

## WORSHIP SERVICE PLAN

(Traditional & Online Service)

May 18, 2025 • Homecoming Weekend • Fourth Sunday in Easter

**Colossians 3:12-17; Psalm 150**

*"A Song for the Ages"*

God expects our lives to sing.

### (online only) Preparation for Worship

Gather these items for worship. If you don't have a particular item, fret not:

- a piece of white cloth
- an end table or stand
- a plate
- a cup
- a glass or bowl of water
- a lighter/match
- a piece of music or music playing device
- a computer or internet-accessible device
- a thank you card to God for something this week

For each item you have, thank God for the provision. For each piece you do not have, thank God you don't need it. Place the table/stand in the area you plan to worship. If more than one person will be present, place the table in the middle of where you will be seated. Drape the cloth over it. Arrange the cup, plate, glass of water, and other items on the table. Keep the Bible in front of you.

### Questions for the announcement loop

*In preparing for Worship, consider the following:*

- What role does music play in your life?
- Why do you imagine God invented music?
- What soundtrack would you use for your life?
- What theme song would God use for our congregation?

### (10am only) Call to Worship

*"Christ Has Arisen!" by Daniel Mattix*

**Christ has arisen as our King.**

**Conquering death and sin's vile sting!**

**With all creation join to sing; Alleluia!...**

*Liturgy:*

*Christ has died! Christ has risen!*

**Christ will come again!**

*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,*

**to receive power, wealth, wisdom and might,  
honor, glory and blessing!**

*To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb*

**be blessing and honor and glory and might  
forever and ever!**

*Alleluia!*

**Amen!**

**Christ has arisen from the grave,**

**He rose to triumph and to save!**

**New life to humankind he gave:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

### (10am only) Prelude:

*"How Beautiful Heaven Must Be" by A.S.*

Bridgewater; Pianist: Robert Buxton

### Opening Sentence

**Colossians 3:16 (CEB)**

The word of Christ must live in you richly. Teach and warn each other with all wisdom by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

**Welcome to this service of Worship, We are glad you are with us! We have a few Community Notes for you to consider as we worship throughout the week...**

### Welcome Visitors!

We are glad you are here! Our nursery is in the Education Building and our restrooms are in the buildings other than the Sanctuary.

### Homecoming 2025: Music Festival

The third Sunday in May is the traditional celebration of the founding of our congregation and our church family reunion! We invite everyone to reminisce and reconnect. This weekend, we plan on worshipping together in song! With Psalm 150 as our guide, we will praise God in gratitude and awe! Also, as always, we will have our potluck

following the worship service. Bring Lemonade or Tea and your favorite dish to share and be ready for our group picture. Everyone is welcome to join in, whether or not they're a member or friend or visitor! Let's make this a grand celebration of 270 years of God's faithfulness and our response!

### A Life That Sings

Not everyone is into music. Certainly not everyone pursues music as a career or vocation. Yet music is as intimate and universal as human experience across cultural, ethnic, even historical lines. It extends the memory of a community and can reach into us even when disease overwhelms us. The power music can have is a gift of God. And so when thinking about your life, especially your life of faith, what song speaks for you? What song speaks to the kind of life you are leading? What music would people hear if they danced to your tune? Compassion? Encouragement? Forgiveness? Right and wrong? Courage?

### Caring for Creation

The truth is as daunting as it is grace-filled: we ARE *partners* with God in Creation. God has seen fit to give us authority over the majesty, variety, and riches of Creation. The question is *what kind of partner does God want us to be?* We will be exploring Scripture's take on our role in several ways throughout this series. Look for the study materials on our website and Facebook page.

### Game Night!

Friday, May 23rd, starting at 7pm, is once again Game Night! Bring your favorite card or board game to share as well as a snack. We will break out at tables throughout the Fellowship Hall (and if need be, the Education Building). Come and join in and let's learn a thing or two about each other!

### Memorial Day Is an Opportunity

Like other holidays, Memorial Day is an arbitrarily set date but the occasion is far from arbitrary. There are many who have given their lives in service for our country and the furthering of our common ideals. Taking time to remember them is an important part of how we express our thanks. Our scouts are taking time to place flags on graves in our cemetery. Take time to walk through and observe the names. Also think of the families who

lost members. Offer your prayers of gratitude for living in a country of laws, of principles, of freedoms, of solemn responsibilities, and of people willing to give up their lives.



