



Preparation for Worship

For most of my life I have struggled to find God, to know God, to love God. I have tried hard to follow the guidelines of the spiritual life—pray always, work for others, read the Scriptures—and to avoid the many temptations to dissipate myself. I have failed many times but always tried again, even when I was close to despair.

Now I wonder whether I have sufficiently realized that during all this time God has been trying to find me, to know me, and to love me. The question is not “How am I to find God?” but “How am I to let myself be found by God?” The question is not “How am I to know God?” but “How am I to let myself be known by God?” And, finally, the question is not “How am I to love God?” but “How am I to let myself be loved by God?” God is looking into the distance for me, trying to find me, and longing to bring me home.

*From *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming**

—Henri J. M. Nouwen

We Gather in God's Name

† Passing of the Peace

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

† Praise Song

One Thing Remains

Praise Band

† Call to Worship

One: O God, we seek you, and our souls thirst for you.

Many: Our flesh faints for the Lord, as in a dry and weary land.

One: O God, your steadfast love is better than life itself!

Many: Let us bless the Lord as long as we live, lift up our hands and call on God's name.

One: Let us worship God.

† Hymn #314

Christ, Be Our Light

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, sometimes we find ourselves in lost places. Our relationships fall out of sync, our priorities become confused, our spirits are burdened. We realize that our path has strayed. We have lost touch with our true North, lost sight of our neighbor in need, lost faith that once came more easily. We fail to respond joyously or to live generously. We forget to seek and serve you above all things. Make straight our paths, O God. Grant that your word may be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Forgive our sin and error, rekindle our hearts, and renew our discipleship; help us to be your whole and holy people. In your name we pray, Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

One: Where can we go from God's spirit, or flee from God's presence? If we take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there, God shall lead us and God's hand shall hold us fast. For God seeks us in love wherever we may be. Friends, believe the good news: in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God!

Response Hymn #48 (two times)

Rain Down

We Proclaim God's Word

Anthem

Hope of the World
Chancel Choir

Davis

Scripture Lesson

Luke 15:1-8

† Hymn #450

Be Thou My Vision

Scripture Lesson

Luke 15:11-32

Sermon

Selva Oscura (The Dark Wood)

Rev. Dr. Benton Trawick

Sharing Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

At the Foot of the Cross

† Response #409

God Is Here! (Verse 4)

Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt,
Keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive:
We, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

Prayer of Dedication

Dave Buckley

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

We Depart To Serve God

† Hymn #350

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning

† Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Sean Cator, Pianist



*The Flowers Are Dedicated by
Daughters Roni and Sheila*

“In Honor of Gene Williams’ Birthday”

Your greeter today was Anne Renninger.

*Thank you ushers, greeters, AV, Fellowship, pulpit assistants, musicians,
choir, and all who work with children during the service every Sunday!*



***WE ARE VERY GLAD YOU CHOSE TO WORSHIP WITH US TODAY!
PLEASE SIGN OUR FRIENDSHIP REGISTER SO THAT WE CAN
GREET YOU BY NAME AND CALL ON YOU IF YOU WISH.***

***ALL CHILDREN ARE WELCOMED IN WORSHIP - ...Even if they
fidget! Worship Bags are available for young children with a
children's bulletin, books, and crayons, and a Nursery is avail-
able downstairs in Room 5 for infants through 4-year-olds.***

After the Children's Message, children have their own worship experience downstairs. Play 'n' Worship is for preschoolers, and Bridges to Worship is for K-3rd graders. Please pick up children before going to Fellowship: K-3rd graders will be in the Bridges Room (Room 14), and all other children will be in the Nursery (Room 5).

SUNDAY SCHOOL - Classes are offered at 9:15 a.m. from the 2nd Sunday in September through the 3rd Sunday in May. Children's Discipleship provides classes for 5-year-olds through 12th graders, and Adult Discipleship reaches all adults after high school.

GRACE INSIGHTS - Learn more about Grace Church, our mission, and our denomination, PC(USA), in groups that form throughout the year. If you are considering membership or if you have interest in learning more about us, please speak to one of our pastors or Elder Valerie Wenderoth. You will find Grace a very welcoming place.

PLEASE ASK ANYONE FOR HELP OR DIRECTIONS!

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OFFICE HOURS

**MON-FRI 9:00-4:30
WE ARE CLOSED ON FEDERAL HOLIDAYS**

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SEARCH FOR THE "INSTANT CHURCH DIRECTORY" APP
ENTER YOUR E-MAIL AND THIS PASSWORD: 7434Bath
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