

Morning Worship Service

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

JANUARY 28, 2024

11:00 A.M.

The purpose of this sermon will be to put a slightly different spin on what we mean by the "word made flesh."

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME, CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS OF THE CHURCH

PRELUDE *Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples* Dale Wood

INTROIT *Come, Labor On* arr. Ryan Murphy

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord with willing hearts, offering praise in the midst of the congregation.

People: Great are God's works; the ways of the Lord are studied by all who delight in them.

Leader: The deeds of the Lord are full of majesty and splendor; God performs acts of justice and mercy across the whole earth.

People: The awe of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; thanks and praise endure among God's people forever!

***HYMN OF PRAISE NO. 420** *God of Grace and God of Glory* CWM RHONDDA

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Almighty God, Light from Light, who commands the universe and all that is made, Your Word is the power that makes whole what is broken, the force of good, and the food of peace. Teach us now as You taught in the synagogue. Heal us now so that in all that we say and do, the freedom we have in You may be for others, too; this we ask in the name of our Savior, Jesus the Christ who taught his disciples this prayer we now lift up to You with one voice, praying;

All: 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.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins before God, the source of our freedom and forgiveness. Let us pray.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, You have given us a sure Word, sealed by Your Spirit in the free gift of Your Son. In him You have set us free from bondage, bound up and healed our wounds, and led us into paths of peace. But still we listen to other voices, as though Your Word were just one among others. In mercy, forgive us, O Lord. Enable us by Your Spirit to demonstrate our gratitude for all Your blessings by following Jesus with undivided hearts, and by bearing his liberating good news where there is brokenness and bondage, to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Leader: Hear now, O Lord, our personal prayers of confession in this time of silence.

KYRIE NO. 565

Lord, Have Mercy
Kyrie Eleison – (Lord, have mercy)
Christe Eleison – (Christ, have mercy)
Kyrie Eleison – (Lord, have mercy)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The God who made you and knows your every thought hears you now and forgives you all your sin. You have been redeemed through Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Savior, who is the Alpha and the Omega, all in all. Amen.

*RESPONSE – NO. 579

“Gloria Patri”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

COMMISSIONING OF GUATEMALA MISSION TEAM

Leader: In accepting the charge to be a member of this Guatemala Mission Team, have you been persuaded by the love of God and a sincere desire to promote God's glory in the gospel for Jesus Christ?

Team members: I have been so persuaded.

Leader: Do you accept this task, pledging your faithfulness in service and opening your heart for the enrichment which others may share with you?

Team members: I do so pledge.

Leader: Do you commit yourself as a partner in obedience to the Christ of the one church and with other Christians, confident that we are all sisters and brothers of the One Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

Team members: I do so commit myself.

Leader: In humble reliance upon divine grace, do you promise to be faithful and diligent in all you do, to be an example of Christian love, and to serve in hearty cooperation with your colleagues in mission and ministry?

Team members: I do so promise relying on God's grace.

Leader: Members of this church, will you open your hearts to the ministry of this team and pray for them as servants of Christ?

Congregation: Yes, we will with God's help.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

ANTHEM

Touch That Soothes and Heals

Mary Louise Bringle

*Touch that soothes and heals the hurting, hands that break a loaf of bread,
Steps that walk beside the weary, bearing burdens in their stead.
Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit ones in need of care.
Give the homeless warmth and shelter, Christ will find a welcome there.
"See My hands and feet," said Jesus, love arisen from the grave.
"Be My hands and feet," said Jesus, "Live as ones I died to save."*

*Love and serve without distinction all God's people, first and least.
Know within each act of kindness hope and wholeness are increased.
"See My hands and feet," said Jesus, love arisen from the grave.
"Be My hands and feet," said Jesus, "Live as ones I died to save."*

*Hands that beckon little children, bind a wound, prepare a meal.
Feet that rush to share good tidings Christ arisen still reveal.
"See My hands and feet," said Jesus, love arisen from the grave.
"Be My hands and feet," said Jesus, "Live as ones I died to save."*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

