

The Celtic Cross is an ancient Christian symbol. The cross proper recalls the death of Christ for the sins of his people, while the circle is a historic symbol of God's eternal nature. Jesus' name is at the center, depicted by the Greek letters "Ιης" and is surrounded by the vine and branches, representing our relationship to Him. At the bottom, CHRISTUS VICTOR, "Christ is Victorious," testifies to his triumph over sin and death on the cross. This Celtic cross is used by permission of Saint Paul's Presbyterian Church in Orlando, Florida. Each of the five panels represents a significant event in Christ's life.

Exalting Christ through Worship, Renewal, Community, and Partnership



HIS REIGN

The wounded lamb as Christ reclining on the book of seven seals is a historic symbol of the reigning Christ. The three-rayed nimbus is an ancient symbol of deity. (Revelation 5:9-12)

HIS RESURRECTION

Lilies traditionally represent the resurrection; the trumpet heralds Christ's certain and triumphant return. (1 Corinthians 15:54; Matthew 24:31; Luke 12:27)

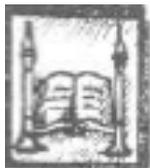


HIS ATONEMENT

The crown of thorns and nails testify to Christ's sacrificial death on the cross. (Hebrews 2:17; John 19:2; 20:27)

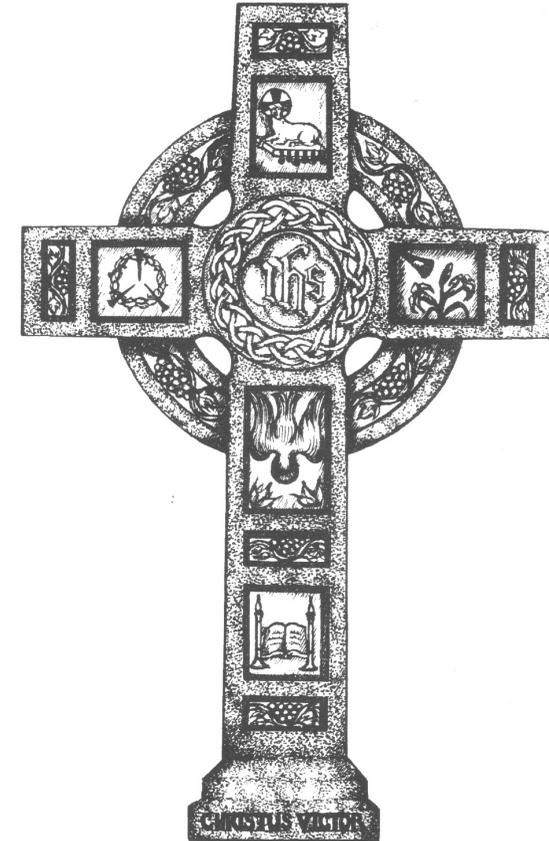
HIS BAPTISM

The dove and tongues of fire symbolically portray the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 3:10; Acts 2:3)



HIS INCARNATION

The open Bible is the Word of God. The double lighted candlesticks represent the dual nature of Christ—his deity and his humanity. (John 1:1-14)



CHRIST CHURCH VENTURA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest; to all who mourn and long for comfort; to all who struggle and desire hope; to all who sin and need a Savior; to all who are strangers and yearn for home; to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to whoever will come; this church offers a genuine welcome in the name of the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT IS OUR MESSAGE?

The great good news is that God has taken it upon Himself to do something for us that we are powerless to do for ourselves. The Gospel is simply this: sinners are forgiven and accepted by God because of the work of Jesus Christ. Trust in Christ's finished work is not just the beginning of the Christian life, but the means and end as well. The Gospel is what must be applied more and more deeply in order to live as a Christian. The power of the Gospel is not merely about forgiveness and improvement, but renewal and wholeness.

