

**Welcome to First Presbyterian Church
April 11, 2021**

This service is one of two options during the Coronavirus time of physical distancing in which worship is happening only online. At 9:00 am on Sundays we will livestream through ZOOM an informal conversational time of worship like our First Light Worship. You can find the link to that on our website or Facebook page: fpcboise.org or facebook.com/fpcboise

This service is live streamed at 10:45 am from our Sanctuary and you can follow along with this bulletin or use this bulletin to guide your own service of worship. The live stream is available for view at <https://www.youtube.com/fpcboise> or facebook.com/fpcboise

Prelude *The King of Love My Shepherd Is* Robert Cundick

Welcome

This is the day the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Choral Introit *Arise, And Hail the Sacred Day* William Billings

*Arise, and hail the sacred day; cast all low cares of life away,
and thoughts of meaner things; this day, to cure the deadly woes,
the Son of Righteousness arose, with healing in his wings.*

*O then let heav'n and earth rejoice, creation's whole united voice,
and hymn the sacred day, when sin and Satan vanquish'd fell,
and all the pow'rs of death and hell, before his sov'reign sway.*

Call to Worship (adapted from Psalm 133 and John 20:21)

Peace be with you. How good and pleasant it is when we live together in unity.
Receive the Holy Spirit. It is like precious oil on the head, the blessing of the Lord.
Let us worship the Lord with thanks and praise.

***Hymn 233** *The Day of Resurrection!* LANCASHIRE

233 The Day of Resurrection!

1 The day of res - ur - rec - tion! Earth, tell it out a - broad,
 2 Let hearts be purged of e - vil that we may see a - right
 3 Now let the heavens be joy - ful; let earth its song be - gin;

the Pass - o - ver of glad - ness, the Pass - o - ver of God.
 the Lord in rays e - ter - nal of res - ur - rec - tion light,
 the round world keep high tri - umph and all that is there - in.

From death to life e - ter - nal, from sin's do - min - ion free,
 and lis - tening to his ac - cents, may hear, so calm and plain,
 Let all things seen and un - seen their notes of glad - ness blend,

our Christ has brought us o - ver with hymns of vic - to - ry.
 his own "All hail!" and hear - ing, may raise the vic - tor strain.
 for Christ the Lord has ris - en, our joy that has no end.

The roots of this English text come from a mid-8th century Greek hymn that continues to be used in Orthodox churches at the midnight Eucharist marking the beginning of Easter. The tune is named for the county in northwestern England where the composer was then an organist.

Prayer of Confession

You have shown yourself to us, O God, by Word and Spirit, with signs and wonders, in flesh and blood, yet we still struggle to live and believe the good news of Jesus Christ. Have mercy on us; forgive us. Enter into our lives and cast out our fear so that we may come to trust in you. O Lord, have mercy on us... (Silence, followed by:)

Forgive us, O God, and move us to trust, that we may boldly live your grace and love; through Jesus Christ our Savior, Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Friends, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. But to say we are only sinners goes too far. Our identity rests not in our brokenness but in God's love. Know that, whatever you believe separates you from God, God's love is more than enough to bridge the gap. The good news is that we are forgiven. You are forgiven. So be at peace.

Anthem

How Can It Be

Dan Forrest

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me who caused His pain? For me who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be that Thou my God, shouldst die for me?

He left His Father's throne above, so free, so infinite His grace;
Emptied Himself of all but love, and bled for Adam's helpless race;
'Tis mercy all, immense and free; For, O my God, it found out me.

No condemnation now I dread; Jesus and all in Him is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head, and clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th'eternal throne, and claim the crown through Christ my own.
Amazing love, how can it be that Thou, my God shouldst die for me?

- Charles Wesley (1738)

Prayer for Illumination

God of all who doubt and believe, by the gift of your Spirit enable us to hear with our ears, to see with our eyes, and to touch with our hands your Word of life—Jesus Christ—our Lord and our God. Amen.

