

# REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church



<https://www.rpcerie.org>

## Sunday Morning Worship Third Sunday of Easter

April 19, 2026

Worship Theme: *“God desires worship with sincerity of spirit, as well as in truth. Faithful worship, according to the patterns of God’s written Word, shapes our minds and touches and changes our hearts.”*

*\* The Congregation should please stand, if you are able to do so*

At Redeemer, we follow the Liturgical Year. Each Sunday sequentially measures from the beginning of the Church Year—the First Sunday of Advent, usually the first Sunday in December. In addition, certain Sundays have significance to celebrate certain occasions in the life of the Church, such as this Sunday which celebrates the Third Sunday of Easter.

The Worship Theme is chosen by the person preaching to represent the main theme of his or her sermon. The Minister of Music and Worship uses this Worship Theme to choose the other Elements of the Worship Service, such as the Call to Worship and the Hymns. The Accompanist uses the Worship Theme to choose the music for the Prelude, Hymn of Reflection, Offertory, and Postlude.

**Welcome, Announcements, and  
Introduction to Worship**..... Thomas Brooks

**Prelude:** *How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place*..... Brahms/Ham  
(From Psalm 84)

The accompanist chooses a Prelude that will support the Worship Theme and provides the text of the piece, so that the congregation can meditate on that text while the music is played. The actual Worship Service begins at the Prelude.

How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!  
For my soul, it longeth, yea fainteth, for the courts of the Lord:  
My soul and body crieth out, yea for the living God.  
Blest are they, that dwell within thy house:  
They praise thy name evermore.

(...continued over...)

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### Connection/Request for Prayer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like:  Call from the pastor  Prayer for:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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The Call to Worship is selected by the Minister of Music and Worship to relate to the Worship Theme and to encourage the congregation to acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all believers present, as they prepare to direct their acknowledgement and praise to God. God summons us to worship, and we respond with praise and with singing.

**Call to Worship:** *(responsively)* ..... Thomas Brooks

Liturgist: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

**Congregation: His love endures forever.**

Liturgist: The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone.

**Congregation: The Lord has done this; and it is marvelous in our eyes.**

Liturgist: This is the day the Lord has made.

**Congregation: Let us rejoice in be glad in it.**

—Psalm 118:1, 22-24

The first Hymn is chosen as a response to the Call to Worship and specifically offers praise to God for who He is: the Creator and Sustainer of all things and the One who has given us salvation from our sins through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus.

**\*Hymn No. 295: Crown Him with Many Crowns** ..... *DIADEMATA*

The first Scripture Reading is chosen by the person preaching to support the Worship Theme embodied in the Sermon. As with all reading of Scripture, the congregation acknowledges what they have heard by the response following the reading.

**Psalter Reading:** Psalm 98.....William Kern

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God!**

*Note: We will have A Moment for Children only if two or more children are present in the Worship Service.*

The Moment for Children communicates to the children that they are an important part of the congregation.

**A Moment for Children** .....Shirley Wilson

The Hymn of Reflection is chosen by the accompanist as a preparation for prayer and confession. This song allows the congregation to sing a song with which they are quite familiar.

**Hymn of Reflection:**

*God, Our Father, We Adore Thee*.....Frazier/Zundel

God, our Father, we adore thee! We, thy children, bless thy name.  
Chosen in the Christ before thee, we are “holy, without blame.”  
We adore thee! We adore thee! Abba’s praises we proclaim!  
We adore thee! We adore thee! Abba’s praises we proclaim!

*(...continued over...)*

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*(...continued from other side...)*

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Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—Three in One! We give thee praise!  
For the riches we inherit, heart and voice to thee we raise!  
We adore thee! We adore thee! Thee we bless thro' endless days!  
We adore thee! We adore thee! Thee we bless thro' endless days!

**Prayers of Confession**..... Thomas Brooks

We will begin by praying a unison prayer of corporate confession.  
Then, we will join in silently, confessing our personal sins.

**Gracious God, we confess that our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Please forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Please set us free from a past that we cannot change, please open to us a future in which we can be changed, and please grant us grace to grow more in Your likeness and image—through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and the Light of the world. Amen.**

*Note: The Congregation should please silently confess their sins.*

**Assurance of Pardon** (*responsively*)..... Thomas Brooks

Liturgist: Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

**Congregation: For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.**

—1 Corinthians 15:20-22

**Thanks Be to God!**

**\*Response Hymn: Gloria Patri**..... *GREATOREX*

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!

