

Dear Friends at FPC Merchantville,

Here is the Worship Guide for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Easter, April 19<sup>th</sup>. My hope continues to be that you will use this guide as an opportunity to worship together in Spirit and in Truth, and share in common readings, prayers and music, and that you have found the guides useful during this time when we cannot meet face to face. For those of you that can access YouTube, I have included links for the music.

Suggestions for using this guide would be the following:

Gather Worship Materials –

A Bible – (A study bible may be helpful if you have one)

A Candle

This Worship guide

Optional Materials –

A Cross or other representations of God's acts of salvation

Flowers, shells, or other objects of nature

Art supplies

If you have children

Children may be permitted to bring a beloved stuffed animal or doll with the explanation that "it's always good to invite a friend to worship"

Decide on the space for your worship.

Prepare Your Heart.

Set up your selected worship space

Worship at 10:00am on Sunday morning as if we were in our church sanctuary

Light your candle as a sign of the Lord's presence

When ready, follow the worship guide

We hope that this will help you to feel God's presence in this time of personal worship, and of course our prayer is that we will be together again very soon!

Please don't forget to mail in your offering, or go online at [www.fpcmerchantville.org](http://www.fpcmerchantville.org)

In Christian Love and Service,

Kim Tomlin

## **Sunday April 19th – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday After Easter**

### **Gathering Around the Word**

“The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.” John 4:23a

**Prelude:** Light your candle as a sign of the Lord’s presence. Think of your FPC family and sense the others in the congregation, especially those that you usually sit near. Remember that during this time, we are worshipping together.

### **Call To Worship (based on 1 Peter 1:3-5)**

**Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

**Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**He has given us new life and hope. He has raised Jesus from the dead.**

**God has claimed us as His own. He has brought us out of darkness.**

**He has made us light to the world. Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!**

**Song: (choose one or both of the songs below to sing or listen to)**

**My Chains are Gone/Amazing Grace** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jbe7OruLk8I>

**I Love to Tell the Story** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=un9GC-LCS-c>

### **Prayer of Invocation**

God of glory, fill your church with the power that flows from Christ’s resurrection so that, in the midst of the sinful world, it may signal the beginning of a renewed humanity, risen to new life with Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

### **Scripture Reading: Psalm 16**

*Keep me safe, O God, for in You I take refuge.*

*I said to the Lord, You are my Lord; apart from You I have no good thing.*

*As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight.*

*The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods.*

*I will not pour out their libations of blood, or take up their names on my lips.*

*Lord, You have assigned me my portion and my cup; You have made my lot secure.*

*Thy boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance.*

*I will praise the Lord, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me.*

*I have set the Lord always before me. Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.*

*Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure,*

*Because You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will You let Your Holy One see decay.*

*You have made known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasure at Your right hand.*

**(choose to listen or sing one or more of the songs listed below)**

**I Need Thee Every Hour** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDZl6tXZ7YE>

**Lord I Need You** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuvfMDhTyMA>

## **Prayer of Confession**

*(Sin and evil are real, and no one is without sin. Naming the evil robs it of power and frees us from the mistaken belief we should, or can, be sinless. Confession and forgiveness in Jesus Christ sets us free from sin and guilt, and allow us to live joyfully dependent upon God's grace. At the ellipsis (...) add your own confession.)*

Almighty God, You have raised Jesus from the grave and crowned Him Lord of all. We confess that we have not bowed before Him or acknowledge His rule in our lives. We have gone along with the way of the world and failed to give Him glory..... Forgive us and raise us from sin, that we may be your faithful people, obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, who rules the world and is head of the church, His body. Amen.

## **Assurance of Forgiveness (Pardon)**

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! May the God of mercy, who forgives you all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, keep you in eternal life.

**Song: Jesus Loves Me** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LONkzLLNPmA>

## **Prayer for Illumination**

God of life, Your Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. Your Spirit inspired the prophets and writers of Scripture. Your Spirit draws us to Christ and helps us to acknowledge Him as Lord. We ask that You will send Your Spirit now to give us deeper insight, encouragement, faith and hope through the proclamation of Your Holy Word. Amen.

**Scripture: Jesus Appears to His Disciples John 20:19-31**

## **Reflection and Interpretation**

Silent reflections on the meaning of the scripture. If you are worshipping as a family, discuss what you have read. Children and adults may create art as an interpretation of scripture.

**Here are some thoughts to discuss together:**

**Why were the disciples hiding, and why were they not immediately overjoyed to see Jesus?**

*They were hiding from the Pharisees, the Jewish leaders, who had demanded that Jesus be killed. The disciples thought they were in danger because they were close followers of Jesus, and the Roman soldiers had accused them of stealing Jesus' body. The disciples were afraid for their lives. Even though Jesus had told the disciples many times that he would be killed and would rise on the third day, the disciples didn't understand. Jesus usually spoke figuratively, and they didn't realize that he was literally telling them what would happen. They had seen Jesus die a gruesome death. They KNEW He was dead. In their minds, there was no way that He was standing in front of them three days later.*

**How did Thomas react when he saw Jesus?**

*Thomas didn't just say "Ok, now that you have shown me your scars, I believe you", instead he said: "My Lord and my God!" When Thomas saw that Jesus had been raised from the dead, it **proved** to him that Jesus was who He claimed to be.*

**Who is Jesus talking about in the second part of verse 29?**

*Jesus is talking about all the people throughout history- from the time He left the earth until now- who have believed in Him. That includes you and me. It was good for Thomas and the disciples to believe in Jesus after they saw Him raised from the dead, but it is **BETTER** for us to*

*believe even though we have not seen Him. This is called Faith. So, how do we believe something that we have never seen? We believe the words of the people who did see Him. Reread verses 30-31*

The Bible was written to each one of us. John makes it clear that he wrote the book of John in order to explain that Jesus was the Messiah, sent by God to take away the sins of the world. By all the amazing miracles He did, He proved that He was who He said He was. Yes, it takes faith to believe something we have never seen. But God will give you the faith you need.