The graphic is a promotional poster for 'Youth Stock'. At the top left is a pink vintage Volkswagen bus with several people inside. To its right, the words 'Youth Stock' are written in a stylized font, with 'Youth' in green and 'Stock' in white on a green background. Further right is a small image of a book titled 'LIGHT IN THE PATH'. Below the bus is a speech bubble that says 'See one of us after worship to make your investment!'. To the right of the speech bubble is a large yellow arrow pointing right, containing the text 'Help us make it to our faith destination by buying Youth Stock!'. Below the arrow is a circular logo with a heart in the center, surrounded by the words 'HOLY LOVE' and 'WHOLLY LOVED'. At the bottom, there is a block of text explaining the investment and its benefits.

See one of us after worship to make your investment!

Help us make it to our faith destination by buying Youth Stock!

When you purchase youth stock, you are investing in our faith and the future of our Church. You can purchase Youth Stock for only \$10 a share. And there is no limit to how many shares you can buy!! The dividend you will receive for your investment included a note written by youth attending the conferences and a delicious dinner at the end of the summer where we will tell you all about our experiences at the conferences.

### (10am only) Greet one another in Christ!

#### (10am only) "This Is the Day CEL #209

**This is the day, that the Lord has made.**

**We will rejoice and be glad in it**

**This the day that Lord has made;**

**We will rejoice and be glad in it.**

**This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.**

### God expects our lives to sing.

In this moment, let us remain standing, take a deep breath, silence our devices, and continue in worship. Let us sing our opening song together...

### Sing:

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" GTG#12

### Prayer of Confession/Preparation

*We spend too much time worrying about singing perfectly when our job, simply, is to praise God. We need to fix that. It's important to talk about our shortcomings so that we're ready to hear what God has to say. Let us begin with silent prayer...*

*(Please pray silently...)*

**Pray: Great God, your voice set the world in motion. Your voice caused the trees to grow, the**



**stars to shine, and all of us to come to be. Your voice is the reason we have a voice at all. May we worry less about how we sound and focus on making a sound. May we worry less about what to say and focus on what you've given us to say. May we worry less about whether we're in tune to our liking and focus on being in tune with you. May we sing, O God. May we sing loudly and broadly and with everything we have. May we come to reflect your generosity as enthusiastically as we receive it. Thank you for listening, God. Amen.**

**(10am only) Assurance of Pardon**

*God's love can change everything, even the power of our sins over us. And it is God's will that we have this power:*

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

*The Peace of Christ be with you*

**And also with you.**

**(10am only) Gloria Patri (Glory to God)**

**Glory be to the Father**

**And to the Son**

**And to the Holy Ghost**

**As it was in the beginning**

**It is now and ever shall be**

**World without end: Amen, amen.**

**A Brief History of Our Church**

Hawfields Presbyterian Church was founded by settlers in 1755. The present sanctuary, constructed in 1854, occupies one of *three* sites used by the congregation over the years. An Educational Building, Fellowship Hall, and century-old Session House also occupy the grounds. The journey for our church includes every transition our country has seen since before we were a country. We've seen the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, the end of slavery, the introduction of co-ed worship space, the move from farming to manufacturing to an Internet-driven economy. We started and have maintained an evening Contemporary Worship Service. The Pandemic was a major, worldwide milestone in which we actually thrived, spurring the start of our online, Home Worship Service. Over the years we founded and shared space with the Presbyterian Home of Hawfields (now Compass Health and Rehabilitation) and the Hawfields Childcare and Development Center. The Hawfields

Civitans run ballparks and many other programs for the community on church grounds behind the main complex. Now, as we contemplate even more changes to our community, it's anyone's guess as to what God has in store for the next 200 years. What we do know is that we will never be the same.

**Sing:**

*"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" GTG#39*

**Reading of Scripture**

*Say: The Word of God doesn't just inform: it reveals. The Word of God doesn't just tell us the truth, it empowers us to live our true path. The Word of God, by God's own Spirit, teaches us to live. Let us be open to this gift of God and ask for help to understand. Let us pray...(everyone sings)*

**Pray/Sing:** *"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"*  
(GTG #232)

**Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!**

**Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!**

**Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!**

**Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!**

*Listen closely to the Word of God to us all and our ongoing place in God's story...*

**Read: Colossians 3:12-17 (CEB)**

*Song is the garment of our faith.*

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God's choice, holy and loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup> Be tolerant with each other and, if someone has a complaint against anyone, forgive each other. As the Lord forgave you, so also forgive each other. <sup>14</sup> And over all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. <sup>15</sup> The peace of Christ must control your hearts—a peace into which you were called in one body. And be thankful people. <sup>16</sup> The word of Christ must live in you richly. Teach and warn each other with all wisdom by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing to God with gratitude in your hearts. <sup>17</sup> Whatever you do, whether in speech or action, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God the Father through him.

