

DIVINE WORSHIP

The prelude is a sacred curtain dropped between the world and the sanctuary. During this time, be prayerful and reverent in preparation for the worship of our holy God in His sanctuary. (Please silence all phones and electronic devices.)

PRELUDE *This Joyful Eastertide*

STRIKING OF THE HOUR

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (Minister) Based on John 8:12; Luke 1:79

Minister: Jesus Christ is the light of the world. He came to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace. Whoever follows him will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Christians, come and follow him. Come and worship your risen Lord!

***SONG OF ASCENT** (Unison) *Christ Shall Have Dominion*
Trinity Hymnal, 439

SCRIPTURE READING Ruling Elder

Genesis 12:1-3
Acts 13:44-49

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.
Congregation: Thanks be to God.

***HYMN OF PRAISE** (Unison) *Psalms 67*

1. O God, to us show mer - cy and bless us in your grace; cause
 2. O God, let all men praise you, let all the na - tions sing; in
 3. O God, let peo - ple praise you, let all the na - tions sing, for
 now to shine up - on us the bright - ness of your face; that
 ev - ery land let prais - es and songs of glad - ness ring; for
 earth in rich a - bun - dance to us her fruit shall bring. The
 so your way most ho - ly on earth may soon be known, and
 you shall judge the peo - ple in truth and right - eous - ness, and
 Lord our God shall bless us, our God shall bless - ing send, and
 un - to ev - 'ry peo - ple your sav - ing grace be shown.
 through the earth the na - tions shall your just rule con - fess.
 all the earth shall fear him to its re - mot - est end.

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND INVOCATION Ruling Elder

GLORIA PATRI (Unison)

*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.*

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison) Daniel 9:4-5

O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.

SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Unison) Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

***HYMN OF REJOICING** (Unison) *Alleluia! Alleluia!*
Trinity Hymnal, 283

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Responsive) *The Nicene Creed*

Minister: We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,

Congregation: of all things visible and invisible.

Minister: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds,

Congregation: God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,

Minister: begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;

Congregation: by whom all things were made;

Minister: who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man;

Congregation: and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried;

Minister: and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father;

Congregation: and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

Minister: And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,

Congregation: who proceeds from the Father and the Son;

Minister: who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets;

Congregation: and we believe in one holy catholic** and apostolic Church;

Minister: we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;

Congregation: and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* = Please stand if able.

**The word "catholic" means universal.

PASTORAL PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

*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*

WORSHIP WITH TITHES AND OFFERINGS (Choir)

***DOXOLOGY** (Unison)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION Deacon

SERMON *The Puzzling Christ* Rev. Simon Arscott
Matthew 15:21-28 (Pew Bible, 821)

***HYMN OF RESPONSE** (Unison) *God Moves in a Mysterious Way*

1. God moves in a mys - te - rious way, his
 2. Ye fear - ful saints fresh cour - age take, the
 3. Judge not the Lord by fee - ble sense, but
 4. His pur - pos - es will rip - en fast, un -
 5. Blind un - be - lief is sure to err, and
 won - ders to per - form. He plants his foot - steps on the
 clouds you so much dread, are big with mer - cy, and shall
 trust him for his grace. Be - hind a frown - ing prov - i -
 fold - ing ev - 'ry hour. The bud may have a bit - ter
 scan his work in vain. God is his own in - ter - pre -
 — sea, and rides up - on the storm. He plants his foot - steps
 — break, with bless - ings on your head, are filled with mer - cy
 — dence, he hides a smil - ing face, be - hind a frown - ing
 — taste, but sweet will be the flow'r. The bud may have a
 — ter, and he will make it plain. God is his own in -
 on the sea, and rides up - on the storm.
 and shall break with bless - ings on your head.
 prov - i - dence he hides a smil - ing face.
 bit - ter taste, but sweet will be the flow'r.
 ter - pre - ter, and he will make it plain.