**\*Passing of the Peace**..... Thomas Brooks

*Note: The Congregation will please turn to each other and speak these words of common greeting: "May the peace of Christ be with you."  
And the reply: "And, also with you."*

The Prayers of Confession give believers the opportunity to confess: first their corporate sins and then (silently) their personal sins. While personal confession is a normal part of a believer's daily time with God, on Sundays, the believers join together to recognize the importance of keeping a clean slate with God through confession.

Having confessed both our corporate and personal sins, the Assurance of Pardon reminds us that Jesus has paid the penalty for our sins and we remain chosen by God and forgiven because of the birth, life, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Liturgist is not a "priest" and thus does not "pronounce absolution" of sins, but points to the assurance given to all believers (the Liturgist included) in God's written Word.

In response to our hearing the Assurance of Pardon, we join our voices in singing praise to God for the forgiveness that He has given us through His Son. The Response Hymn varies based on the season. This one, the Gloria Patri ("Glory to the Father"), is one of the ancient Christian doxologies.

Recognizing that the Lord Jesus Christ has made peace between us and God through his redeeming work, we each declare that peace to one another, and the peace among us as redeemed people. This celebrates the community we have through our faith in God.

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During this time of Prayer, we bring the needs of the world, our church, and the members and friends of our congregation to God in prayer. The congregation is encouraged to share their prayers both aloud and silently. Typically an Elder, as one of the shepherds of the congregation, leads the prayer. The Lord's Prayer is how Jesus commanded his disciples to pray (Matthew 6:9-13). It unites all Christian churches, though the precise wording varies somewhat for historical reasons.

**Pastoral Prayer, Prayers of the People, and The Lord's Prayer**..... Robert LeSuer

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.

The second Scripture Reading likewise supports the Worship Theme and the sermon. Typically the three readings are chosen from different portions of the canon of Scripture (Psalm, Gospel, other Old Testament, other New Testament), to ensure we are fed a "balanced diet" of God's written Word.

**Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 58**.....Emily Kern

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God!**

Prior to the sermon, the congregation sings this song, asking God to illumine our hearts and minds through the instruction of His written Word.

**Prayer of Illumination: *Speak, O Lord***..... Getty/Townend

Teach us, Lord, full obedience  
Holy reverence, true humility.  
Test our thoughts and our attitudes  
In the radiance of Your purity.  
Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see  
Your majestic love and authority.  
Words of pow'r that can never fail.  
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.

During this time in the Worship Service, the person preaching shares what God has laid on his or her heart with the congregation. The Worship Theme comes alive during this time of preaching from God's written Word, the Bible.

**Sermon: "Warming Hearts, Transforming Minds, Forming Lives"**..... Rev. Giffone

**Sermon Text:** Matthew 5:23-26; 7:21-27

Each week (or whenever possible) we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion in response to the instruction of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a time of reflection on the suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord, and a time of recommitment to living lives dedicated to serving Him and His Kingdom.

**The Sacrament of Holy Communion**  
*Remembrance · Communion · Hope*

The ordained minister celebrating Holy Communion invites all who have received Jesus as Savior to join in celebrating this Sacrament.

**Invitation to the Lord's Table**..... Rev. Giffone

The offertory, the tithes and offerings, and the doxology are all included in the celebration of Holy Communion. This is not "compensating" God or the church for the sermon or the sacrament. Instead, we dedicate a portion of the fruit of our labors, for holy use. This dignifies the work that we do during the week, and points our hearts to God the Creator and Sustainer.

**Offering: *Something for Thee***..... arr. Wilson

Savior, thy dying love thou gavest me,  
Nor should I aught withhold, dear Lord, from thee;  
In love my soul would bow, my heart fulfill its vow,  
Some off'ring bring thee now, something for thee.

In the Old Testament, people brought various kinds of oil, grain, wine and meat to share with God, the priests, and the poor. In the early church, the sacrament was a meal, food and other in-kind gifts were brought to the communion table for the sacrament, and then deacons distributed the rest to the poor.

*Note: We welcome the families with children sitting in the rear of the sanctuary to come forward and find seating in the front of the church, so that the children may observe the Celebration of Holy Communion.*

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**\*Offertory Hymn No. 733: *Doxology*..... *LASST UNS ERFREUEN***  
*(Sung with an Alternate Tune)*

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Alleluia, Alleluia!  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

As the usher brings the Offering plate to the Communion Table, the congregation sings this song of praise to God, acknowledging our privilege of sharing with Him our tithes, offerings, and love gifts.

**\*Offertory Prayer**..... Rev. Giffone

This Prayer dedicates the tithes, offerings, and love gifts to the service of Christ and His Kingdom and reminds us of the joy we should feel in giving back to God a portion of what He has given to us.

