

REFORMATION WORSHIP

The Westminster morning service follows the classical pattern of the major Protestant Reformers as they sought to return Christian worship to the pattern and elements of the immediate post-Apostolic church. The service consists of four major parts—the acts of entrance, the ministry of the Word, the ministry of prayer and the acts of commitment. Not only does the practice of “classic” worship place the focus on Almighty God himself and his majesty—as opposed to human personalities and entertainment—but the “means of Grace” are central in the service.

THE LORD’S DAY AT WESTMINSTER

- 9:45 A.M. Sunday Bible School for the entire family
- 11:00 A.M. Morning Service
- 6:00 P.M. Confession class and Q&A Club

REVIVAL PRAYER, TONIGHT AT THE CHURCH 6 PM

CONFESSION CLASS AND Q&A CLUB BEGINS TONIGHT AT 6 PM!

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION SERVICE

The ordination and installation service for our new church officers will take place during the morning worship service on September 27.

ALL CHURCH FELLOWSHIP MEAL SEPTEMBER 27

We will have our all church fellowship meal immediately after the morning service on September 27. Please plan to bring a main dish and a side to share.

THE LORD ADDED

We welcome into the communion membership of Westminster Church the following new member received last Lord's Day by the Session: **By Transfer of Letter:** Mr. and Mrs. William and Jamie Wallace and Mr. Ben Wallace, from the First Presbyterian Church, North Palm Beach (ECO).

***BOOK OF THE MONTH:** *Trembling Joy: A Biblical Defense of Traditional Worship* by Ryan Speck*

Westminster Presbyterian Church

THE MORNING SERVICE

eleven o'clock

Lord’s Day, September 13, 2026

Visitors will note that the Westminster morning service proceeds without announcement. Written direction is found in the bulletin for each component of the corporate expression of worship of the Almighty and Majestic Triune God. The service is planned in this manner so as to eliminate as much as possible interruptions of the flow of thought and expressions of reverent worship that is commensurate with the majesty of Almighty God. This worship begins with the prelude.

- *Indicates the congregation standing, as one is able.
- +Latecomers may be seated.

“O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true . . .” II Samuel 7:28

REBIRTH

It was Jesus who first declared that spiritual rebirth was an absolute necessity for entering the kingdom of God. He declared to Nicodemus, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). The word *unless* in Jesus’ teaching signals a universally necessary condition for seeing and entering the kingdom of God. Rebirth, then, is an essential part of Christianity; without it, entrance into God’s kingdom is impossible. *Regeneration* is the theological term used to describe rebirth. It refers to a new generating, a new genesis, a new beginning. It is more than “turning over a new leaf”; it marks the beginning of a new life in a radically renewed person. Peter speaks of believers having “been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” (I Peter 1:23).

Regeneration is the work of Holy Spirit upon those who are spiritually dead (see Ephesians 2:1-10). The Spirit recreates the human heart, quickening it from spiritual death to spiritual life. Regenerate people are new creations. Where formerly they had no disposition, inclination, or desire for the things of God, now they are disposed and inclined toward God. In regeneration, God plants a desire for Himself in the human heart that otherwise would not be there.

Regeneration is not to be confused with the full experience of conversion. Just as birth is our initiation, our first entrance into life outside the womb, so our spiritual rebirth is the starting point of our spiritual life. It occurs by God’s divine initiative and is an act that is sovereign, immediate, and instantaneous. An awareness of our conversion may be gradual. Yet rebirth itself is instantaneous. No one can be partially reborn.