A GOSPEL-SHAPED MINISTRY

- **The Gospel changes people** — Through the continual application of the Gospel we become more like Christ.
- **The Gospel produces joy** — Grace frees us from both condemnation and self-righteousness to enjoy God fully.
- **The Gospel defines community** — In union with Christ, we become God's sons and daughters—His new people.
- **The Gospel points outward** — Grace disengages approval seeking, engenders authenticity, and curbs pride.
- **The Gospel informs attitudes** — As Christians, we desire the peace and wellbeing of our communities and cities.
- **The Gospel removes barriers** — Reconciliation humbles us so that we may become agents to reconcile others.
- **The Gospel renews culture** — All of life matters to God and we are to pursue all vocations with excellence.
- **The Gospel builds momentum** — Church planting is the result of and the means to fulfilling the great commission

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

We embrace the **historic Christian faith** — believing the timeless truths held in common by the church in all ages and places. We wholeheartedly affirm the classic doctrines defined by the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds.

- **The Trinity** — There is only one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- **The Incarnation** — The person Jesus Christ is the only Son of God who is both fully God and fully human.
- **The Atonement** — Jesus died on a cross and was raised from the dead in order to redeem us from our sins.

biblical teachings that were restated during the Protestant Reformation. This great renewal of the church in the 16th century has given us a common heritage in the classic "solas".

- **Scripture Alone** — The Bible is the one source of divine revelation and the only completely reliable guide for faith and life.
- **Christ Alone** — Salvation is accomplished by the substitutionary atonement of the historical and sinless Christ alone.
- **Grace Alone** — We are rescued from God's anger, freed from sin's bondage and lifted to new life by His grace alone.
- **Faith Alone** — Christ's righteousness is imputed to us as the only possible satisfaction of God's justice by faith alone.
- **God Alone** — The sole purpose of our creation and redemption is to enjoy God's presence and live for His glory.

**CHRIST CHURCH VENTURA IS A CONGREGATION
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

Alive by God's grace, we aim to know, love, and follow Jesus through historic worship, gospel renewal, genuine community, and global partnership to the end that God's people are gathered and Christ's Kingdom is extended throughout Ventura County and beyond.

CHURCH OFFICERS

Teaching Elder Roy R. Bennett (ojairoyb@gmail.com)
Ruling Elder David Sveiven (dsevend@yahoo.com)
Ruling Elder David Blank (cosmos.psa19@rocketmail.com)
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CONTACT INFORMATION

PO Box 25 Ojai, CA 93024 (805) 452-3354 www.christchurchventura.org

WORSHIP LOCATION

Christ Church Ventura meets Sundays at 196 N. Ashwood Ave. at 1:30pm
Christ Church Ventura also streams worship services live on YouTube.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NURSERY (Available for parents with young children)

MEN'S STUDY GROUP — The Book of Job (Contact David Blank)

WOMEN'S STUDY GROUP — Westminster Shorter Catechism (Online)
(Contact Rebecca Durant)

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Order for the Celebration and Worship of God

First Sunday of Advent; November 28, 2021 1:30pm

* Congregation standing

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE (*Lyrics on page 2*) "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"
Ordinary Time © 2006

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

Leader: Why do we light the Advent candles?

People: *Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the Light of life."*

Leader: What is the meaning of the first lighted candle?

People: *The first lighted candle is a reminder of the light of hope of the prophets.*

Leader: Who were the prophets?

People: *The prophets were men called by God to speak His word to the people of Israel. At times the prophets spoke promises made by God that would come true many years in the future. Often the promises related to the coming of the Messiah, God's Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.*

Leader: What do the prophets say concerning this light?

People: *Isaiah prophesied, "The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwell in the land of deep darkness, on them the light has shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given. And the government will be upon His shoulders, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

LET ALL MORTAL FLESH KEEP SILENCE

Let all mortal flesh keep silence
And with fear and trembling stand
Ponder nothing earthly minded
For with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth
Our full homage to demand

King of kings, yet born of Mary
As of old on earth He stood
Lord of lords, in human vesture
In the body and the blood
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food

Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way
As the light of light descendeth
From the realms of endless day
That the powers of hell may vanish
As the darkness clears away

At his feet the six wingèd seraph
Cherubim with sleepless eye
Veil their faces to the presence
As with ceaseless voice they cry
Alleluia, Alleluia
Alleluia, Lord Most High!

