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**GOD**  
ME YOU THEM  
RELATIONSHIPS  
FRIENDS FAMILY  
PASTORS ELDERS DEACONS  
BROTHERS & SISTERS IN CHRIST  
TEACHING PREACHING  
**FAITH BIBLE**  
SALVATION SANCTIFICATION  
PRAISE ADORATION THANKSGIVING  
LOVE JOY PEACE  
**WORSHIP**

## WHAT IS CHURCH?

Part 1- Acts 2:42-47

New Covenant Presbyterian Church  
April 16, 2023 10:00am Service



1125 Jamison Corner Road Middletown, DE  
(302) 378-4446 [www.newcov-church.org](http://www.newcov-church.org)

# The Worship of God

April 16, 2022    Second Sunday of Easter

## Welcome and Announcements

## Sharing Our Vision

### Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Musical Prelude ...



*When we are tempted to feel as if Jesus abandoned us to the ways of the world, it is helpful to remember that he did not leave us to fend for ourselves. He promised us to send the Spirit – the Paraclete – to be with us. “Paraclete” comes from a verb meaning “to call to one’s side” and it can mean Comforter, Advocate, Counselor, or Helper. Sometimes the Spirit is present in quite large, obvious ways, and, other times, it is present as a still, small voice; but it is ALWAYS present with us.*

*The work of the Holy Spirit is not necessarily to answer questions, but to goad us into asking them. The Spirit is a force that drives us into living with integrity, paying attention to that which is greater than us, and walking in the beauty of that life. We may not all walk this path in the same way, but it is helpful to walk alongside our sisters and brothers in faith.*

## Preparing to Meet God

### Call to Worship

- L:**     God’s knowledge and love for each of us is infinite, and so we come this day to give thanks for our blessings, and to honor our God.
- P:**     ***For placing us within our human families and incorporating us within the family of faith, we thank you, O God.***
- L:**     We rejoice that you have called us from our varied backgrounds and perspectives, and knit us together into this family of faith.
- P:**     ***And we renew our commitment to you and each other, as we gather as the Body of Christ this day and every Sabbath.***
- A:**     ***Come and dwell among us and bless us with your presence, most holy God.***

### Hymn # 469

### *Morning Has Broken*

*1-Morning has broken, like the first morning,  
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!*

2-Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,  
Like the first dewfall, on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,  
Sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.



3-Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning  
Born of the one light Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation, praise every morning,  
God's recreation of the new day!

### Prayer of Confession

***If we were honest in our confessions, O God, our sins would accuse us of being enemies of Christ. Sin has possessed us and we long to be set free in order to love and serve the Lord. Thank you for the eternal message of hope that the church preaches to repent and be baptized in the name of the triune God. We do believe in Christ and in the forgiveness his death obtained for us. Give us the strength through your Spirit to live as his disciples. And now, holy God, we turn to you in silent prayer to share our concerns and to seek your forgiveness.....Amen.***

### Assurance of Pardon

**L:** Jesus' life and death brings with it the possibility of new life for us.

**P:** ***Through Christ, we die to ourselves and live for him.***

**L:** Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel -

**P:** ***In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and freed for new life.***

## Meeting God in the Word

### Children's Message/Prayer for Illumination

#### First Lesson

*1 Peter 3: 8-22 Suffering for Doing Right*

*Lay Leader*



*Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called - that you might inherit a blessing. For 'Those who desire life and desire to see good days, let them keep their tongues from evil and their lips from speaking deceit; let them turn away from evil and do good; let them seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.'*

*Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be*

*intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame.*

*For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you - not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.*

**L:** This is the Word of the Lord.     **P: Thanks be to God.**

**Second Reading**     Acts 17: 22-31     *The God in Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being*     Carol

*Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, 'Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, "To an unknown god." What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him - though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we too are his offspring." Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.'*

**L:** This is the Word of the Lord.     **P: Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

*The Three "B's" of the Christian Life*

*Responding to the Word*

**Hymn # 522**

*Lord, When I Came Into This Life*

*1-Lord, when I came into this life,  
You called me by my name;  
Today I come, commit myself,  
Responding to your claim.*

*3-In all the tensions of my life,  
Between my faith and doubt,  
Let your great Spirit give me hope,  
Sustain me, lead me out.*

*2-Within the circle of the faith  
As member of your cast,  
I take my place with all the saints  
Of future, present, past.*

*4-So, help me in my unbelief  
And let my life be true:  
Feet firmly planted on the earth,  
My sights set high on you.*



### **Affirmation of Faith**

**L:** Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, even in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character, hope.

