



Clifton Presbyterian Church is a welcoming Christian Community driven by compassion, generosity, resilience and service to others.

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**Breath Prayer:**

*INHALE:*

**Reveal yourself,**

*EXHALE:*

**in my life,  
and in our world.**

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Third Sunday of Easter  
April 19, 2026

*Conversion of Paul the Apostle, by Caravaggio  
Public domain, retrieved from wikimedia*

**WE GATHER TOGETHER TO WORSHIP GOD**

*Words in **BOLD** indicate the congregation reading together. Words of the worship leader are in PLAIN type. An asterisk \* indicates that the congregation may stand, as you wish.*

Gathering Song GtG 243

**Be Not Afraid**

**Be not afraid; sing out for joy!**

**Christ is risen, alleluia!**

**Be not afraid; sing out for joy!**

**Christ is risen, alleluia!**

Time of Prayer and Care

Prelude

**\* Call to Worship**

One: Come! Listen to the call of the Lord.

**All: Let us respond together to his call.**

One: Come! We are his chosen instrument.

**All: Let us be equipped together as his people.**

One: Come! Let us declare the name of the Lord.

**All: Let us worship together the Lord of all!**

**\*GtG Hymnal 267**

**Come, Christians, Join to Sing  
Come, Christians, join to sing,  
Alleluia, Amen!  
Loud praise to Christ our King,  
Alleluia, Amen!  
Let all with heart and voice  
Before his throne rejoice;  
Praise is his gracious choice;  
Alleluia, Amen!**

**Come, lift your hearts on high:  
Alleluia! Amen!  
Let praises fill the sky:  
Alleluia! Amen!  
He is our guide and friend;  
to us he'll condescend;  
his love shall never end:  
Alleluia! Amen!**

**Prayer of Confession**

One: God calls to each of us in different ways, but with the same desire, that we respond and live in your way. Confident of God's love, let us offer our confession.

**All: Lord, help us to see and hear your call, help us to seek you out in our daily living, to actively look and listen for you and to respond when we see and hear you. Forgive us for those times when we forget your call and choose to ignore it for our own desires. Forgive us for the times when we become deaf and blind to your call because we are afraid of what you will ask of us. Amen.**

**Assurance of God's Grace**

One: Like the apostle Paul, God seeks us out and calls us back, offering us new life and the chance to start again. Friends, trust that you are never too far off from God's way of love and justice, for God is gracious, forgiving, and merciful.

**All: We trust in God's power to renew us in love. Alleluia. Amen.**

## Sing Praise Presbyterian Hymnal 123

**Jesus Christ is Risen Today *vv 4***  
**Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!**  
**praise eternal as God's love; Alleluia!**  
**Praise our God, ye heavenly host, Alleluia!**  
**Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Alleluia!**

### The Peace of Christ

One: In the resurrection of Jesus, hope overcomes despair, life vanquishes death, and peace triumphs over violence. The peace of Christ that holds us gives us courage to be peacemakers in this world of division. Let us share that peace with one another. The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

*Those in the sanctuary are invited to greet those around you.*  
*Those on zoom are invited to offer greetings in the chat.*

### Offering our Gifts to God

*For those who would like to make a physical offering, the offering plates are available in the middle of the sanctuary. Donations can also be made online. [www.cliftonpc.org](http://www.cliftonpc.org)*

One: All the world belongs to God. All that is the air, on land or sea. Everything is God's. In our offering, we give our gifts freely, as a sign and symbol of our very selves. Let us pray.

**All: O God, take and use our gifts for the work of your kingdom at home and abroad. May your word be heard in every corner of the world and may your people always respond by turning to you. Amen.**

## **WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD**

Prayer for Illumination                      Come and Fill Our Hearts (sung two times)

**Come and fill our hearts with your peace.**

**You alone, O Lord, are holy.**

**Come and fill our hearts with your peace.**

**Alleluia!**

### First Reading Matthew 6:24 (NRSVUE)

<sup>24</sup> No one can serve two masters.

Either you will hate the one and love the other,

or you will be loyal to the one

and have contempt for the other.

You cannot serve God and wealth.

One: God be in our listening, God be in our understanding.

**All: Amen.**

## Anthem

### Second Reading Acts 9:1-22 (NRSVUE)

<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" <sup>5</sup> He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. <sup>6</sup> But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." <sup>7</sup> The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. <sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank.

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." <sup>11</sup> The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, <sup>12</sup> and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." <sup>13</sup> But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup> and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." <sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; <sup>16</sup> I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." <sup>17</sup> So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." <sup>18</sup> And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, <sup>19</sup> and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus.<sup>20</sup> and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." <sup>21</sup> All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?" <sup>22</sup> Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

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.**

Sermon

**Paul and the Early Church:  
Sacred People and Places**

*Diane Walton Hendricks*

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD AND ARE SENT TO THE WORLD**

Presbyterian Hymnal 108 Christ is Alive *vv 1, 3, 5*

**Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.  
The cross stands empty to the sky.  
Let streets and homes with praises ring.  
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.**

**In every insult, rift, and war  
where color, scorn, or wealth divide,  
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,  
and lives, where even hope has died.**

**Christ is alive, and comes to bring  
good news to this and every age,  
till earth and sky and ocean ring  
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.**

Prayers of the People and 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, forever. Amen.**

Minute for Ministries

Ringling of the Bell

Charge and Benediction

Benediction Response Presbyterian Hymnal 111

**Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing**

**Good Christians all, rejoice and sing!  
Now is the triumph of our King!  
To all the world glad news we bring:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. We can be reached at [office@cliftonpc.org](mailto:office@cliftonpc.org)*

Liturgy from *Spill the Beans* worship resource.

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License #A- 721138 and CCLI License 20618208.

**Thanks to those leading us in worship**

**Hosts:** Lynne Coyle and Pete Daniels

**Liturgist:** Rich Coyle

**Prayer Note Taker:** Beth Corish

**Technical Team:** Jeff Dohse

**Nursery Volunteer:** Bekah Mann

**Mission Elder:** Kimberly Davis

**Sanctuary Flowers:** Peter Coughlan in memory of Nancy Coughlan

**CPC STAFF**

Rev. Dr. Diane Walton Hendricks, Pastor

John Kim, Music Director

Hannah Harris, Lead Vocalist

Debbie Kilpatrick, Office Administrator

Kate Trussell, Preschool Director

Rev. Dr. Lynn Stanton-Hoyle, Pastor Emerita