***PASTORAL BENEDICTION** (Responsive) 2 Corinthians 13:14

Minister: *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

Congregation: *Thanks be to God! Amen.*

POSTLUDE *God Moves in a Mysterious Way*

Sermon Notes

The Puzzling Christ
Matthew 15:21-28 (Pew Bible, 821)

I. Introduction

II. Christ plays hard to get

III. The woman has faith in Christ

IV. Christ will free the nations from Satan's bondage

Covenant Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith

Welcome & Announcements

Welcome to Covenant Presbyterian Church of Fort Smith! We are thankful that you have come to worship the true and living God with us. Our worship service, in essence, is a covenant renewal ceremony in which the covenant community gathers to hear the covenant promises, which have been secured for us by Christ, and respond in faith. The congregation is not a passive but an active participant in the worship service.

If you are visiting with us this morning, please complete a visitor's card and place it in the offering plate during the offertory so that we may have a record of your visit.

Seating: Please be courteous by moving toward the front of the sanctuary providing room in the back for those arriving late.

Paraments: Liturgical colors have an instructional purpose and point us to the life of Christ and the great acts of redemptive history. White paraments adorn the pulpit and communion table during the celebration of Christmas, Easter, and other days to represent the purity of Christ and the joy and peace believers find in Him.

Restrooms: Restrooms are available at the East-end on the sanctuary level or downstairs at the East-end of the hallway. Please use the restrooms downstairs during the worship service. Parents, please accompany your children to the restroom during the worship service.

Nursery: We now have a nursery available starting at 9:00 a.m. for Sunday School and the worship service for children ages birth to 3 years old.

Prayer Ministry: If you have a prayer request that you would like the church to pray for, you can send your request to pray@cpcfs.org. Your prayer request will be sent out in our weekly prayer ministry email. If you would like to receive the weekly prayer email, please go to <https://tinyletter.com/cpcfs-prays>.

Volunteers Needed: Each Sunday morning as we gather in worship, volunteers serve us in worship by running our video slides and soundboard. We all benefit from this service. Out of gratitude to current volunteers and to the benefit of our fellow-members, we need more volunteers. As of today, we need four more volunteers. To be clear, no specific experience is necessary, even on the soundboard. So, please consider serving the church by volunteering today. Please contact Brandon Bolin at bbolin@cpcfs.org or call (479) 242-7737.

VBS Dates and Age Change: Our dates for VBS have changed to June 19th-21st for ages 4 years old to 5th grade. We need lots of volunteers, and children over 5th grade are welcome to help.

Communicant's Class: The Communicant process is for students in 6th-12th grades who are interested in learning more about church membership. The class is five weeks during the Sunday School hour and this year will be April 30th, May 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th. Each student is paired with an Elder-Sponsor who shepherds them throughout the Communicant process whether or not they choose to join the church. For more information, please call the church office.

Sunday School Coordinator: If you have the gifts of organization and administration and are looking for a place to serve, please contact the church office regarding our Sunday School Coordinator position.

Spring Fellowship Luncheon: Our Covenant Family Meal is TODAY after the service in the Fellowship Hall. Menu: Chicken and Beef tacos, Mexican rice, and refried beans. Please join us.

Covenant Game Night: Our next Game Night is Saturday, April 29th from 5:00-8:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. To reserve your spot, please contact Marian Henry at (918) 728-5844 so she can coordinate the food.

Weekly Giving Summary

General fund giving – April 9th: \$7,911
Designated giving: \$0
Total giving: \$7,911

General fund giving (YTD): \$146,623
Designated giving (YTD): \$600
Total giving (YTD): \$147,223