**Communion Opening Prayer  
and Words of Institution** ..... Rev. Giffone

The ordained minister celebrating the Sacrament offers a prayer of thanksgiving and shares from God's written Word a passage that reminds the congregation of the importance of this act of remembrance.

**Distribution of the Bread:** *The body of Christ, broken for you.*

(Please note that for Communion we use both gluten-free and dairy-free bread or crackers.)

As you pass the bread/crackers, please say to the next person:  
**"The body of Christ, broken for you."**

Upon receipt of the bread, please hold it until all have been served, so that we can partake of the bread together, as a sign of our oneness in Christ and membership in His corporate body—the Christian Church.

The Elements of the Sacrament of Holy Communion consist of the gluten-free wafers of unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice. These common substances represent the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. By partaking of these Elements, we remember the sacrifice of God's Son on the cross of Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus paid the price in our behalf. Unlike some fellow Christians, we do not believe that the Elements are transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ. By passing the Elements from congregation member to congregation member, and by saying the appropriate phrase as the Elements are passed, we recognize our oneness as brothers and sisters in Christ and after receiving each Element, we partake of that Element together.

**Distribution of the Cup:** *The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

(Please note that for Communion the juice we use is non-alcoholic grape juice.)

As you pass the cup, please say to the next person:  
**"The blood of Christ, shed for you."**

Upon receipt of the cup, please hold it until all have been served, so that we can partake of the cup together, as a sign of our oneness in Christ and membership in His corporate body—the Christian Church.

*Note:* This is not a distinctly Reformed practice, nor is it the only practice of communion in Reformed churches. Other common practices include: processing forward to receive from elders; common cup; intinction (dipping bread in wine/juice).

Please use the baskets we have provided in alternate rows for disposal of the used communion cups

The ordained minister celebrating the Sacrament offers a prayer of thanksgiving, usually pointing to the intended effect of the Sacrament in the life of each believer: sanctification, and mission.

**Prayer following Communion** ..... Rev. Giffone

The final Hymn reminds us of what we have learned throughout the entirety of the Worship Service regarding the Worship Theme and how it relates to our lives. This Hymn often contains words of commitment that will encourage us throughout the week ahead.

**\*Hymn No. 266: *Come, Ye Faithful Raise the Strain*.... *ST. KEVIN***

The Benediction is a pronouncement of peace from God's written Word for the congregation and a reminder that, in each day that lies ahead, we rely on God to lead us and guide us as we seek to be obedient to Him. After the benediction, the pastor typically recesses (walks down the aisle) to lead the congregation symbolically forth into the world (and to greet people as they leave the sanctuary, especially visitors).

**\*Benediction** ..... Rev. Giffone

**Postlude: *Brethren, We Have Met to Worship*** ..... *arr. Hayes*

The Worship Service concludes with a Postlude, to serve as a joyful encouragement as the congregation goes out for the week ahead.

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The fellowship of the saints is one of the four means of grace, along with prayer/singing, Scripture, and the Sacraments.

Each month our Session determines a special prayer emphasis and enlists the congregation to pray, as with one voice, for that month's topic.

### → After the Worship Service

We invite you to join us for a time of fellowship with coffee and cookies after the Worship Service in the rear of the sanctuary.

If you wish to have a time of personal prayer, please speak to Pastor Benj or to one of our Ruling Elders—Zachary Harvey, Robert LeSuer, or Amy Stearns.

### → Monthly Prayer Focus

During the month of April, Session asks us to pray for each other. A list of members and regular attendees will be available on the center table at the back of the sanctuary. If you don't know some of the people listed, ask someone to introduce you and get to know them. As you consider each individual person, please pray:

- Giving God thanks for placing each of these individuals in your life.
- Asking God to strengthen the bond between the two of you, considering what you can share about yourself that will help build your friendship.
- Considering what you know about them:
  - Do they have problems or troubles where you could come alongside them and give them a friend to lean on?
  - Do you know if they have committed their lives to Jesus Christ? If not, please pray for opportunities to witness to them.
- Asking for God's continued blessing on their lives and families.
- Asking God to strengthen their faith, and to protect them from temptation.

**Pastor:** ..... Rev. Benjamin D. Giffone, PhD  
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**Minister of Music and Worship:** ..... Thomas Brooks

**Accompanist:** ..... Shirley Wilson

**Ruling Elders:** ..... Robert LeSuer, Amy Stearns, Zachary Harvey

**Ways to Give to Redeemer:**

- *Offering Plate*
- *Mail:* RPC Treasurer, c/o 115 W Lakeview Blvd., Erie, PA 16508
- *Online:* <https://www.rpcerie.org/give>



**To contact the church:** [info@rpcerie.org](mailto:info@rpcerie.org)

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