—The Rev. R. C. Sproul, Drs. (Free Uni., NL)
Founding pastor, St. Andrew’s Chapel (Ind. Reformed), Sanford, FL

- The Prelude**
O Worship the King Kraus
Beneath the Cross of Jesus Maker
I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art *Genevan Psalter*, 1551
- *The First Lesson** – Isaiah 55:6-7
Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
Let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (ESV)
- *The Hymn No. 296** – “All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name” *Coronation*
- *The Invocation and the Lord’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, for ever. Amen.
- *The Response** (Sung by all) *Austrian Hymn*
Worship, honor, glory, blessing, Lord, we offer unto you; young and old, your praise expressing, in glad homage bend the knee. All the saints in heav’n adore you; we would bow before your throne: as your angels serve before you, so on earth your will be done. (Based on Ps. 148, v. 1 anon., 1796, v. 2, Edward Osler, English literary figure, wrote sixty-five hymns, 1836, mod.)
- +The Interlude** – How Sweet and Awesome Is the Place.....Ancient Irish hymn melody
- *The Ascription of Praise** (Sung by all) *Divinum mysterium*
Of the Father’s love begotten ere the worlds began to be, he is Alpha and Omega, he the Source, the Ending he, of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore! Christ, to thee, with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee, hymn, and chant, and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be, honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore! (by Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 405, tr. John Neale, 1854)
- *The Apostles’ Creed**
I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; 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 sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.
*i. e. His body continued in the state of the dead until the third day.
(from the 2nd c.; the term “Catholic” is the Anglicization of the Latin for universal)
- *The Gloria Patri** (Sung by all) *Greatorrex*
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. (2nd cent.)
- *The Great Commandment** (Unison)
And he [*Jesus*] said . . . “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” (St. Matthew 22:37-40 [Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18]) (ESV)
- *The Response** (Sung by all) *Slane*
Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art— thou my best thought by day or by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word; I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord; thou my great Father, I thy true son; thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one. Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise, thou mine inheritance, now and always: thou and thou only, first in my heart, High King of heaven, my treasure thou art. High King of heaven, my victory won, may I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heav’n’s Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all. (by Irish monk Dallan Forgaill, ca. 700, to honor the faith of fifth century missionary Patrick of Ireland, tr. Mary Elizabeth Byrne, 1905, vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1912)
- *The Second Lesson** – I John 1:5-2:2 (Responsively)
5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.
7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.
1 . . . But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (ESV)
- *The Silent Prayers of God’s People**
- *The Psalm** (Sung by all) *Redhead*
Broken, humbled to the dust, by thy wrath and judgment just, let my contrite heart rejoice and in gladness hear thy voice; from my sins O hide thy face, blot them out in boundless grace. I am evil, born in sin; thou desirest truth within. Thou alone my Savior art, teach thy wisdom to my heart; make me pure, thy grace bestow, wash me whiter than the snow. (Psalm 51 paraphrase, *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, 2018)

***The Westminster Larger Catechism**

Pastor: Q. 52. How was Christ exalted in his resurrection?
Congregation: A. Christ was exalted in his resurrection, in that, not having seen corruption in death (of which it was not possible for him to be held) and having the very same body in which he suffered, with the essential properties thereof, (but without mortality, and other common infirmities belonging to this life) really united to his soul, he rose again from the dead the third day by his own power; whereby he declared himself to be the Son of God, to have satisfied divine justice, to have vanquished death, and him that had the power of it, and to be Lord of quick and dead: all which he did as a public person, the head of his church, for their justification, quickening in grace, support against enemies, and to assure them of their resurrection from the dead at the last day.

***The Psalm – “O come, let us sing with joy to the LORD”***Hanover*
O come, let us sing with joy to the LORD; our Savior and rock, loud praises accord.
With thanks let us enter his presence and raise our shouts of thanksgiving in psalms filled with praise.
How great is the LORD, our God and our King, above all the gods, his greatness we sing. Earth’s valleys and mountains he holds in his hand. He made them and rules them—the sea and the land.
O come, let us bow and worship the LORD; before him we kneel, with praises adore.
For he is our God; we’re the sheep of his hand, and we are his people who dwell in his land.
Today if you hear the voice of the LORD, then close not your hearts to God’s holy word, like those in the desert of Massah that day, like those who at Meribah would not obey. (Psalm 95, *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*)

The Interlude – O God, We Praise Thee.....*Scottish Psalter, 1615*

The Sacrament of Baptism

The Third Lesson – Numbers 21:4-9 (Pew Bible, p.129, Large Print, p. 152)