Ministry Staff

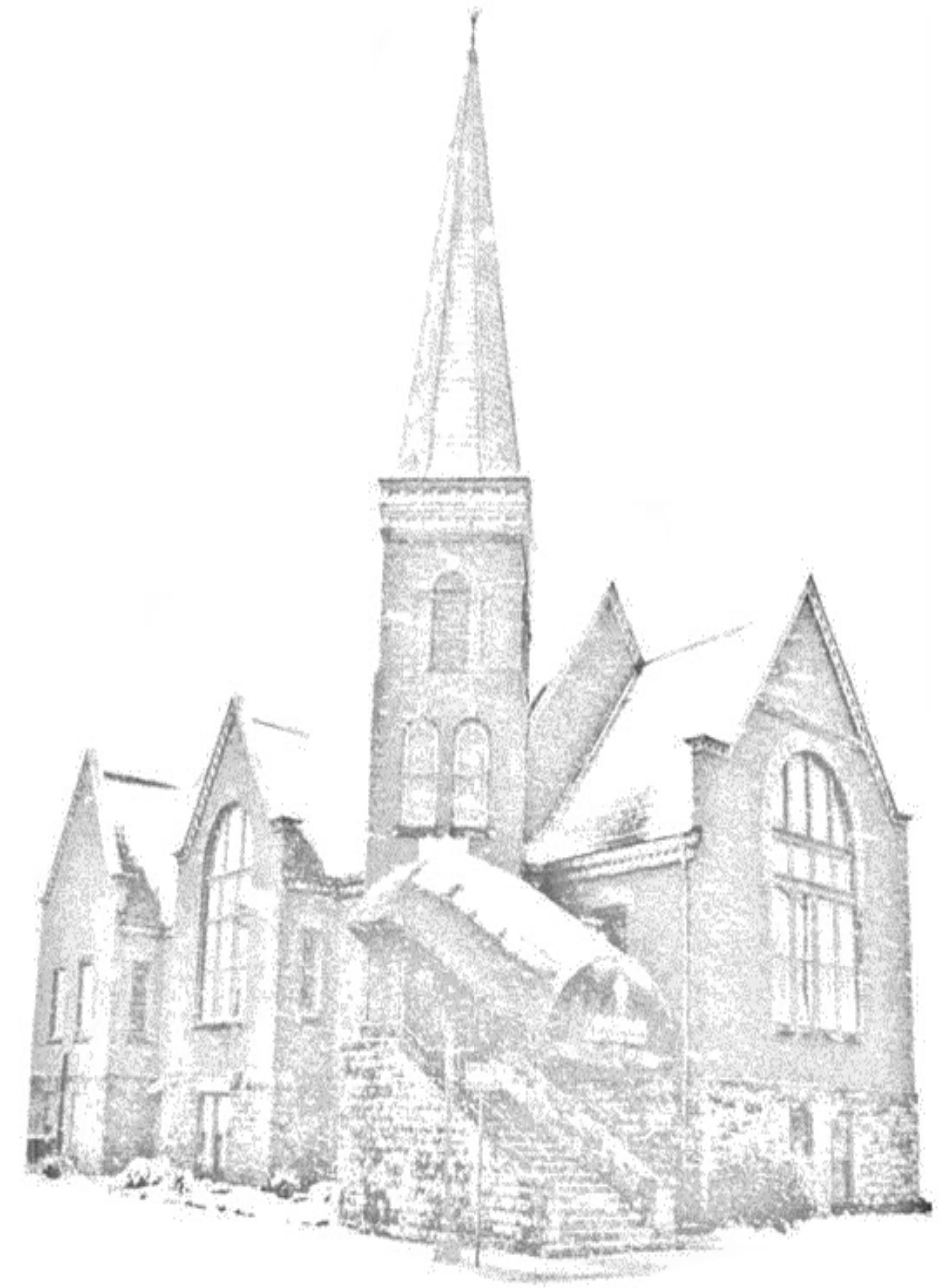
Dr. John Clayton, Senior Minister – jclayton@cpcfs.org
Brandon Bolin, Director of Music & Media – bbolin@cpcfs.org
Sydney Clayton, Administrative Assistant – sclayton@cpcfs.org

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Covenant Presbyterian Church

Fort Smith, Arkansas



Lord's Day, April 16, 2023

10:30 A.M.

“It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name,
O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night” (Psalm 92:1,2)

120 North 9th Street, 72901