

Bower Hill Community Church (Presbyterian USA)  
Order for Worship ~ 3rd Sunday after Epiphany ~ 26 January 2025

Preparation for Worship:

*"The African concept of ubuntu is the essence of being human — that a person is a person only through other persons, that my humanity is caught up in yours. I am fully me only if you are all you can be."*

~Desmond Tutu

**Prelude**

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

Alec Wynton

**Introit**

*Alleluia*

**Call to Worship:**

Psalm 19

Leader: The heavens are telling the glory of God,

**People: and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.**

Leader: Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

**People: They do not speak, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;**

Leader: yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

**People: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.**

**Prayer of Adoration:**

Holy One, we thank you for the gift of the Scriptures, for their psalms and poems, myths and stories, histories, teachings, and prophecies. May the Spirit who inspired those ancient writings inspire us still today, that our lives might reflect the first sermon of Jesus, our crucified and risen Christ, who brings good news to the poor and lets the oppressed go free; who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**\*Hymn 14**

*For the Beauty of the Earth*

1 For the beauty of the earth,  
for the glory of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth  
over and around us lies:

Refrain:

Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.

2 For the wonder of each hour  
of the day and of the night,  
hill and vale, and tree and flower,  
sun and moon, and stars of light: [Refrain]

3 For the joy of ear and eye,  
for the heart and mind's delight,  
for the mystic harmony  
linking sense to sound and sight: [Refrain]

4 For the joy of human love,  
brother, sister, parent, child,  
friends on earth, and friends above,  
for all gentle thoughts and mild: [Refrain]

5 For thyself, best gift divine  
to the world so freely given;  
for that great, great love of thine,  
peace on earth and joy in heaven: [Refrain]

## Call to Prayer

Let us confess our sin as an expression of our trust in God's love and forgiveness for us. Together, let us say:

## Prayer of Confession:

**God of our restoration, whenever we come home to you, we realize just how far we have strayed and how much we have forgotten your ways and your love. Rarely have we loved you with our whole heart, or our neighbors as ourselves. Forgive us, heal us, and restore us to right relationship with you and with each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.** [Silent prayers]

## Words of Assurance

God's word is not to condemn us, but to make us wise, reviving the soul and rejoicing the heart. Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ: in him we are forgiven. Amen.

## \*The Gloria: Hymn 583

*Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest. Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia.*

## \*The Peace

Leader: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us greet one another with the peace of Christ.

## Time with the Children

*All children from preschool through fourth grade are invited to the front steps for the children's sermon.*

## Prayer for Illumination

Just as we see your wisdom and glory in nature around us, God, may we hear your Word in the words of these readings. By the power of your Spirit, draw us closer to you, through Jesus, your Word incarnate. Amen.

## First Scripture Reading

I Corinthians 12:12-31a

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## Psalter: Hymn 61

*Your Law, O Lord, Is Perfect  
Remain seated for the singing of the psalms*

## Psalms 19

## Second Scripture Reading

Luke 4:14-21

## Anthem

*How Can We Sing Our Love for God?*

## Sermon

**"Good News to the Poor"**

Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder

## Response

*Amen*

## \*Affirmation of Faith

"Credo for Christians"

**I worship and adore God, source, essence, and aim of all things,  
Spirit that enlivens all beings.**

**I follow the way of Jesus, who found God in himself  
and shared a way for others to find God in themselves.**

**He was born through love,**

**He lived for love,**

**He suffered for love,**

**He died for love,**

**But love never dies.**

**I submit myself to the leading of the love that is God,  
that I may be compassionate toward all beings,  
that I may live and serve in community with others,  
that I may ask for and offer forgiveness,  
that I may praise and enjoy God forever. Amen.**

## Pastoral Prayer and the 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.**

*\*Or "Mother" or "Parent"*

## **Welcome and Next Steps**

**Minute for Mission**

*Steel City Squash*

Brad Young

**Offerings and Gifts of Self**

**Offertory**

**\*The Doxology: Hymn 606, 607**      *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow\**      Old Hundredth  
*Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Praise God, all creatures here below!  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host! Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen.*  
*\*For a gender-neutral version, use hymn 607.*

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**\*Closing Hymn 757**

*Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples*

1 Today we all are called to be disciples of the Lord,  
to help to set the captive free, make plowshare out of sword,  
to feed the hungry, quench their thirst, make love and peace our fast,  
to serve the poor and homeless first, our ease and comfort last.

2 God made the world and at its birth ordained our human race  
to live as stewards of the earth, responding to God's grace.  
But we are vain and sadly proud; we sow not peace but strife.  
Our discord spreads a deadly cloud that threatens all of life.

3 Pray justice may come rolling down as in a mighty stream,  
with righteousness in field and town to cleanse and to redeem.  
For God is longing to restore an earth where conflicts cease,  
a world that was created for a harmony of peace.

4 May we in service to our God act out the living word,  
and walk the road the saints have trod till all have seen and heard.  
As stewards of the earth may we give thanks in one accord  
to God who calls us all to be disciples of the Lord.

**\*Charge and Benediction**

**Postlude**

*Prelude in G Major*

JS Bach

*Feel free to exit during the postlude, mindful of those who wish to stay and listen*