[Mark 1:21-28](#)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The Word Made Flesh"

Rev. Dr. A. Taylor Todd

***UNISON PROFESSION OF FAITH**

(from *A Declaration of Faith*)

Before Jesus left his disciples, he commanded them to proclaim to all people the good news of his victory over death and promised to be with them always. We are certain that Jesus lives. He lives as God with us, touching all human life with the presence of God. He lives as one of us with God. Because he shares our humanity and has bound us to himself in love, we have an advocate in the innermost life of God. We declare that Jesus is Lord. His resurrection is a decisive victory over the powers that deform and destroy human life. His lordship is hidden.

The world appears to be dominated by people and systems that do not acknowledge his rule. But his lordship is real. It demands our loyalty and sets us free from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us. We maintain that ultimate sovereignty now belongs to Jesus Christ in every sphere of life. Jesus is Lord! He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end. Even now he is Lord. Amen.

***HYMN OF AFFIRMATION NO. 357**

MARYTON

O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

God invites us to give the testimony of our hearts in practical offerings of money and time. Therefore, let us testify to God's love by bringing our gifts.

OFFERTORY

Prelude

William H. Harris

***DOXOLOGY NO. 592**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Blessed are You, God of all creation. Through Your goodness, we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for Your glory and for the service of Your kingdom. In Christ's name we give and pray, Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN NO. 419** *How Clear is Our Vocation, Lord*

REPTON

POSTLUDE

Toccata in Seven

John Rutter

***BENEDICTION**

***Congregation standing as able.**

WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

During today's service, we are commissioning our mission team traveling to Guatemala. Their trip commences on Tuesday, January 30. We ask that you keep the team members in your prayers: Blake Hobson, Grayson Robbins, Tatum Collins, Alix Roaten, Matt Blanchard, George Dent, Travis Roaten, Rubenia Sanchez, and Pablo Maldonado.

Are you looking for a church home? If so, please speak to our minister following worship.

Large print bulletins and hymnals are available from the ushers.

As a courtesy to those around you, please turn off or silence cell phones and personal communication devices.

The Flowers are placed in the sanctuary to the glory of God and in honor of Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd, with much love from a grateful congregation.

Nursery care is available for newborns through four-year-olds. Please ask an usher for directions to the nursery if you are visiting for the first time.

Ritual of Friendship—Members and Visitors: Please sign the black attendance register every Sunday and pass it down your pew. Please read the names, greet one another, and meet new members and visitors.

We care about you as we care about each other. If you would like to submit a prayer request, you may use the blue cards in the pews or in McFadden Hall, and our pastoral staff and prayer partners will pray for you.

The service is live streamed and available for viewing on [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) by those unable to be with us this morning. Search *firstprestupelo*. We also invite you to visit our website at www.firstprestupelo.org.

Leading the worship service today: Rev. Dr. A. Taylor Todd, Dr. Robert Taylor, Dr. Ray Harris
Liturgist: Rev. John Brock
Greeters: Pat Agnew, Lori and Bill Dickerson, Virginia Toliver

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Two years ago, we were blessed with the arrival of Dr. Taylor Todd. Even though he had the title of “interim,” he quickly became a friend to all and a calm and guiding light to our church. Join us today at Noon in the Fellowship Hall for a luncheon in his honor.

Be sure to join church friends and our visitors for supper at 5:30 P.M., Wednesday, January 31 in the Fellowship Hall. The menu: Million Dollar Chicken Casserole, Fried and Grilled Chicken Tenders, Build Your Own Beef Tacos or Taco Salad, Homestyle Green Beans, Tater Tots, Roasted Vegetable Medley, Rolls, Full Salad Bar, Fresh Fruit, and Assorted Desserts.

The Adult Program begins at 6:15 P.M. and will be led by Colby Cuevas, a licensed professional counselor and former care and recovery pastor at The Orchard Church. He will present a program on life's struggles and challenges.

