

November 3, 2019

Elders: Undershepherds
Free Grace Presbyterian Church

SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

There is no word in the whole round of primitive ecclesiastical phraseology which is more frequently used to express the relation of office-bearer than "to shepherd."

Thomas Lindsay

19th century Scottish historian and Presbyterian minister

"Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD."
Jeremiah 23:3-4

The love of Christ opens the shepherd's heart to share the joys and griefs of his people.

Edmund Clowney

20th century Presbyterian pastor, theologian, and president of Westminster Theological Seminary

And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."
Matthew 9:35-38

The honor of the office of elder is not the title but the work.

Neal Ganzel

Presbyterian pastor

For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

2 Corinthians 4:5

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

Acts 20:28

I initially thought pastors just married and buried. But now I began to realize that they weathered the trenches.

Drinking, drugs, disorders, divorce, debt, despair—they saw it all, and yet they aimed, in spite of their own struggles, to remain confidants of the darkest secrets, upholders of families, hubs of social wheels. All the spokes circled around them madly, while they learned to be still. To be present. To give both momentum and stability. A lot like parenting, I imagined. I had never before equated shepherding with love, or soldiering with pastoring.

Carolyn Weber

Canadian poet, essayist, and professor of Romantic literature

GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

Leader: What is man's primary purpose?

People: To glorify God and enjoy him forever.

Leader: So make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the LORD, he is God!

People: It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Leader: Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!

People: For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Westminster Shorter
Catechism #1
Psalm 100

We, the sheep of his pasture, enter his courts with praise

"Now unto Jehovah"

Now un - to Je - ho - vah, ye sons of the migh - ty, all
5 glo - ry and strength and do - min - ion ac - cord; as - cribe to him glo -
10 - ry, and ren - der him hon - or. In beau - ty of ho - li - ness wor - ship the Lord!
17 1. The voice of Je - ho - vah comes down on the wa - ters; in thun - der the God
2. The voice of Je - ho - vah is migh - ty, is migh - ty; the voice of Je - ho -
3. Each one in his tem - ple his glo - ry pro - claim - eth. He sat on the flood;
23 of the glo - ry draws nigh. Lo, o - ver the waves of the wide - flow - ing
- vah in maj - es - ty speaks: the voice of Je - ho - vah the ce - dars is
he is King on his throne. Je - ho - vah all strength to his peo - ple im -
29 wa - ters Je - ho - vah as King is en - thron - ed on high!
break - ing; Je - ho - vah the ce - dars of Leb - a - non breaks.
part - eth; Je - ho - vah with peace ev - er bless - eth his own.

As the church gathers in worship of our God, we get a foretaste, a glimpse, of the eternal reality of our worship. Our worship now blends with the songs and hallelujahs of those surrounding the throne of God in heaven.

"Heavenly Hosts in Ceaseless Worship"



1. Heaven-ly hosts in cease-less wor-ship, "Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly!" cry;
2. All cre-a-tion, all re-demp-tion join to sing the Sa-vior's worth;



"He who is, who was, and will be, God Al-migh-ty, Lord Most High.
Lamb of God whose blood has bought us, kings and priests to reign on Earth.



Praise and ho-nor, power and glo-ry be to him who reigns a-lone."
Wealth and wis-dom, power and glo-ry, ho-nor, might, do-min-ion, praise



We, with all his hands have fa-shioned fall be-fore the Fa-ther's throne.
now be his from all his crea-tures and to e-ver-last-ing days!

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

Revelation 5

GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

The holy God calls us to sorrow over our sin

Thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite."

Isaiah 57

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

James 4

We submit ourselves to God, humbling ourselves before him as we confess our sin

We use this time in God's presence to confess our sins and our need for God's grace, silently, personally before him alone. We invite you to join us in sorrow over your sin and joy in his grace and mercy in Jesus Christ.

When we humble ourselves we confess our sins and our need for Jesus Christ and God responds assuring us that Christ's death paid the price of our sin once for all. We are not forgiven again, rather we are reminded that Christ's sacrificial death guarantees our forgiveness once for all.

God claims his sheep through the good Shepherd who laid down his life for us

He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ... He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Isaiah 53
1 Peter 2

The good news of the gospel is that in Christ we are forgiven! Our assurance of this is based on God's words of promise in Scripture and not on our accomplishments, hopes, or desires. It is the death of Jesus Christ that gives us life.

We stake our lives on the Shepherd of our souls

"Upon A Life I Have Not Lived"

1.Up - on a life I have not lived, up-on a

4 death I did not die; an-oth-er's life, an-oth-er's death, I stake my whole e-ter - ni-ty.

7
2.Not on the tears which I have shed, not on the
3.Lord, I be - lieve; O deal with me as one who

9 sor - rows I have known; an - oth - er's tears, an - oth - er's griefs; on these I
has thy Word be - lieved; I take the gift, Lord look on me as one who

11 rest, on these a - lone. O Je - sus, Son of God, I
has thy gift re - ceived.

13 build on what thy cross has done for me.