ADVENT

The season of Advent begins the Christian year. The four Sundays preceding Christmas mark a time of preparation. "Advent" comes from a Latin word meaning "coming" or "arrival". Advent not only anticipates the mystery of the incarnation that we celebrate at Christmas; it also is the time to prepare for the One who is coming to us as our judge and redeemer, a time of self-examination and repentance.

The coming of the Lord Jesus was the first in a series of events leading to the salvation of a people. We at Christ Church are numbered among that people, who have been set apart by God and for God that we might delight in him forever. We care about traditions at Christ Church. They are like sign posts along the way as we travel the road to our heavenly home. Traditions fortify bonds as we become what God intends us to be—a community of faith.

The Book of Common Prayer directs believers to ask God "to give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever." Our prayer is that God will use the season of Advent with its tradition to lead us to greater gratitude and deeper worship.

The Advent wreath is a symbol of waiting for the coming of Christ. As we draw nearer to Christmas, spiritual light increases and the darkness is banished, symbolized by the lighting of the candles. Since the first century, Christians have awaited the advent of the true Light in prayer and liturgy, saying, "Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!"

CALLED TO A LIVING HOPE

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3)

It has been said that hell begins where hope ends. We cannot live without hope. Remove all hope and life becomes too dark to live. This is due to the fact that as human beings we are hard wired to hope. In the beginning, God designed us to look forward to the future glorified life for which he created us, symbolized in the Tree of Life. The tragic story, of course, is that we fell short of that glory when Adam, our representative in the garden, rebelled against our creator. In Adam, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Although we continue to hope, our hopes have been frustrated by sin ever since the fall, and so we no longer hope for the glory of the age to come. Many of the things for which we do hope are good in themselves (love, health, family), but they are confined to this present evil age and misguided by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of possession. This is why we are never ultimately satisfied. As C. S. Lewis said, "The longings which arise in us when we first fall in love, or first think of some foreign country, or first take up some subject that excites us, are longings which no marriage, no travel, no learning can really satisfy... If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world. The hope about which Peter writes is not a dead or empty hope, but a sure and living hope—a hope that holds the future in the present, because it is anchored in the past. Peter hopes for God's salvation, the final deliverance from sin, suffering, and death that will be fully realized in the resurrection of the body on the last day. It is "a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5) Peter's hope is firm, because God has already accomplished salvation "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Only this kind of hope can truly withstand the tempestuous onslaughts of persecution and sorrow in our present evil age.

Michael G. Brown
Excerpt from Modern Reformation Vol. 28, No. 6

O COME, O COME, IMMANUEL

O come, O come, Immanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

O Come thou dayspring, come and cheer,
Our spirits by thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy cloud of night
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 40:1-5 ESV

INVITATORY

Minister: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

People: *As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever,*

Minister: The Lord our King and Savior now draws near!

People: *Come let us adore Him!*

* **ADVENT HYMN** (*Lyrics on page 3*) "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
Matthew Smith @ 2000

* PRAYER OF ADORATION

Unison: *Merciful God, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, so that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever. Amen.*

* **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** Westminster Confession 14:1-3

Unison: *The gift of faith makes it possible for the souls of the elect to be saved by believing in Jesus Christ. This gift is the work of the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of the elect and is ordinarily accomplished by the ministry of the word. It is also increased and strengthened by the word, by prayer, and by the administration of the sacraments. By this faith a Christian believes whatever is revealed in the word to be the true, authentic, authoritative statement of God Himself.*

By this faith the believer also acts according to what particular passages in the word say. By faith the believer humbly submits to and obeys God's various commands. He trembles at God's awesome threats, and eagerly embraces His promises about this life and the life to come. But the chief actions of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting on Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, in the power of the covenant of grace.