**Read: Psalm 150 (CEB)**

*Praise God everywhere with everything!*

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary!

Praise God in his fortress, the sky!

<sup>2</sup> Praise God in his mighty acts!

Praise God as suits his incredible greatness!

<sup>3</sup> Praise God with the blast of the ram's horn!

Praise God with lute and lyre!

<sup>4</sup> Praise God with drum and dance!

Praise God with strings and pipe!

<sup>5</sup> Praise God with loud cymbals!

Praise God with clashing cymbals!

<sup>6</sup> Let every living thing praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD!

*One: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us...*

**All: Thanks be to God!**

**Sticks and Stones**

Our evolution as a congregation can be seen in the models painstakingly crafted to represent the different eras of our congregation. In a digital and virtual age, the walls and buildings we might point to for our identity are giving way to the reality that has always been: the Church, Hawfields Presbyterian Church, is its people.

**Sing:**

*"Every Time I Feel the Spirit" GTG #66*

**Children's Sermon**

*Adults, you'll need:*

- a children's song (or you can teach the one provided!)
- Don't forget to wait for answers *"Unforgettable!"*
- We use music for a lot things in the church. One of the most important is to teach fun! So we're going to learn a fun camp song!
- (You can use the recording and corresponding lyric slides or skip the recording to teach your own song.)
- *I think I'm gonna throw up (x3)*  
*my hands to the Lord*  
*Throw up (x3)*  
*my hands to the Lord*

*I think I'm gonna chuck (x3)*  
*my sins out the door*  
*Throw up (x3)*  
*my hands to the Lord*

*I think I'm gonna "p" (x3)*  
*P\_R\_A\_Y*  
*Throw up (x3)*  
*my hands to the Lord*

- One of the things adults forget too fast is that our faith is supposed to be memorable and fun.
- So when you're around the people who care about you, be sure and ask them what they remember about church that's fun!
- Don't forget to pray!

**(10am only) Anthem:**

*"Love Lifted Me" by Greg Gilpin; Soloist: Lora Melton; Accompanist: Robert Buxton; Percussionist: Chason Alligood*

**Sermon: "A Song for the Ages"**

The lights dimmed. The audience hushed. And then a voice cried out in song like an ancient power calling everything into motion. The "sun" rose on the stage. The animals gathered from each corner of the theater, even the balcony. As the chorus and instruments, especially the drums, added to the sound, Pride Rock comes into view. The King and Queen ascend with the baby prince,

Simba. Rafiki comes, anoints the prince and raises him up before the kingdom. The music is soaring, taking our emotions and imaginations with it.

When I saw “The Lion King” in Cincinnati with my family, I was not exactly a big Broadway person. I had been in my share of plays and musicals but I just didn’t watch them a lot at all nor listen to the soundtracks. Mandy taught me to do that. But sitting there in the theater watching everything unfold, it was breathtaking. For all of my interest in science fiction and special effects, I simply had not experienced anything like that before.

And the simple reality is that without the music the entire experience would have been a dud. Oh, take nothing away from the elaborate costumes, the puppetry, the scenes, or the actors, the lighting, the script, the direction, the stage hands, even the stage itself. The music is what takes the entire experience and makes it burn into the memory and become a spiritual phenomenon.

When I think about my most memorable moments growing up in church, music is at the center of a LOT of those memories. Just hearing a song can take me back to a place welcome and familiar and kinder than the times to which I feel hostage. Music can be an escape. But it is also a bridge. It helps me tie one moment to another and lend strength to my resolve. Music reminds me of home.

I’ll never forget one of our members, after suffering a debilitating stroke that left them speechless, somehow found the voice to sing “Amazing Grace.” We just hosted the service at Compass Rehabilitation. Where some of those folks can’t recall Scripture passages or even hold the songbook in their hands, when the songs rise, their voices rise with them.

What are we to make a gift so powerful? Why did God give us songs to sing?

Well, to answer that, we need to talk about the times we don’t feel like singing.