(Scripture lesson questions/answers from Bible.org and Biblelessons4kidz.com)

### **Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession**

Ellipses(...) in prayers indicate a pause for silent prayer.

Satisfy us with your love in the morning, and we will live this day in joy and praise.  
Mighty God of mercy, we thank you for the resurrection dawn bringing the glory of our risen Lord who makes every day new. Especially we thank you for:

The beauty of your creation....

The new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness...

The sustaining love of family and friends....

The fellowship of faith in your church...

Merciful God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the living Lord. Especially we pray for:

Those who govern nations of the world...

The people in countries ravaged by poverty and warfare...

All who work for peace and international harmony...

All who strive to save the earth from destruction...

The church of Jesus Christ in every land...

Those who serve and protect us every day...

The Doctors and Nurses and all medical staff serving us during this pandemic...

Eternal God, your touch makes this world holy. Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the splendor of creation, and in the beauty of human life. Help us to cherish the gifts that surround us, to share your blessings, and to experience the joy of life in your presence.

We ask this through Christ our Lord who taught us to pray by saying:

Our Father, which 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: My Faith Looks Up to Thee** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGKlmThF2to>

**Benediction:** May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forever. Amen.

## Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

### Verse 1

Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost but now I'm found  
Was blind but now I see

### Verse 2

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear  
And grace my fears relieved  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed

### Chorus

My chains are gone I've been set free  
My God my Savior has ransomed me  
And like a flood His mercy rains  
Unending love amazing grace

### Verse 3

The Lord has promised good to me  
His word my hope secures  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures

### Verse 4

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow  
The sun forbear to shine  
But God who called me here below  
Will be forever mine  
Will be forever mine  
You are forever mine

CCLI Song # 4768151

Chris Tomlin | John Newton | Louie Giglio

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### **I Love to Tell the Story**

I love to tell the story of unseen things above, Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love;  
I love to tell the story because I know 'tis true, It satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.

#### *Refrain*

I love to tell the story! 'Twill be my theme in glory –  
To tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

I love to tell the story 'tis pleasant to repeat; what seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully  
sweet; I love to tell the story, for some have never heard -The message of salvation from God's  
own holy Word. (refrain)

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like  
the rest; And when in scenes of glory I sing the new, new song, "twill be the old, old story that I  
have loved so long. (refrain)

### **I Need Thee Every Hour**

I need Thee every hour, most gracious Lord; no tender voice like Thine can peace afford.

#### *Refrain*

I need Thee, O I need Thee; Every hour I need Thee! O bless me now my Savior, I come to Thee.

I need Thee every hour, stay Thou near-by; Temptations lose their power When thou art nigh.  
(refrain)

I need Thee every hour, In joy or pain; Come quickly, and abide, or life is vain. (refrain)

I need Thee every hour, Teach me Thy will, and Thy rich promises in me fulfill. (refrain)

## Lord I Need You

### Verse 1

Lord I come I confess  
Bowin' here I find my rest  
And without You I fall apart  
You're the one that guides my heart

### Chorus 1

Lord I need You oh I need You  
Ev'ry hour I need You  
My one defense my righteousness  
Oh God how I need You

### Verse 2

Where sin runs deep Your grace is more  
Where grace is found is where You are  
And where You are Lord I am free  
Holiness is Christ in me  
Where You are Lord I am free  
Holiness is Christ in me

### Bridge

So teach my song to rise to You  
When temptation comes my way  
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You  
Jesus You're my hope and stay  
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You  
Jesus You're my hope and stay

### Chorus 2

Lord I need You oh I need You  
Ev'ry hour I need You  
My one defense my righteousness  
Oh God how I need You  
My one defense my righteousness  
Oh God how I need You

CCLI Song # 5925687

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### **Jesus Loves Me**

Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so;  
Little ones to Him belong, They are weak but He is strong.

#### *Refrain*

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! He who dies Heaven's gate to open wide;  
He will wash away my sin, Let His little child come in. (refrain)

Jesus love me! He will stay close beside me all the way;  
He's prepared a home for me, And some day His face I'll see. (refrain)

### **My Faith Looks Up to Thee**

My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine!  
Now hear me while I pray, take all my guilt away, O let me from this day be wholly Thine!

May Thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire;  
As Thou has died for me, O may my love to Thee, pure, warm and changeless be, a living fire!

When life's dark maze I tread and griefs around me spread, Be Thou my guide;  
Bid darkness turn today, Wipe sorrow's tears away, nor let me ever stray from Thee aside.

When ends life's passing dream, when death's cold solemn stream shall o'er me roll,  
Blest Savior, then, in love, fear and distrust remove; O lift me safe above, a ransomed soul!