ON JORDANS STORMY BANKS

On Jordans stormy banks I stand

And cast a wishful eye

To Canaans fair and happy land

Where my possessions lie

All o'er those wide extended plains

Shines one eternal day

There God the Son forever reigns

And scatters night away

Chorus: I am bound (I am bound)
I am bound (I am bound)
I am bound for promised land
I am bound (I am bound)
I am bound (I am bound)
I am bound for promised land,

No chilling winds nor poisonous breath

Can reach that healthful shore

Sickness, sorrow, pain and death

Are felt and feared no more.

Chorus:

When shall I reach that happy place

And be forever blessed

When shall I see my Fathers face

And in His bosom rest

Chorus 2X

* **PRAYER OF COMMITMENT** (From Dan. 7:13-14; Acts 3:20-21)

Unison: *Father, the advent of Christ marks the beginning of his dominion, glory and kingdom that shall not be destroyed, and that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve. We pray that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for us, this Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for the restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago.*

* **BENEDICTION**

Minister: Now may Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly, fill you with His joy and peace: and may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

Minister: Go in peace to love and serve the risen Lord Jesus.

People: *Thanks be to God!*

POSTLUDE (*Lyrics on Page 17*) "O Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand"
Christopher Miner © 1997

✳ **Regarding participation the Lord's Supper**

- *Believers who have publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ, have been baptized, and are members in good standing of an Evangelical church, are welcome to celebrate in the Lord's Supper with us. If these particular facts do not describe you, we respectfully ask you to refrain from participating in the sacrament.*
- *Please come forward to receive the sacrament at the table. You are encouraged to repent, rest, and rejoice in the finished work of Christ as the Lord's Supper is observed. The consecrated bread and wine are served in separate cups. After you have partaken, please dispose of empty cups in the white collection containers at the table.*

This faith has different degrees of strength and weakness. It may be attacked and weakened often and in many ways, but it gets the victory. In many believers it matures and becomes completely assured through Christ, who both creates and perfects our faith.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Malachi 3:1-3 (ESV)

3:1 "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. **2** But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. **3** He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord."

Minister: The Word of the Lord!

People: *Thanks be to God!*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A Litany for Advent

(*The congregation is encouraged to participate both verbally and in silence.*)

Unison: *O King of all the nations, you are the only joy of every heart, the keystone of the mighty arch who makes us one. We come together before you to offer ourselves and our prayers to you, O Lord. Grant us grace and mercy. Save and strengthen the creatures you fashioned from clay. May we be vigilant in faith and grow in Jesus Christ who unites us to himself and to one another.*

Minister: For the peace of the world and for our faithfulness and unity in Jesus Christ.

People: *Come, O Lord, and save us.*

Minister: For our pastor and elders, presbytery, denomination, and all gospel ministers.

People: Come, O Lord, and save us.

Minister: For all new believers who have put their trust in the incarnate Son of God.

People: Come, O Lord, and save us.

Minister: For the church throughout the world and for all God's people in every place.

People: Come, O Lord, and save us.

Minister: For the leaders of nations and all those in authority and for peace and justice.

People: Come, O Lord, and save us.

Minister: For the conversion of the elect through the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: Come, O Lord, and save us.

Minister: For travelers, the sick and suffering, and the hungry, oppressed, and imprisoned.

People: Come, O Lord, and save us.

Minister: For our discipline in grace and deliverance from all affliction, strife, and need.

People: Come, O Lord, and save us.

WHAT A DAY

The splendor of your presence Lord, we will meet you there
One day we will stand to see you. Your majesty we'll bear
You satisfy the hungry heart, our wells will not run dry
But till that day, that glorious day, we'll walk with heads held high

We're waiting for your glory, longing just to see you face to face
The day I see Your glory, yeah, what a day
Our freedom won, freedom found, upon that empty cross
Pain and suffering we'll know no more, 'cause you died and rose for us
Teach us how to love you, Jesus, in everything we do
But till that day, that awesome day, let our lives belong to you

As we're waiting for your glory, longing just to see you face to face
The day I see your glory, yeah, what a day! oh yeah
Just waiting for your glory, longing just to see You face to face
The day I see your glory, yeah, what a day
We will worship you. We will worship you. We will worship. What a day!

