days that lie ahead,
God keep us caring in the pain that fills your world,
God keep us serving as we seek to do your will,
God live in us, God live with us, God live through us.

God keep us loving toward neighbours near and far,
God keep us trusting through the uncertainties of life,
God keep us sharing from your generous abundance.
God live in us, God live with us, God live through us.
Amen.