The Sermon – FIERY SERPENTS IN THE WILDERNESS.....Mr. McGowan

***The Hymn No. 342 – “Christ is made the sure foundation”** *Regent Square*

***The Benediction**

***The Response** (Sung by all) *Cwm Rhondda*
Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land; I am weak, but thou art mighty; hold me with thy pow’rful hand; strong Deliv’rer, strong Deliv’rer, be thou still my strength and shield, be thou still my strength and shield. (by William Williams, greatest 18th century Welsh hymn writer, about 800 hymns in Welsh, 1745)

The Postlude – Be Thou My Vision.....Traditional Irish melody, arr. Evans

THE PERSEVERANCE AND PRESERVATION OF BELIEVERS

As the parable of the sower indicates (Mt. 13:18-23), there are different kinds of faith, but only faith that produces the fruit of holy living is saving faith. This is why the writer of Hebrews insisted that “without holiness, no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). Those with temporary faith may experience many blessings from God because of their close association with the faithful (Heb. 6:1-6; II Pet. 2:21-22), but they will lose those blessings as they turn from Christ and will eventually suffer eternal judgment (Heb. 10:26-31). Many who say to Jesus, “Lord, Lord,” will not be acknowledged (Mt. 7:21-23). Only those who show themselves to be regenerate by pursuing holiness as they pass through this world are entitled to believe themselves secure in Christ. Persevering in faith and penitence, not just in Christian formalism, is the path to glory.

Nevertheless, Reformed theology has also emphasized that God’s gracious preservation must sustain true believers so that they remain faithful to Christ. Christians do not begin their walk with Christ by faith and then continue by reliance on their own efforts (Gal. 3:3). Paul exhorted the Philippians to “work out [their] salvation” (Phil. 2:12) but then added “for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose” (Phil. 2:13). Paul also assured them, declaring that “he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion” (Phil. 1:6). Jesus himself stressed his preservation of true believers when he said that believers “shall never perish: no one can snatch them out of my hand” (Jn. 10:28).

Sometimes truly regenerate believers backslide and fall into gross sin. But in this they act out of character, do violence to their own new nature and make themselves deeply miserable, so that eventually they seek and find restoration to righteousness.

—From *Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible* (2003), theological editors, The Rev. John M. Frame, M.Phil. (Yale), D.D. (Belhaven) and The Rev. J. I. Packer, D. Phil. (Oxford), p. 1919

PRAYER

We are able to talk with God. He speaks verbally to us in his Word and nonverbally through His obvious providence. We commune with Him through prayer. Charles Hodge declared that “prayer is the converse of the soul with God.” In and through prayer we express our reverence and adoration for God, we bare our souls in contrite confession before Him, we pour out the thanksgiving of grateful hearts, and we offer our petitions and supplications to Him.

In prayer we experience God as personal and powerful. He can hear us and act in response. The Scripture teaches both the sovereign foreordination of God and the efficacy of prayer. The two are not inconsistent with one another, for God ordains the means as well as the ends for His purposes.

—The Rev. R. C. Sproul, Drs. (Free Uni., NL)
From *The Reformation Study Bible*, 3rd. ed., p. 1808

SANCTIFICATION: THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH

According to the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (Q. 35), sanctification is “the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.” It is a continuing change worked by God in us, freeing us from sinful habits and forming in us Christlike affections, dispositions, and virtues. It does not mean that sin is instantly eradicated, but it is also more than a counteraction, in which sin is merely restrained or repressed without being progressively destroyed. Sanctification is a real transformation, not just the appearance of one.

The basic meaning of “sanctify” is to set apart to God, for His use. But God works in those whom He claims as His own to conform them “to the image of his Son” (Rom. 8:29). This moral renovation, in which we are increasingly changed from what we once were, flows from the agency of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:13; 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:11, 19, 20; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:22-24; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 13:20, 21). God calls His children to holiness and graciously gives what He commands (1 Thess. 4:4; 5:23).