We will worship you We will worship you. We will worship
Waiting for your glory, longing just to see You face to face
The day I see your glory, what a day! oh yeah
Waiting for your glory, longing just to see you face to face
The day I see Your glory, yeah, what a day
I will see Your glory, what a day

COMMUNION

Chorus This the body this is the blood
Broken and poured out for all of us
In this communion share in his love
This the body this is the blood

I will remember every thing Lord that you've done for me
Won't take for granted the sacrifice that set me free
I hunger and thirst for the your love come fill me today

Chorus This the body this is the blood
Broken and poured out for all of us
In this communion share in his love
This the body this is the blood

I will remember every thing Lord that you've done for me
Won't take for granted the sacrifice that set me free
I hunger and thirst for the your love and your righteousness
we long for your presence here Lord with us again

Chorus This the body this is the blood
Broken and poured out for all of us
In this communion share in his love
This the body this is the blood
This the body this is the blood
This the body this is the blood

Unison: Father, as we keep awake for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, help us by your presence and power. Illumine our way, gladden our hearts, and accept the prayers we offer this day. As we join with the angels and shepherds to rejoice in the birth of the Son of God, let us celebrate the glory of God, who gives new birth to sons and daughters in every place for Christ's sake. Amen.

* ADVENT HYMN

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"
Fernando Ortega © 2008

Come, thou long expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.
Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:5-17 (ESV)

1:5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. **6** And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. **7** But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

8 Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, **9** according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. **10** And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. **11** And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. **12** And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. **13** But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. **14** And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, **15** for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. **16** And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, **17** and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared." **18** And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." **19** And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. **20** And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." **21** And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. **22** And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. **23** And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Minister: Therefore, we proclaim the faith!

Unison: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

PRAYER OF APPROACH

Unison: We do not presume to come to this your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord, whose nature is always to have mercy; grant us therefore, gracious Lord, that we may so partake of this bread and wine that our sinful bodies may be made clean by Christ's body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

AGNUS DEI

John 1:29

Minister: "Jesus is God's Lamb, who takes away the world's sin!"

People: Have mercy on us, O Lord and grant us your peace.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Minister: Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us.

People: Therefore, let us keep the feast!

Minister: The gifts of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to the Lord!

COMMUNION MUSIC

(Lyrics on page 14)

"Communion"
Chris Padgett © 2010

(Lyrics on page 15)

"What A Day!"
Robert Galea © 2010

ASSURANCE OF PARDON Romans 8:31-33, 35, 37 (ESV)

Minister: "If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Minister: The Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Minister: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord!

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord!

People: It is good and right so to do.

Minister: It is truly right, and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O Lord our God, for you are the creator and sustainer of the universe. You formed us in your image and breathed life into us. You set us in this world to love and serve you, and to live in peace with all that you have made. When we turned from you, you sought us out. When we were captives in slavery, you freed us from our bonds. When we were without hope, you promised to be our sovereign master. When we were stubborn and stupid, you reasoned with us by your Word through other believers. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with the faithful of every time and place.

THE SANCTUS Isaiah 6:3; Psalm 118:26

Minister: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory!"

**People: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
We bless you from the house of the Lord."**

²⁴ After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, ²⁵ "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

Minister: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!

People: Thanks be to the Lord!

*** PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

SERMON

Dr. David Blank MD

"The Unbelief of A Righteous Man "

PASTORAL PRAYER

OFFERTORY

"Sinfonia Pastorale"
(Sonos Handbell Ensemble 2001)

*** DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CONFESSION OF SIN

Unison: Our gracious God and Father, your promises in Christ Jesus are true and will all be fulfilled as surely as you have spoken them. Yet we have often doubted them and lived at times as if there were no God. Lord, forgive us for trusting other things and being content with temporal treasures. Grant us grace to repent and to rest in Christ, our God incarnate, as the ground of our lives and the spring of our hope. Teach us to resign to your will and to believe that you work all things for my good. Bless us with the faith of Abraham, that does not stagger at promises through unbelief.

