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ORDER OF WORSHIP

JANUARY 5, 2025 | 8:15 AM



FPC HOUSTON

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

A MEDITATION BEFORE WORSHIP:

When the song of the angels is stilled, When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home, When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music from the heart. [Howard Thurman]

PRELUDE | *What Sweeter Music*

John Rutter

WELCOME AND INVITATION TO COMMUNITY

Jon Crantz, Pastor of Community Life

Please stand

CALL TO WORSHIP

The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;
yet their voice goes out through all the earth,

and their words to the end of the world.

The glory of God echoes throughout the world.

Let us praise the name of the Lord. —based on Psalm 19:1-4, NRSV

GATHERING HYMN | *Arise, Your Light is Come*

FESTAL SONG

1 A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey; show
2 A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door; pro -
3 A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born, bind
4 A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song! Rise

forth the glo - ry of your God, which shines on you to - day.
claim the cap-tives' lib - er - ty, good ti - dings to the poor.
up the bro - ken-heart-ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
up like ea - gles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

We call on God's name, assured of his presence. We ask him to speak to us in specific ways.

GATHERING PRAYER

Jon Crantz

O God,

you spoke your Word and revealed your good news in Jesus, the Christ.

Fill all creation with that Word again so that by proclaiming your joyful promises to all nations and singing of your glorious hope to all peoples, we may become one living body, your incarnate presence on the earth.

Lord, you greet us here on this Lord's day with your unending offer of a fresh start.

We call upon your name, knowing you will be among us.

Teach us today to welcome one another as you have welcomed us. Give us eyes to see one another as you see us.

Teach us always to walk in your light, and to spread your light to others. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE | *Holy Forever*

Tomlin

A thousand generations falling down in worship to sing the song of ages to the Lamb
And all who've gone before us and all who will believe will sing the song of ages to the Lamb

Your name is the highest, Your name is the greatest, Your name stands above them all
All thrones and dominions, all powers and positions, Your name stands above them all

And the angels cry, "Holy." All creation cries, "Holy, You are lifted high. Holy. Holy forever."

If you've been forgiven and if you've been redeemed, sing the song forever to the Lamb

If you walk in freedom and if you bear His name, sing the song forever to the Lamb

We'll sing the song forever and Amen

Hear your people sing, "Holy!" To the King of Kings, "Holy!" You will always be Holy. Holy forever."

Please be seated

There is no sincere Christian community without honesty with God and with one another. But acknowledging our faults does not leave us broken. As we live in the truth, we are restored to spiritual health, knowing that we all share in the common affliction of sin and in the forgiveness offered equally to us all.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Jan Smith, Elder

The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. Let us confess our sin to God, beginning with a moment for silent reflection.

—based on John 3:19, NRSV

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty and merciful God, **we confess that we have sinned against you and one another in both our actions and our inactions.**

We have often failed to notice one another, ignoring the image of God in them.

We have allowed those who are near us to feel alone and unseen.

We have judged or disregarded others, not caring to know their story - and the story You have in mind for them.

We recognize that in Jesus Christ our Light has come,

yet often we choose to walk in shadows and ignore the light.

Gracious God, forgive our sins and remove from us the veil of darkness that shrouds our lives.

Illumined by your Word and Communion Table, may we rise to the radiance of Christ's glory. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you,

that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true;

but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Followers of Christ, because of the tender-mercies of God,

I declare to you that in His name, we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God! —1 John 1:5-7, NRSV

Please stand

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Jan Smith

Because we have been reconciled to God and one another,
we use this moment to bless one another with God's peace.

Please be seated

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Jonathan Ramsay, Founder of Jericho Road Renewal

ANTHEM | *Walk in the Light*

TRAD. GOSPEL/arr. André Thomas

Walk in the light, beautiful light. Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.

Shine all around us by day and by night, Jesus, the Light of the World.

Christ, whose glory fills the skies, Jesus, the Light of the World.

Christ, everlasting Light, Jesus, the Light of the World.

Walk in the Light...

Sun of righteousness, arise, Jesus, the Light of the World.

Triumph o'er the shades of night; Jesus, the Light of the World.

Walk in the Light.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

MESSAGE | Greet One Another (Rom. 16:1-16, Matt. 23:5-7)

Curtis A. Bronzan,
Senior Pastor

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Jon Crantz

SUNG AFFIRMATION OF FAITH | This I Believe

1. Our Fa - ther ev - er - last - ing___ The all cre - at - ing___ One___
 2. Our judge and our de - fend - er___ Suf - fered and cru - ci - fied___

___ God___ Al - might - y Through Your Ho - ly Spir - it___
 ___ For - give - ness is in ___ You De - scend - ed in - to dark - ness

___ Con - ceiv - ing Christ the Son___ Je - sus our Sav - iour
 ___ You rose in glo - rious life___ For - ev - er seat - ed___ high

1. I be - lieve in God our Fa - ther I be - lieve in ___ Christ the Son
 2. I be - lieve in life e - ter - nal___ I be - lieve in the vir - gin birth

I be - lieve in the Ho - ly Spir - it___ Our God is three in ___ One
 I be - lieve in the saints' com - mun - ion___ And in Your ho - ly ___ Church

I be - lieve in the res - sur - rec - tion___ That we will rise a - gain
 I be - lieve in the res - ur - rec - tion___ When Je - sus comes a - gain

For I be - lieve in the Name of Je - sus

Please stand
Creeds are summary statements of faith, carefully refined over time. Whether from long church history or directly from scripture, they provide guidelines for our Christian thinking.