Listen to the Word: 1 John 1:1-2:2

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

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.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Reflection on the Word and Life: “I’m just being honest...”

When I went to seminary I went to a Presbyterian seminary. That’s not a surprise. Most of us do – they would teach classes from a reformed theological perspective, they would understand our polity and ordination process, and they largely share our ecclesiological expectations on future clergy. There is a lot that makes sense about going to a school that understands your context... that understands you.

One of the drawbacks however is that... well – there is a lot of like-mindedness. We do understand each other, too much. And when we come from the same mental space with many of the predisposed ideas, we can have a tendency not to question certain givens. When everyone is an insider, we don’t question the thoughts that make us insiders – because we all agree on them. But do we?

Years ago, I remember starting to ask basic questions like: what does Gospel mean? We use the words a lot. We say this Gospel account, or we share this Gospel with the world, or Jesus came to give us Good News. But do we ever stop to ask what we mean by “the Gospel” or are we just assuming we all know and agree what that means? As Presbyterians we have a similar issue with words like “predestination” or “justified by faith”. Anything that we use regularly and start presuming we all mean the same thing by them.

When I switched to from being a math major in college to being a philosophy major, I got all the jokes. There are not a lot pay gigs for philosophers. In fact, ninety percent of philosophy majors go on to graduate school... so they can get a job in something. However, as a discipline there are several gifts that philosophy gave me and none more than the constant practice of examining our language. What does it really mean, what do we really mean by it, and how is that language shaping my reality?

You know in a Police TV Show how they take a suspect to the interrogation room and three people are behind glass watching as a detective sits at a bland table staring intently at a

suspect and examines them to find the truth. In much the same way the philosopher drags a word or idea out from the dark of our interior world and places in the interrogation room. They shine a bright light on the idea to mine it for its meaning and its implications and consequence when its used. In theological circles we have a name for this process: exegesis. It is the critical explanation or interpretation of a text or idea where we pull out from the idea all that it means or might mean in the world. We examine it closely to make sure we actually know what we are talking about when we say something like “Gospel” or “Salvation” or “Good News”. We analyze, we break it down, we evaluated, we build it back up and from a point of understanding we begin to make applications with that thought for our lives.

Now... you are probably starting to wonder: what is this all about Andrew?

I want to talk a moment – or I believe John’s letter wants us to talk a moment about honesty. Honesty is one of those values that I believe we all take for granted... and yet most of us have a very fast and loose relationship with daily. What is a white lie, and does it ever hurt? And how do we know the line between keeping something confidential and secret keeping? What is the boundaries upon which we “speak the truth in love” and when we speak honestly with intent to harm or hurt and defend it all be saying, “I’m just being honest”. And when we say that do we mean that we aren’t honest all the other times?

Honest is, frankly, far more complicated than we make it out to be when it finds its way onto the top 10 lists of core virtues of humanity. What does honesty look like when we haul into the interrogation room? What does it mean to be honest about our own relationship with honesty? This is the conversation I find so captivating in our reading for today from 1st John. John asks us a question about intent versus actuality and he asks it four times in a row:

If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie...

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us...

If we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and God’s word is not in us.

The repetition here is our examination. That light of Christ here is our interrogation. The question this letter wishes to ask us is this: how honest are we being with ourselves? The implication is that dishonest with others and with God begins with the one who is being dishonest with themselves. It is not, the text seems to imply, that we set out to lie. It is that we have deceived ourselves into believing that a lie is the truth... and the truth is the lie. And so the author of this letter draws on a tradition embedded in all Johanne literature: to talk about the different between those who walk in darkness and those who walk in the light. The light of Christ is a interrogation room to our own beloved truths... and even more so our beloved lies we tell ourselves about ourselves. This is a practice of confession and interrogation by Grace that we participate in weekly – and daily – where we draw out our practices, our beliefs, our values, our myths, truths and lies and we examine them before God and one another and we say... ok. So forget “I’m just being honest with you”. I need to start being honest with myself. And to this idea 1st John offers another rhetorical move juxtaposed against all the IFs of our self-deception:

If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

God is less a judge than a doctor. God's pledge is to do no harm. God's intent is to foster the well-being of all creation. And to bring about such flourishing God the doctor begins with an invitation to honest reflection of our lives in order that we may be properly diagnosed, treated, and healed. That we may be made well. But so long as we are lying to the doctor about our lack of symptoms – there can be no healing.

