FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

Traditional Worship Service
The Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 30, 2025

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

WELCOME AND COMMUNITY LIFE

PRELUDE Adagio in E — Cesar Franck

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Call to Worship:
Our God is a shepherding God.
Our God knows us by name.
Our God will never stop searching for us. So if you feel lost,
then know that God is seeking you.
If you feel found,
then know that God will never leave.
This is the promise of scripture.
This is the promise of God's love.
Let us worship our with-us God.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN — #313
Come Down, O Love Divine — DOWN AMPNEY

*Please stand if you are able.

1 Come down, O Love divine,
Seek out this soul of mine
And visit it with Your own ardor glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
Within my heart appear,
And kindle it, Your holy flame bestowing.

2 O let it freely burn,
Till earthly passions turn
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
And let Your glorious light
Shine ever on my sight,
And clothe me round,
the while my path illuming.

3 And so the yearning strong
With which the soul will long
Shall far outpass the power of human telling;
For none can guess God's grace,
Till Love creates a place
Wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSON

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

If God is a painter, **let us be the brush.** If God is a musician, **let us be the song.**

If God is an architect, **let us be the tools. Let us be the hands. Let us be the builders.**

But if God is a shepherd, who never stops seeking, **let us be willing to be found, no matter how lost we feel**. Our God is never far away. **Forgive us for forgetting this good news. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (responsive)

Family of faith, we are all a little bit lost and a little bit found. We grumble. We push back. We doubt God. We doubt ourselves. We leave the flock and lose our way. But fortunately for us, our God is a shepherding God who is always by our side. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel: **No matter how far we wander, we can never wander from the bounds of God's grace.**

We are loved. We are forgiven. We are not alone. Thanks be to God! Amen.

WE LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE

Psalm Reading: Psalm 34:1-7 Betsy Simpson

Gospel Reading: Luke 15:1-7

Leader: The word of the Lord;

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON Rev. Karen Kinney

"A Sheep Owner's Lost and Found"

WE RESPOND

MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

When in your life have you felt lost? What did it feel like to be found?

*SERMON HYMN #387

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us BRADBURY

1 Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy folds prepare:
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are;
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

2 Thou hast promised to receive us,
Poor and sinful though we be;
Thou hast mercy to relieve us,
Grace to cleanse, and power to free:
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Early let us turn to Thee.
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Early let us turn to Thee.

3 Early let us seek Thy favor;
Early let us do Thy will;
Blessèd Lord and only Savior,
Eith Thy love our bosoms fill:
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Thou hast loved us, love us still;
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,
Thou hast loved us, love us still.

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a seeking God, a with-us and before-us God, a chasing-after-us God. We believe that no matter where we wander or what mountains we climb, *this* God - the God who walked the streets of Jerusalem, shook hands with lepers, patted children on the head, and told stories of love—is always close at hand. So on the good days and the hard

days, on the mountains and in the valleys, we believe that we are always being found. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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 evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory Shall We Gather at the River arr. Fred Bock

Chancel Choir

*Doxology #592

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow OLD HUNDREDTH

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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*SENDING HYMN #171

The King of Love My Shepherd Is (verses 1, 2, 3 and 6) ST. COLUMBIA

1 The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.

2 Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul He leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.

3 Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me.

6 And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever.

*BENEDICTION

As you leave this place, may you find God in every messy middle. May you know that the world is bigger than two sides. May you trust that you are made in the image of God, and therefore, you contain multitudes. So may you move through this world with an open heart, with a curious mind, and with the confidence that you do not go alone. God is with you in the mountains, in the valleys, and everywhere in between. Believe that good news, and go in peace.

POSTLUDE Fugue No. 3 from *Six Fugues on the name of BACH*, Op. 60 Robert Schuman