Psalms 137 is beautifully set in the context of the Exile, when the people of God were ripped from

their homes and made to live in foreign territory. They sing,

*Alongside Babylon’s streams,  
there we sat down,  
crying because we remembered Zion.  
We hung our lyres up  
in the trees there  
because that’s where our captors  
asked us to sing;  
our tormentors requested songs of joy:  
“Sing us a song about Zion!” they said.  
But how could we possibly sing  
the LORD’s song on foreign soil?*

It’s a great question. When I’m trying to grieve my loved ones being gone, when I’m trying to recover from surgery, when I’m overwhelmed by the changes in my culture, my community, the changes in myself, when I’m baffled by the cruelty and evil I experience, when I get to the point that just sitting at home and staying away from it all seems like the better option, how do I sing? How do we say “Praise God” when everything in our life seems to point at God having abandoned us?

In the letter to the Colossians, we are told the reason. We are told how to leverage the power music can have over human life, even in misery.

**Read: Colossians 3:12-17 (CEB)**  
***Song is the garment of our faith.***

So, we don’t sing only when we *feel* like it. There’s was nothing in there about conditions, circumstances, or even formulas. We put on faith like a garment. Determine to be we are meant to be. The peace of Christ must control our hearts, not fear. We *choose* to do all of that. And we sing, y’all, to learn how.

That congregation member who sang “Amazing Grace” with us even after he stroke, found her voice. There are days that music can reach me when nothing else does. On a recent vacation with my family, there was a run where we heard a bunch of music from the 80s. My wife and I gave each other knowing looks as we were taken back to times, to moments, that formed us. One of the reasons church leaders in the Middle Ages stole pop tunes and replaced the words was to tap into

something that we all know. Some of the most well-loved hymns we sing borrowed their tunes from pubs in small European towns. Can you think of a better way to teach theology than to put the concepts to music?

*Father Abraham had many sons  
Many sons had Father Abraham  
I am one of them, and so are you  
So let's just praise the Lord...*

We could drill down into the finer points of Genesis 15:5:

*Then he brought Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars if you think you can count them." He continued, "This is how many children you will have."*

Yet we have a song that spells out plainly the implications of this divine promise and our part in it. "I am one of them and so are you" is about as loaded a theological statement as you can find. The implications are powerful and generational.

We can sing "Count Your Blessings" or "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" or "When the Roll Is Called up Yonder" or "Precious Lord" or "Here I Am, Lord" or any number of hymns, songs, choruses, that don't simply speak to when we learned the song but to what the song makes us feel, what it makes us remember, what it teaches us anew about God and each other, what the song does to buoy our faith. And of course, WHO the songs make us remember.

As I talk with people about the church songs that stand out to them, I wonder what songs might have been raised up by our forebears. What would have the founders preferred? What would the families have sung? What held weight with our children, our slaves, our visitors, our people, over this 270 years? And what do those songs teach us about who they were, what their values were, what they were facing? What do our songs teach people about us: who we are, what our values are, what we are facing now?

But Colossians is clear: our songs are about more than circumstance or even history. They are prayers, our prayers, that help us connect and

reconnect to a living God. This invariably draws us back to a basic task.

### **Online Read: Psalm 150 (CEB)** ***Praise God everywhere with everything!***

One of the goofy things about how we practice worship nowadays is we get hung up on appropriateness: everything in its place and a place for everything. Now, as a classically-trained seminarian, believe me, I'm all about things being done "right." Use the right language, use the right songs, follow the right procedures. How do you even recognize if you're worshipping God without this kind of structure?

But then God answers us simply and comprehensively.

We get clues to this in something Jesus says to the woman at the well:

*"But the time is coming—and is here!—when true worshippers will worship in spirit and truth. The Father looks for those who worship him this way. God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth."* (John 4:23-24)

Okay, fine. Spirit and truth. But what does that really mean? How do we get there? Well remember, Colossians said the songs will get us there. The music will teach us how. So what does the say to do?

Praise the Lord!

Honestly, Psalm 150 could've just stopped there and have been done. But the rest of the Psalm just tries to explain the scope and stakes.

First, Praise God everywhere. How do I know it says "everywhere"? Well, let's go through it. Where in Creation can you go that God is not present? Where on this earth can you go where God is NOT active? So...everywhere.

