

WELCOME TO...
The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
February 21, 2016



FEARLESSNESS

God is our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear?

*God is our shelter and refuge on the days of trouble,
and our hope and joy on the days of celebration!*

One thing we ask of God:

*That we may live in God's dwelling place all the days of our life,
and never cease to behold the beauty of God's home.*

Beloved of God, enter this worship in thanksgiving,

for God is among and within us! Thanks be to God!

Gathering: *Holy God, one thing we ask and one thing we seek: to live in your presence and to be transformed by your Word. Send your Spirit to this place that we might behold the beauty of your grace and your goodness. As we wait on this journey to the cross, bless this proclamation of your Word so that it may be pleasing in your sight and that we may not go forth unchanged. Amen.*

Hymn: Now Quit your Care (vs. 1-2)

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Prayer of Confession: together: **Refuge of our hearts, we must speak of how we have not made you the center of our lives. We look for shelter in the false security of the world, not in your promises. Our fears are driven by our emotions and decisions, not by our trust in you. We look to the powerful, the beautiful, the athletic to be our role models, instead of the One who comes in your name. Have mercy on us, our Light and our Hope, and touch us with your forgiving grace. Fill our hearts with your presence, so we might recognize the One who has come to gather us up and lead us into your Kingdom, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.** (Silence is kept)

Assurance of Pardon: *God does not give us up to the fears and frustrations of the world, but shelters us with love, with hope, with grace. We are forgiven people. Thanks be to God. Amen.*

Hymn: Now Quit your Care (vs. 3-4)

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Prayer of the Day: **Lord, Please listen to us when we pray Hear our cry for those in need of prayer, those who are downtrodden—lift them up.**

Those who are ill—bring your healing touch.

Those who have lost a loved one—comfort for their sorrow.

Those who have felt rejected—acceptance and support.

Those who have become homebound, disabled, chronically ill, terminally ill, or gone into nursing care—send them your loving presence. Be gracious to all Lord and answer our prayers.

Hymn: Now Quit your Care (vs. 5)

191

Scripture: Psalm 27 *The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?*

The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh-- my adversaries and foes-- they shall stumble and fall. Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident. One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple. For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock. Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me! "Come," my heart says, "seek his face!" Your face, LORD, do I seek. Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation! If my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me up. Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies. Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and they are breathing out violence. I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

Psalm 27 includes a song of trust, prayers for deliverance, and a lament. The rapid fire movement among these responses to God makes clear the challenge of faith. The circumstances of our lives can appear to give the lie to God's goodness. The empty echo meeting our prayers casts doubt upon God's attentiveness. We feel forsaken, and we can so easily fall into unbelief. So the psalm begins and ends with proclamations of trust. They serve to reassure us as to who God is for us and to remind God of who God is for God's self. Luther wrote that if God came to his doorstep tomorrow and announced that on second thought he was not going to save him, he would respond, "Too late, I have your promise." Not exactly a humble reply but an appropriate one in the circumstances, for this God has taken us up. *Jane Strohl*

Rabbi Harold Kushner speaks about such prayer. He reminds us that "people who pray for courage, for strength to bear the unbearable, for the grace to remember what they have left instead of what they have lost, very often find their prayers answered. Their prayers helped them tap hidden reserves of faith and courage that were not available to them

before." **Invitation:** *Come, you weary and restless, come, all who hunger and thirst. Jesus calls us to dine as friends, come, God's feast of welcome awaits us.*

Hymn: Shout for Joy (1-2)

557

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *Rejoice in the Lord always. Shout out his name. For God is with us. Our God is with us. The God of our salvation in whom alone we trust. Rejoice in the Lord always Shout out his name (we continue in prayer) Holy Spirit, come! Make all things new. Bless this bread which you have given and human hands have made. Let it become for us the bread of life. Bless also this cup, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. Let it become for us the cup of salvation. Bless us also who eat and drink, that in this sharing we may know the living Christ who is with us now, and to the end of the age. Nourish us by these gifts to be willing servants of your world until the new age comes, and every creature beholds it. We pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to say **Our Father....***

Communion

Hymn: Shout for Joy (4)

557

Prayer following communion *Give us the fruits of this holy communion: oneness of heart, love for neighbours, forgiveness of enemies, the will to serve you every day, and life that never ends. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.*

Hymn: Lord Jesus you shall be my song (vs. 1 and 4)

665

This is Lent, and into its wilderness God calls us. Come, brothers and sisters, Christ is heading for Jerusalem. And we must follow.

fearlessness