**W:** ***We rejoice because God has promised never to leave us or forsake us, no matter who or what fails us in life.***

**L:** We persevere through trials because Jesus Christ persevered, never once giving up, that we might be saved.

**M:** ***We develop character because he has promised to sanctify us by his truth as we live in obedience to his Word.***

**A:** ***And character produces HOPE – not a vague hope as when we hope or wish to visit a certain place, or buy a certain thing – but faith and hope based on God’s unchanging character. It is only as we endure the uncertainty of this life, that we can comprehend and appreciate God’s dependability.***

### **Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer**

Cares Chorus: *I cast all my cares upon you. I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.  
And anytime, I don’t know what to do, I cast all my cares upon you.*

### **The Call to Celebrate Our Gifts**

*God provided all that we need, and so we are called to return a portion of our blessings to God to be used in God’s service. We so appreciate all that each of you shares for our church’s ministry. May we all give sacrificially for God’s glory.*

Prayer of Dedication: God of power and might, you are the ultimate in generosity as you led your Son that we might have life as you meant it to be. Touch our hearts with your generous spirit that our offerings of time, money and talents might be used to reach those who do not know you and bring them new life through you. Amen.

*Going Out to Serve*

### **Hymn # G2G 838**

*Standing on the Promises*

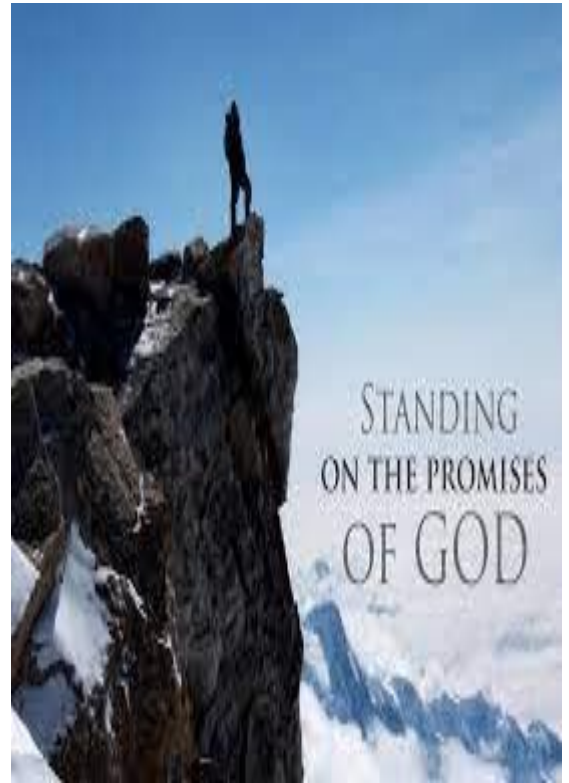
*1-Standing on the promises of Christ my king;  
Through eternal ages let his praises ring;  
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,  
Standing on the promises of God. **R***

**Refrain:**  
**Standing, standing,**  
**Standing on the promises of God my Savior;**  
**Standing, standing,**  
**I'm standing on the promises of God.**

*2-Standing on the promises that cannot fail,  
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,  
By the living Word of God I shall prevail,  
Standing on the promises of God. R*

*3-Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,  
Bound to him eternally by love's strong cord,  
Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,  
Standing on the promises of God. R*

*4-Standing on the promises I cannot fall,  
Listening every moment to the Spirit's call,  
Resting in my Savior as my all in all,  
Standing on the promises of God. R*



## **Blessing**

**L:** We have heard God's Word of Truth -

**P:** **About BELONGING, BELIEVING, and BEHAVING.**

**L:** We give thanks for the privilege of joining together as the Church

**P:** **Each of us bringing our unique thoughts and talents, and sharing them for the good of the community of faith.**

**A:** **May God lead us as we seek to attain unity of spirit, having sympathy and love for one another, being tender-hearted and humble.**

**L:** May your lives declare the Lordship of Jesus Christ today and every day, and may the blessings of God.....

## **Response**

*He is Lord – He is Lord,. He has risen from the dead, and he is Lord.  
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord.*