Communion: With the coming of Jesus the covenant with Israel was expanded and confirmed. Through Christ, the gates of salvation have been thrown open. Just as the Magi were welcomed at the cradle of the Christ child, so God welcomes all strangers and those in need into the covenant of blessing. Jesus Christ offered food to the hungry and water to the thirsty, shelter to the wanderer and justice to the oppressed, friendship to the lonely and kinship to the faithful. Jesus forgave sins, preached good news, and filled all people with the hope of new life.

Please stand

COMMUNION AT THE LORD'S TABLE

THE COMMUNION

Communion is served by intinction, that is, to take the bread and dip it in the cup. Worshipers come forward to receive. If anyone needs to be served in the pew, please let an elder know, and they will be pleased to bring communion to you.

COMMUNION ANTHEM | *Let Us Break Bread Together (All are invited to sing)*



1 Let us break bread together on our knees; let us break bread together on our knees.

2 Let us drink wine together on our knees; let us drink wine together on our knees.

3 Let us praise God together on our knees; let us praise God together on our knees.

Refrain



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.

SENDING

PRAYER OF THANKS

Jon Crantz

Loving God, we thank you that you have fed us at your table, united us with Christ, and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet in your eternal kingdom. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Jon Crantz

**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

Curtis A. Bronzan

POSTLUDE | *Prélude sur l'Introït de l'Épiphanie*

Maurice Duruflé

MUSICIANS

Chancel Choir, Dan Wagner (Conductor & Director of Worship), Jeong-Suk Bae (Organist & Accompanist), Owen Teixeira (Djembe), Zach Goodrick (Guitar), and Vickie Wagner (Worship Leader)

FLOWERS

The flowers in the sanctuary today are given to God's glory by Anne & Currie Bechtol with deep thanksgiving for the blessings of this church.

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Ministry Partner Update

Jericho Road Renewal

Jonathan Ramsay, founder of Jericho Road Renewal, will be sharing in worship this morning. Jericho Road Renewal (JRR) is a community serving Southeast Houston through supportive housing for marginalized men and women, the development of leaders, and the creation of partnerships that strengthen the fabric of our neighborhood. Rise Again Bread is one area of their ministry where residents of JRR develop skills to bake delicious bread using four ingredients—flour, yeast, salt and water. This morning's loaves of bread used by the pastor's in communion is from Rise Again. A Jericho Road Renewal table will be in Palm Court this morning where you can learn more about the ministry and support their work and sign up for bread. The mission of Rise Again is "we bake bread so that we can hire and house the homeless." *For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.* - John 6:33

Intentional 5K: Logging the Journey

Have you invited a colleague to coffee, encouraged a pew mate to join you in Sunday School, shared details with a neighbor about Christmas Eve worship, or simply invited another parent to join your family at the park? We want to know! Becoming a community that is intentional about inviting others in takes practice. Let's encourage one another as we work to develop the muscle memory for cultivating community through an intentional invitation. Share your Intentional 5K story at fpchouston.org/intentional5k.

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Curtis A. Bronzan, Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Jon Crantz, Pastor of Community Life

Rev. Dr. Courtney McLaughlin, Pastor of Equipping

Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Paulpeter, Pastor of Outreach

Rev. Jeanmarie Tade, Pastor of Caring



There are many ways for you to gather, grow in community, and serve here at FPC. We invite you to join us for these upcoming events. View additional opportunities at fpchouston.org/events.

GriefShare

Thursdays | Begins Jan 9 | 11:30 AM | FH 253

GriefShare is a 13-week program to help you through one of life's most difficult experiences, the loss of someone special. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone. Anyone who has gone through the loss of a loved one and needs support is welcome to attend. Contact caring@fpchouston.org for more information or to attend.

Children & Family Baptism Orientation

Sun | Jan 12 | 9:30 AM | LC 228

Planning to have your young child baptized at FPC? This orientation is the first step in the process. Parents will learn about baptism at FPC and the expectations we have for them. They'll also learn about our Children's Ministry and have a chance to fellowship with other parents in the same stage of life. Childcare provided. Register at fpchouston.org/events.

Chancel Choir Winter Workshop

Sat | Jan 11 | 8:30 AM-12 PM | Fellowship Hall


The Chancel Choir is looking for new singers! To experience what it's like to participate, make plans to attend the annual Winter Workshop. Contact Nancy Turner at turnernancy@sbcglobal.net so that preparations may be made for your participation.

City Serve Opportunity:

Kids' Meals Lunch Pack

Sun | Jan 26 | 9:30 AM | Fellowship Hall

FPC Houston exists to *Cultivate Community in the Way of Jesus for the Flourishing of the City* and what better way to demonstrate our commitment to this mission than a morning serving together. Skip your Sunday best, put on something comfortable, and make plans to be here as we pack 1,500 lunches for local children. All ages welcome!

 Look for this symbol to find easy opportunities for an *intentional invitation*. Visit fpchouston.org/intentional5k to learn more.

Connect

Text **CONNECT** to **90859** for more info about FPC Houston, ways to get involved, and upcoming events.

Give

Your generosity helps impact the people, places, and ministries we serve. To contribute today, text **GIVE** to **90859** or place your gift in an offering box. Thank you for your faithfulness.