Honestly. Gently. Lovingly. The world needs us to go to the doctor. The world needs us to be honest about our truths and lies and myths and realities. The world needs us to be well. It is not that world doesn't need your help. But that without making sure you are well first, you will not be of help to the world no matter how hard you try. It is a "put your oxygen mask on first, and then put it on your neighbor" kind of moment. But to get that kind of wellness we need to commit to being honest. Honest with ourselves, and with God, and with one another.

I understand the power one can feel in point out a neighbors sins. And the world needs such prophets. Judgement is not decried by Scripture. You can tell thousands of years of prophetic tradition that we want not honest truth, no prophetic judgement. The problem for us is the order of operations with which we apply such practice. Jesus says, in Matthew, "Judge not lest you be judged." But the full teaching is that we will have to pull the log out of our own eye before we can pull the speck out of our neighbors. This is not "do not judget". But judge yourself first. Examine yourself first. Interrogate yourself first. And when you have done that through Grace of God. Then do likewise for your neighbor. The world needs truth-telling. It also needs honest truth-tellers.

Let us take up the invitation, weekly – daily, to examine our lives and let go our deceptions. Let us be made well... let us be made whole, so that in the process we can participate in the healing of the world.

***Affirmation of Faith** (adapted from the Brief Statement of Faith)

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain, and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

***Doxology** (Tune: Old Hundredth, Hymn 607)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

You can make an online donation to the mission and ministry of FPC Boise at www.fpcboise.org/donate or mailing cash or check to the church office.

Prayers of the Community

The Lord's Prayer (traditional)

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.

***Hymn 239**

Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing!