Regeneration is birth; sanctification is growth. In regeneration, God implants desires that were not there before: desire for God, for holiness, and for glorifying God’s name in the world; desire to pray and worship; desire to love and bring benefit to others. In sanctification, the Holy Spirit “works in you, both to will and to work” according to God’s purpose, enabling His people to fulfill their new, godly desires (Phil. 2:12, 13). Christians, as the moral profile of Jesus (the “fruit of the Spirit”) is progressively formed in them (2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; 5:22-25).

Regeneration is a momentary act, bringing a person from spiritual death to life. It is exclusively God’s work. Sanctification is an ongoing process, dependent on God’s continuing action in the believer, and consisting of the believer’s continuous struggle against sin. God’s method of sanctification is neither activism (self-reliant activity) nor apathy (God-reliant passivity), but human effort dependent on God (2 Cor. 7:1; Phil. 3:10-14; Heb. 12:14). Knowing that without Christ’s enabling we cannot do good works, but also that He is ready to strengthen us for all we have to do (Phil. 4:13), we “abide” in Christ, asking for His help constantly—and we receive it (Col. 1:11; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Tim. 1:7; 2:1).

The standard to which God’s work of sanctifying His saints is directed is His own revealed moral law, expounded and modeled by Christ Himself. Christ’s love, humility, and patience are a supreme standard for Christians (Rom. 13:13; Eph. 5:2; Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 2:21).

Believers find within themselves contrary urgings. The Spirit sustains their regenerate desires and purposes, but their fallen instincts (the “flesh”) obstruct their path and drag them back. The conflict of these two is sharp. Paul says he is unable to do what is right, and unable to restrain himself from doing what is wrong (Rom. 7:14-25). This conflict and

frustration will be with Christians as long as they are in the body. Yet by watching and praying against temptation, and cultivating opposite virtues, they may through the Spirit’s help “put to death” particular bad habits (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5). They will experience many particular deliverances and victories in their battle with sin, while not being exposed to temptations that are impossible to resist (1 Cor. 10:13).

—The Rev. J. I. Packer, D. Phil. (Oxford)
author of *Knowing God, Fundamentalism and the Word of God, Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*
from *The Reformation Study Bible*, 2d. ed., p. 1650

REBIRTH

It was Jesus who first declared that spiritual rebirth was an absolute necessity for entering the kingdom of God. He declared to Nicodemus, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). The word *unless* in Jesus’ teaching signals a universally necessary condition for seeing and entering the kingdom of God. Rebirth, then, is an essential part of Christianity; without it, entrance into God’s kingdom is impossible. *Regeneration* is the theological term used to describe rebirth. It refers to a new generating, a new genesis, a new beginning. It is more than “turning over a new leaf”; it marks the beginning of a new life in a radically renewed person. Peter speaks of believers having “been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Peter 1:23).

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Regeneration is not to be confused with the full experience of conversion. Just as birth is our initiation, our first entrance into life outside the womb, so our spiritual rebirth is the starting point of our spiritual life. It occurs by God’s divine initiative and is an act that is sovereign, immediate, and instantaneous. An awareness of our conversion may be gradual. Yet rebirth itself is instantaneous. No one can be partially reborn.

—The Rev. R. C. Sproul, D.D. (Free Uni., NL)
Founding pastor, St. Andrew’s Chapel (Ind. Reformed), Sanford, FL
Founder of Ligonier Ministries, author of over one hundred books
from *The Reformation Study Bible*, 3d. ed., p. 1857

JOHN CALVIN ON THE NECESSITY FOR REFORMING THE CHURCH
More than 450 years ago, a request came to John Calvin to write on the character of and need for reform in the Church. The circumstances were quite different from those that inspired other writings of Calvin, and enable us to see other dimensions of his defense of the Reformation. The Emperor Charles V was calling the Diet of the Holy Roman Empire to meet in the city of Speyer in 1544. Martin Bucer, the great reformer of Strassburg, appealed to Calvin to draft a statement of the doctrines of and necessity for the Reformation. The result was remarkable. Theodore Beza, Calvin’s friend and successor in Geneva, called *The Necessity for Reforming the Church* the most powerful work of his time . . .

. . . Calvin focuses on four topics, which he calls the soul and body of the church. The soul of the church is worship and salvation. The body is sacraments and church government. The great cause of reform for Calvin centers in these topics. The evils, remedies and necessity for prompt action all relate to worship, salvation, sacraments and church government.

