

~Gathering the Family of God~

The Peal of the Church Bell

Prelude *If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee* J. Walther

Welcome

One: The peace of Christ be with you.  
 All: **And also with you.**

Call to Worship

One: As God set Abram, Sarah, and Lot on a journey,  
 God calls us to follow in trust.  
 All: **God is able to make us more than we have been  
 and blesses us on the way.**  
 One: As Jesus invited Nicodemus to be born again,  
 God invites us to become a new creation.  
 All: **Christ calls us out of darkness into his marvelous light,  
 and we are saved through him.**

\*Hymn *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above* #645

\*Call to Confession

We cannot earn God's grace or favor. It comes to us, not as something owed, but as a gift freely given. Confident in God's love for us, even when we are ungodly, we confess our sins in faith.

\*Confession of Sin (unison)

Gracious God we come before you in need of forgiveness and grace. You call us to trust in you completely, but we do not. We are timid and fearful as we follow your lead. We justify our actions and words, though we know they are not what you require. We struggle to understand the new life Christ offers, preferring old habits to risky change. Forgive us we pray. Help us to be born again into the life of Christ, trusting that you have included us by your grace in the family of faith. In Christ's name we pray.

\*Silent Confession

\*Assurance of Forgiveness

God is for us and not against us! For that reason, God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Believe the good news, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

\*Gloria Patri # 581

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.

Tune: Gloria Patri, Henry W. Greatorex, 1851, Public Domain

~Hearing God's Word~

Prayer for Illumination

God of signs and wonders, we come to your word again and again, seeking understanding and the new life it offers. By the power of your Holy Spirit, illumine our hearts and minds so that we may believe this testimony and walk in the ways of Jesus our Savior. Amen.

Old Testament

One: The Word of the Lord. Genesis 12:1-4a page 10  
 All: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

One: The Word of the Lord. Psalm 121 page 571  
 All: **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

One: The Word of the Lord. Romans 4:1-5. 13-17 page 154  
 All: **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

*Create in Me* Henry Gerike

Gospel

One: The Word of the Lord. John 3:1-17 page 93  
 All: **Thanks be to God.**

Message

God so Loved the World that He Gave Rev. Terry Epling

\*Affirmation of Faith (unison)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen. [The Apostles Creed].

\*Hymn *Deep In the Shadows of the Past* #50

~Responding to God's Word~

**Invitation to Become a Joyful Giver**

All that we have is a gift from God. In faith and gratitude, we return now a portion of what we have so abundantly received, as grateful heirs of the promises of God.

**Giving of our Tithes and Offerings & Friendship Pad**

*Please take a moment to sign your name and contact information in the pew pad. You may also share any joys or concerns on the cards in the pews. Place them in the offering plate for inclusion in the pastoral prayer.*

**Offertory**

*Speak, O Lord*

Johann Pachelbel

**\*Doxology**

*Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow  
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.*

#606

**\*Offering Prayer (unison)**

Gracious God, we dedicate to you not only these gifts, but also ourselves, in deep gratitude for your call on our lives, your guidance on our journey, and for blessing us to be a blessing to others. Use what we bring for your good purposes. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

**Pastoral Prayer**

**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.*

**\* Closing Hymn**

*Let All Things Now Living*

#37

**\*Life in Our Church Community**

**\*Benediction**

Go out in faith, trusting in God's sense of direction. Remember how much God loves this world. May Christ's love embrace you and the Holy Spirit empower you with new life, now and forever. Amen.

**\*Postlude**

*Meditation in E minor*

Franz Murschauser

\*Please stand, if you are able.

Electronic aid for the hearing impaired is available from the usher.

# First Presbyterian Church

235 Broadway, Cape Girardeau, Missouri



**Sunday, March 12, 2017**