Second point: Praise God with everything. It is telling to me that all the things the Psalm says to praise God with have to do with music: makeshift instruments, crafted instruments, drums and dancing (seriously, when's the last time you danced



before God?...you really should!). And cymbals: glorious, bracing, lingering. Everything in the band's arsenal. Oh, and, just to be sure we get the point, the song says, "every living thing." Take a moment and make your list: every living thing. How long until you give up and just say, "Okay, all of Creation"? That's everything.

Praise the Lord!

It's life itself. All of life that should be singing. God, y'all, expects our lives to sing. And so on the occasion of 270 years of being a congregation, let us keep singing.

**We are in the season of Easter.** In that time of the year that we celebrate the power of God to raise up a Church despite our best efforts to do otherwise. It's not about longevity. It's about the compelling authority of God to write the music of the present and the future together in us, standing on the shoulders of all that came before us.

**Christ is risen!**

**The Lord is risen indeed! Hallelujah!**

### Song of Reflection

"When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder" CEL #774

### Necrology

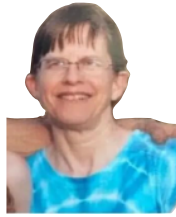
Each Homecoming we reflect on those have left their mark on us and whose legacies continue to speak to us even after leaving us.



Jeffrey Neese, 6/8/24



Tom Stone, 8/16/24



Susan Foster, 9/22/24



Mary E. Scott, 2/8/25

### Offering

God chooses to love us, abundantly. We should respond by choosing to be loving, abundantly. This is why we should give and share what we have and who we are. Let us reflect together on what has been given...

### (10am only) Offertory

"Because He Lives" arr. Carol Tornquist

### (10am only) Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,**

**Praise God all creatures here below.**

**Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Praise God above ye heavenly hosts;**

**Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.**

**Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

### Blessing

*(text online only)*

Let there be no doubt, Great God: you love us. And we are grateful. Let there be no doubt, Great God: we should be loving in turn. As we receive the gifts you provide, may the gifts we are meant to be emerge. In the great name of Jesus Christ, we pray this together. Amen.

### Prayer of the People

- Say: The Lord be with you...and also with you. Let us pray...

- *"Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks"* (GTG #240)  
**Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord. Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to His name (2 X)**
- Holy God, We are well aware that we didn't get here on our own. But the grace of this is not always front of mind. But whenever we weigh our preferences and desires against your will, help us remember those who came before us. Please continue to teach us through the songs of your people. May all of our history with you come to bear not just on our futures, but on our present.
- Thus, today, we give you thanks for Hawfields Presbyterian Church and the legacy our 270 years represents. All the trust you've invested in us. All the love you have shared with us. All the challenges in which you've traveled with us. This is more than a place, O God. It is home to so much and to so many. While we want to never forget all those upon whose shoulders we stand, please, help us remember to broaden our shoulders for all of those who walk with us and will come after us. Any celebration of the founding of our congregation is a celebration of you, Great God, and the songs you have written with the lives of your people.
- Thus, let us be Godly people. Let us make a habit of compassion and consolation. Let us make second nature your grace and mercy and sense of justice. Let us set aside safety and embrace risk-taking with you. May your healing balm reach through us to those around us, especially those on our prayer lists and those we will come to know. Help us love and give love. Help us value mercy as you do. Despite our collective answer of violence, of disdain, of division, of cynicism, to your love, may we truly be washed by you and embrace hope instead...(take time to name your own prayers)
- Thank you for believing in us, Thank you for transforming us. Thank you for teaching us, even how to pray when words fail us, saying,
- **Pray: 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.**

## Hymn of Sending

(10am) *"When We All Get to Heaven"* CEL #772

## Sending & Benediction

*Let us say together our benediction...*

**God expects our lives to sing.**

(raise your hands and say) "Get up, take heart, Jesus is still calling you..."; Go, and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding guide your hearts and minds this day and forever more. Amen!

**Christ is risen!**

**The Lord is risen indeed! Hallelujah!**

**Sing:** *"Praise, Praise, Praise the Lord!"*

(GTG #390)

**Praise, praise, praise the Lord! Praise God's holy name. Alleluia!**

**Praise, praise, praise the Lord! Praise God's holy name. Alleluia!**

**Praise God's holy name, alleluia! Praise God's holy name! Alleluia!**

**Praise God's holy name, alleluia! Praise God's holy name! Alleluia!**

**Praise, praise, praise the Lord! Praise God's holy name. Alleluia!**

**Praise, praise, praise the Lord! Praise God's holy name. Alleluia!**

## (10am only) Postlude

*"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"* arr. Mark Hayes

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