. . . Proper worship is Calvin’s first concern.

WORSHIP

Calvin stresses the importance of worship because human beings so easily worship according to their own wisdom rather than God’s. He insists that worship must be regulated by the Word of God alone: “I know how difficult it is to persuade the world that God disapproves of all modes of worship not expressly sanctioned by His Word. The opposite persuasion which cleaves to them, being seated, as it were, in their very bones and marrow, is, that whatever they do has in itself a sufficient sanction, provided it exhibits some kind of zeal for the honour of God. But since God not only regards as fruitless, but also plainly abominates, whatever we undertake from zeal to His worship, if at variance with His command what do we gain by a contrary course? The words of God are clear and distinct, ‘Obedience is better than sacrifice.’” This conviction is one of the reasons that reform was required: “ . . . since . . . God in many passages forbids any new worship unsanctioned by his Word; since he declares that he is grievously offended with the presumption which invents such worship, and threatens it with severe punishment, it is clear that the reformation which we have introduced was demanded by a strong necessity.” . . .

For Calvin the worship of the medieval church had become “gross idolatry.” The issue of idolatry was for him as serious as the issue of works righteousness in justification. Both represented human wisdom replacing divine revelation. Both represented a pandering to human proclivities, rather than desiring to please and obey God . . .

The reformers, like the prophets of old, needed to attack the idolatry and the “external show” of the worship of their time. The antidote to the theatrics of the church in Calvin’s day was a godly simplicity of worship — as reflected in the order of service in the church of Geneva . . .

—The Rev. W. Robert Godfrey, Ph.D. (Stanford)

From www.Ligonier.org, July 8, 2016

*Westminster’s worship service follows Calvin’s 1542 order of service.

THE SESSION
Sean W. T. McGowan, Moderator
George E. Close
Arthur E. Wahl
Brett S. Doster

THE DIACONATE
Christopher J. Colson
Kerry S. Langston
Drew D. McLeod

OUR MINISTER
Sean W. T. McGowan, Pastor

OUR MISSIONARIES
Rev. and Mrs. Allen M. Baker, III, Reformed Evangelistic Fellowship Africa, India and USA
Rev. and Mrs. Ethan P. Brown, Reformed University Fellowship (PCA) University of Illinois
Mr. and Mrs. Juan C. Cardenas, TEAM (The Evangelical Alliance Mission) India
Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Davila, Presbyterian Church in America El Salvador
Rev. and Mrs. J. Kelly Jackson, Reformed University Fellowship (PCA) . . Florida State University
Rev. and Mrs. George Sayour, Ministry to State (PCA Mission to North Am.) Tallahassee
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stewart, Presbyterian Church in America Japan

OUR MISSION AGENCIES
A Women’s Pregnancy Center Tallahassee
Calvary Home for Children Anderson, SC
Chelsea House, Good Samaritan Network Tallahassee
Good Samaritan Inn for Men, Good Samaritan Network Tallahassee
Gulf Coast Presbytery, Presbyterian Church in America Madison, FL to Mobile, AL
Palmer Home for Children Memphis and Nashville, TN
Pregnancy Center of Gadsden County Havana and Quincy
Presbyterian Church in America Retired Ministers and Widows Relief Fund USA

THE ORDINARY MEANS OF GRACE-BASED MINISTRY
“What exactly do you mean by ‘ordinary means of grace-based ministry?’” The “ordinary means of grace” are “the Word, sacraments, and prayer.” These are the ordinances given by God with which spiritual life is nurtured. By ordinances we mean spiritual instruments of grace and growth in grace appointed by God in the Bible. So, when we say ordinary means of grace-based ministry, we mean a ministry that focuses on doing the things God says are central to the spiritual health and growth of His people. The key things that the church can do to help people know God and grow in their knowledge of God are: (1) the public reading and preaching of the Word; (2) emphasize the confirming efficacy of the sacraments; and (3) emphasize a life of prayer. —The Rev. J. Ligon Duncan, III, Ph.D.