GELOBT SEI GOTT

***Charge and Benediction**

Choral Response

God Be with You Till We Meet Again

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Postlude

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

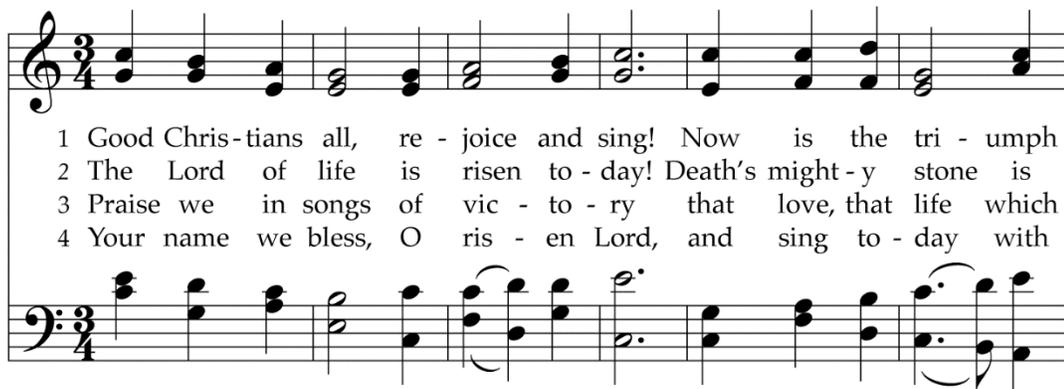
John Longhurst

Leading Worship

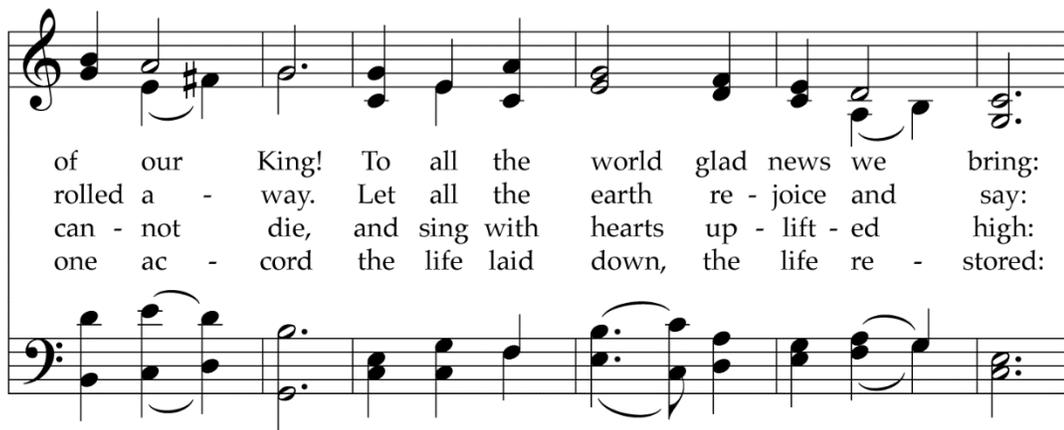
Rev. Dr. Andrew Kukla
Luann Fife, Pianist
The FPC Chancel Choir

Ryan Dye, Minister of Music
Bonnie Lind, Liturgist

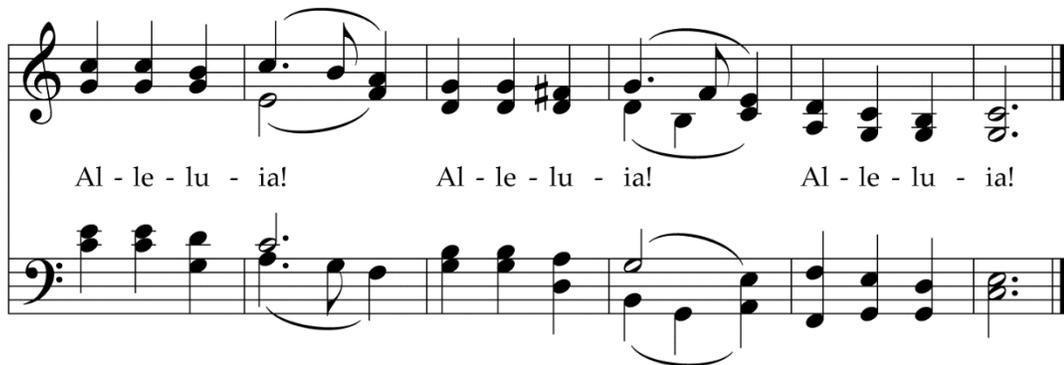
Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing! 239



1 Good Chris-tians all, re - joice and sing! Now is the tri - umph
2 The Lord of life is risen to - day! Death's might - y stone is
3 Praise we in songs of vic - to - ry that love, that life which
4 Your name we bless, O ris - en Lord, and sing to - day with



of our King! To all the world glad news we bring:
rolled a - way. Let all the earth re - joice and say:
can - not die, and sing with hearts up - lift - ed high:
one ac - cord the life laid down, the life re - stored:



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

This 20th-century Easter text is both a song of encouragement (stanzas 1–3 directed to the congregation) and a song of praise (stanza 4 addressed to the risen Christ), all ending with joyous alleluias. It was written specifically for the dancelike 17th-century tune found here.

TEXT: Cyril A. Alington, 1931, alt.
MUSIC: Melchior Vulpius, 1609; harm. *Pilgrim Hymnal*, 1958
Text © 1958, ren. 1986 *Hymns Ancient & Modern* (admin. Hope Publishing Company)

GELOBT SEI GOTT
8.8.8 with alleluias