

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

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**Breath Prayer:**  
*INHALE: God of blessings, EXHALE: free me for life.*

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April 26, 2026  
Fourth Sunday of Easter

**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: In many and various ways, at different times and places  
the all powerful God calls us to pray and sing.

**All: With joy in our hearts, let us pray and praise together.**

One: The risen Christ has overcome death with life and is with us always.

**All: In this we are assured that nothing is impossible with God.**

One: Let us worship God!

### \*Presbyterian Hymnal 220      All People That on Earth Do Dwell, *vv 1, 2*

**All people that on earth do dwell,  
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;  
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell.  
Come ye before him and rejoice.**

**Know that the Lord is God indeed;  
without our aid he did us make;  
we are his folk; he doth us feed,  
and for his sheep he doth us take.**

### Prayer of Confession

One: We worship a God who is present across the fabric of creation, in every sphere of life, in the varying circumstances of the whole of humanity. We worship a God who is there when it is easy to celebrate and also when it is difficult to tolerate. Through it all, God's faithfulness endures. In confidence of God's steadfast love that holds us, let us offer our confession. Let us pray.

**All: Steadfast God, we consider the elements of our living that cause pain to others. We are sorry for the constrictions we place on others through our words, actions or lack of attention. Forgive us for the ways we leave others vulnerable or held captive in a life which is not as full of opportunity as it should be. We are sorry when we judge others as acting strangely or for being annoying, instead of being tolerant or understanding. We are sorry too for the times when we underestimate your influence in the world, when we ignore the transformative power of your Holy Spirit, working in and through others, and directly across the world. Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers. Drive out all that is wrong and ill-judged in our lives. Cultivate within us a sense of awe and appreciation: both in you as Creator, and for all that you create. Amen.**

### Assurance of God's Grace

One: "Family of faith, hear the good news of the gospel: you have been rescued from what binds you and set free for release into the world, to serve God in love. Let your hearts sing and joyful.

**All: Praise be to God! 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: Christ is alive and offers us abundant life. In gratitude, we return what we can, as tokens of ourselves, confident that God can and will use our gifts and our lives to bring about the work of God's coming new day. Let us pray.

**All: Generous God, for the gifts that we so value in our life we thank you.**

**We do not take for granted your gifts of family, friendship, freedom and fun.  
We acknowledge all that we have been given. From these gifts, we present  
our offering to you, that it may be used wisely for the ongoing work of the  
Church in the world. 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 Luke 6:18-23 (NRSVUE)

<sup>18</sup> They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. <sup>19</sup> And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

<sup>20</sup> Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,

for yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup> “Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup> “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven, for that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

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

**All: Amen.**

## **Anthem**

### **Second Reading Acts 16:16-34 (NRSVUE)**

<sup>16</sup> One day as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a female slave who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. <sup>17</sup> While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, “These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” <sup>18</sup> She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

<sup>19</sup> But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. <sup>20</sup> When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, “These men, these Jews, are disturbing our city <sup>21</sup> and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us, being Romans, to adopt or observe.” <sup>22</sup> The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. <sup>23</sup> After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. <sup>24</sup> Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

<sup>25</sup> About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. <sup>26</sup> Suddenly there was an earthquake so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were unfastened. <sup>27</sup> When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. <sup>28</sup> But Paul shouted in a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” <sup>29</sup> The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. <sup>30</sup> Then he brought them outside and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” <sup>31</sup> They answered, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” <sup>32</sup> They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. <sup>33</sup> At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. <sup>34</sup> He brought them up into the house and set food before them, and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

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:  
Right Where God Wants Me**

*Diane Walton Hendricks*

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

Hymn GtG 634

**To God Be the Glory**

**To God be the glory; great things he has done!  
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,  
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,  
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.**

**Refrain: Praise the Lord, praise the Lord;  
let the earth hear his voice!  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord;  
let the people rejoice!**

**O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,  
and give him the glory: great things he has done!**

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)*

Some 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:** Rene Law and Joyce Rarumangkay

**Liturgist:** Stephen Law

**Prayer Notetaker:** Mark Lorey

**Technical Team:** Jim Wrightson

**Nursery Volunteer:** Nikki Lehman

**Mission Elder:** Kimberly Davis

**Sanctuary Flowers:** Luisa Menjivar

**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