Sign up by Noon Wednesday using Sunday's attendance register, [the link](#) in Friday's newsletter, or call the church office at 662-842-5681. Wednesday programs for Faithbuilders and youth begin at 6:00 P.M., Cherubs begin at 6:10 P.M. All programs conclude at 7:00 P.M.

The Youth and Outreach/Missions Committee hope you will join us for Souper Bowl Sunday, February 11. Lunch will be served in the Fellowship Hall following the 11:00 A.M. service and feature homemade soup made by members of our congregation. To-Go meals will be available early for those interested! We ask that you donate what you would typically spend on a Sunday lunch out, and these donations will be split evenly between our Youth and Outreach/Missions. If you are interested in contributing a pot of soup, please contact Robin Faucette or Melissa McDuffie.

PRAYERS FOR THIS WEEK

Homebound: Harry Rayburn, Grace Stamps, Annette Thornton

College Students: Carson Clark, Mazzie Cooper, Emma Counce

Service Members: Patrick Hastings, Andrew Ray

Confirmants: Alice Fagan, Hudson Fisher, Gracie Wallace, and Kelsey Whitten, along with their teachers and elder mentors.

Attendance Sunday, January 14 - 9:00 A.M.: 48 11:00 A.M.: 109

THE CHURCH AT WORSHIP AND WORK

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

10:00 A.M. Annual Congregational Meeting, Sanctuary

10:00 A.M. Only Cherubs through Jr. High have Sunday school

11:00 A.M. Worship Service, Sanctuary

12:00 P.M. Luncheon honoring Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd

4:30 P.M. Boy Scouts, Room B205

5:30 P.M. Youth

MONDAY, JANUARY 29

2:45 P.M. CASA, Gym

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30

9:00 A.M. T'ai Chi Chih

10:00 A.M. Staff Meeting

11:00 A.M. Bible Study, Bolton/Sistahood Room

2:45 P.M. CASA, Gym

7:00 P.M. A.A. Meeting

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31

2:45 P.M. CASA, Gym

3:00 P.M. Mah-Jongg, Stewart Clayton Room

5:05 P.M. Tower Ringers
5:30 P.M. Supper, Fellowship Hall
6:00 P.M. Faithbuilders, Youth
6:10 P.M. Cherubs
6:15 P.M. Adult Program, Fellowship Hall
7:00 P.M. Chancel Choir

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1

8:00 A.M. Men's Breakfast, Hilton Garden Inn

2:45 P.M. CASA, Gym

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2

12:00 P.M. A.A. Meeting

2:45 P.M. CASA, Gym

THE SESSION

Rev. John Brock, Moderator

Clerk of the Session, Lisa Nichols

Class of 2024

Kim Burleson

Cindy Faucette

Leslie Geoghegan

Michael Gratz Jr.

Chauncey Godwin

Charles Reece

Alice Rogers

Class of 2025

Richard Hastings

Trey Leeke

Lucy Nash

Chris Rogers

Mary Stubbs

Glenn Thomas

Presly Wallace

Class of 2026

Glen Davidson, Sr.

Jim Fisher

Ben Hunter

Bob Lence

Corey Littrell

Helen Monts

Aubre Wells

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Rev. John Brock, Pastor

Rev. Dr. Ron Richardson, Parish Associate for Pastoral Care

Melissa McDuffie, Director of Youth and Christian Education

Dr. Robert Taylor, Director of Music

Dr. Ray Harris, Organist

Seth Shelnut, Audio/Visual Technician

Danielle Frerer Ratliff, Director of Elementary and Youth Choirs

Cindy Faucette, Church Librarian

Margaret Anne Murphey, Music Librarian

Helen Curtis, Church Secretary

Kay Stanford, Financial Secretary

Jen Baylor, Receptionist

Eddie Baker, Maintenance Superintendent

Rev. M. McCoy Franklin, Pastor Emeritus