

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Welcome to Christ's Service of Worship for the Lord's Day

March 9, 2025
First Sunday in Lent



WE WELCOME YOU TO WORSHIP! You are special, because God brought you here today. Together we celebrate and rejoice in God's blessings in our lives!

GATHER JOYFULLY

THE PRELUDE

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:9-16; Luke 4:1-13

(Congregants are encouraged to read and reflect upon these passages as they prepare for worship.)

BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

GATHERING HYMN 166

Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days (Verse 1)

**Lord, who throughout these forty days for us did fast and pray,
Teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.**

THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive, from Psalm 91)

Minister: Where is our home?

Congregants: Our home is in the shelter and shadow of God.

Minister: How can this be our refuge?

**Congregants: God's angels will guard our home and those in it
from any evil and threat.**

Minister: How can we flourish?

**Congregants: Staying close to the ways of God will bring our lives
to abundance.**

Minister: So come, let us worship God!

*HYMN OF PRAISE 165 *The Glory of These Forty Days*

*PRAYER OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION (unison)

**Gracious and ever-present Lord, our Savior and Friend,
we come now in praise and wonder to Your holy throne.**

**In this season of penitence and self-awareness,
when we focus on our shortcomings, our fears, our brokenness,
we remember that You have already won the victory for us over sin,
and that the final enemy has been defeated on the Cross.**

**Yet we still come before you with our confessions,
for there is still much life-giving healing needed for ourselves and our world.
Too often we live for ourselves and do not celebrate Your kin-dom.**

**Too often we judge others without acknowledging our own failings.
Too often the words of commitment we speak are not matched
by our actions and our deeds.
Forgive us, Father, and give us hearts that reflect Your heart.
Use us to amplify Your grace into the whole world.
Hear these our private and personal prayers.**

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*RESPONSE HYMN 576 *Lord, Have Mercy*

GROW SPIRITUALLY

THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Psalm 32:1-7

¹ Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

² Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. ³ While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord', and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah ⁶ Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them. ⁷ You are a hiding-place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. Selah

THE PASTORAL PRAYER / THE LORDS'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.

Led my Lord to the cross, led my Lord up the mountain,
led my Lord to the tree, led my Lord to the fountain,
led my Lord out to die, to redeem, to deliver,
led Him out to provide for his children forever.

Died for you on the cross, died for me on the mountain,
died for you on the tree, drank of death's bitter fountain,
suffered long on the tree, bore alone all my sorrow,
eased my pain, took my grief, gave me hope for tomorrow.

Was not bound by the cross, lingered not on the mountain,
left my sins on the tree precious, life-giving fountain.
Loving Father above calmed our fears, soothed our aching,
gladly gave of His own: dying Lamb man's own making.
Died for me on the mountain, bids me drink from life's fountain.

MESSAGE FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

THE SECOND READING OF GOD'S WORD Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

¹ 'Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² 'So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.

³ But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁵ 'And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶ But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶ 'And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,

¹⁸ so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ¹⁹ 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal;

²⁰ but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

Author and Source of our lives, open our hearts to Your Holy Spirit so that the words proclaimed can go beyond ink and paper and sound, and can become the spiritual imparting of Your desires for our lives. We pray through the Living Word, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERMON

Moving into Lent

Dr. Russ Merritt

HYMN OF COMMITMENT 167 *Forty Days and Forty Nights*

* PRESENTATION AND DEDICATION OF GIFTS (unison)

(unison, from Deuteronomy 26))

We bring to You the first of the fruit of the ground that You, O Lord, have given to each of us.

We bow before You now and celebrate the bounty that You have provided. Use these gifts to serve Your Kingdom.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *The Apostles' Creed* (unison)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, 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 is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

GO FAITHFULLY

*HYMN OF DEDICATION 738 *O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee*

*CHARGE

*THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

YOUR SERVICE

*Indicates the People Standing

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Card Shower for Frances Bowling's 100th birthday for/by March 18th. Please mail cards to Frances Bowling, Goodwill Retirement Community, Room 4113, 891 Dorsey Hotel RD. Grantsville MD 21536

Lenten devotional booklets can be picked up in the narthex.

Circle 1 will meet Tuesday, March 11th, at 10:00 am at the Church.

Our Men's Fellowship Breakfast will meet Thursday, March 20th, at 8:30 a.m. at Pete's Deli. It's a great way to start your day, come join us!

THE SESSION WILL MEET on Sunday, March 23, following the worship service. If you have any matters for the Session to consider, or if you would like to become a member of Northminster, please contact the Minister.

In January, the Discipleship ministry sent monetary donations to the Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands, hurricane relief that went to Montreat in North Carolina, the Presbyterian Center, RAM, the Rescue Mission, and CEDEPCA, which helps with the impoverished in Guatemala.

Jane Livesay is in need of pillow cases for the Little Dresses for Africa project. We want to thank her for making 411 dresses and thank you for providing the pillow cases and materials to make them. Little Dresses for Africa is a Christian organization that sends dresses to girls in Africa but also sends hope.

Calendar

Today	10:00 am	Seekers Class
	11:00 am	Worship Service
Tuesday	10:00 am	Circle 1
Next Sunday	10:00 am	Seekers Class
	11:00 am	Worship Service

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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Russ Merritt, Pastor
Susie Tallmage, Secretary
Melissa Hudson, Music Director
Ministers...Members of Northminster

If you or someone you know should be included in the list of those needing special prayer, please contact the Pastor. If prayers have been answered and we can celebrate God's goodness by removing your name from the list, let the Pastor know.

Let us keep those listed below in our prayers.

Members

Bill Bailey	Frances Bowling	Ellen Brumfield
Pam Claterbaugh	Marie Haines	Walt Haines
Jake Hayes	Hayes Family	Mary Ann Huff
Jyke Jones	Dennis Kincer	Skylar Kirby
Patsy Linton	Floyd Moretz	Ann Pace
Mac Pace	Justin Plymale	Buddy Smith
Sandy Smith	Vicki Whitworth	

Friends and Family

Nancy Assaid	Joaquin Bielawski
Shirley Basham	Donna Betters
Lucy Collier	Terry Foss
Issac Franklin	Vicki Widener
Glenna Myers	Dan Cone

***THE SESSION ***

Clerk of Session: Holly Woodson
Elders: Frankie Bielawski, Pam Claterbaugh, Richard Claterbaugh, Dana Esworthy, Matt Graybill, Joe Gwitt, Karen Gwitt, Maggie Hambrick, Gary Harris, Lynn Kirby, Chuck Lockard, Judy Moore, Dave Snider, Ron Staton, Greg Theimer