15 There both my life and death I read, my guilt, my par - don

17 there I see, there I see. *D.S. al Fine*

GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

¹So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: ²shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. ⁵Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

1 Peter 5:1-5

Sermon

Rev. Per Almquist

Elders: Undershepherds

The Church that God Built

The function of the pulpit is not to entertain, to amuse, to satisfy an idle curiosity: it is to instruct, to inspire, to fire the heart and mind, to implant within us noble desires and ambitions: and, above all to keep ever before men the one supreme figure in history, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to beget within them a passion for him, and for a Christly life.

Francis Grimké

We submit ourselves to the chief Shepherd

"Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

D A A⁷ D

1. Sav - ior, like a shep-herd lead us, much we need thy ten - der care;
 2. We are thine; do thou be - friend us, be the guard - ian of our way;
 3. Thou hast prom - ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;
 4. Ear - ly let us seek thy fa - vor; ear - ly let us do thy will;

A A⁷ D

in thy pleas - ant pas - tures feed us, for our use thy folds pre - pare:
 keep thy flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray:
 thou hast mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free:
 bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with thy love our bo - soms fill:

F G D A⁷ D

bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, thou hast bought us, thine we are;
 bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, hear, O hear us when we pray;
 bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, let us ear - ly turn to thee;
 bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, thou hast loved us, love us still;

G D A⁷ D

bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, thou hast bought us, thine we are.
 bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, hear, O hear us when we pray.
 bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, let us ear - ly turn to thee.
 bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, thou hast loved us, love us still.

But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice ... I am the good shepherd.

John 10

GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

We rejoice in the tender care of the chief Shepherd as we hear one of his lambs profess his faith

1. Do you acknowledge yourself to be a sinner in the sight of God, justly deserving his displeasure, and without hope save in his sovereign mercy?
2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon him alone for salvation as he is offered in the Gospel?
3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes a follower of Christ?
4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?
5. Do you submit yourself to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

These vows are taken by all who join Free Grace. They are a public profession of what we believe and our commitment to the church.

1-2

We declare what we believe, the core of what it means to be a Christian.

3

We acknowledge that Christ is lord over all of our life. We commit ourselves to living as he calls us in love for him and gratitude for his grace to us.

4

We commit ourselves to this church. We promise to be active in the life of the church and in the lives of the other members of the church.

5

We promise to submit to the care of the church, understanding that they will pursue us in love to hold us to the vows we have taken that God would be glorified in our lives.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper partaking of the glory of our chief Shepherd and declaring that we belong to a good Shepherd who laid down his life for us

We celebrate God's free grace to us in Jesus Christ by observing the Lord's Supper each Sunday. We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized followers of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking the cup with us as a visitor, you are acknowledging to our church that you are in covenant with God. You also acknowledge that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. If you have any doubts about your participation, please speak to one of the elders after the service. Wine and bread are the elements of the supper as instituted by Jesus Christ and so we follow his example.

John 10:7-18

So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

The Lord's Supper is a physical action, established by Jesus, through which God acts to nourish, sustain, comfort, challenge, teach, and assure us. The celebration of the Lord's Supper nourishes our faith and stirs our imaginations to perceive the work of God and the contours of the gospel more clearly.

"Down at the Cross"



1. Down at the cross where my Sa - vior - died,
 2. I am so won - drous - ly saved from sin;
 3. Come to the foun - tain, so rich and sweet;



3 down where for cleans - ing from sin I cried;
 Je - sus so sweet - ly a - bides with - in;
 cast thy poor soul at the Sav - ior's feet;



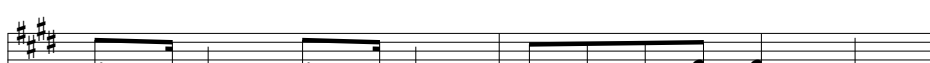
5 there to my heart was the blood ap - plied sing - ing,
 there at the cross where he took me in, sing - ing,
 plunge in to - day and be made com - plete, sing - ing,



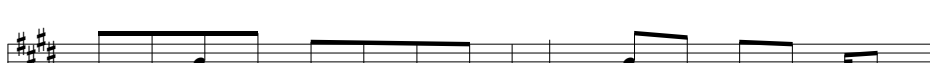
7 "Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Na - me."
 "Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Na - - -"
 "Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Na



11 me."
 me." There to my hea - rt was the blood ap - plied sing - ing,



15 "Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Na - me."



17 There to my hea - rt was the blood ap - plied sing - ing,



19 "Glo - ry, Glo - ry, Glo - ry to his Na - me."

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1

We clothe ourselves with humility, submitting our lives to our great Shepherd of the sheep as we give our tithes and offerings to him

We give our offerings to God as a public demonstration of our faith, putting our money where our mouths are. In this action we show what we claim, that our lives are organized around God and lived for him instead of ourselves.

We cry out in prayer to our great Shepherd that we would see his care for us in all things

*During this time we live in faith, trusting in the power of his grace, placing our lives and our church in his hands.
We ask that he would work in us and through us for his glory.*

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Psalm 23

GOD SENDS US WITH HIS GRACE

We rejoice to be of his flock, the sheep of his pasture, welcomed into his fold:

Zion "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"



1. Glor-ious things of thee are spo-ken, Zi - on ci - ty of our God;
 2. See, the streams of liv - ing wa - ters, spring - ing from e - ter - nal love,
 3. Blest in - hab - i - tants of Zi - on, washed in the Re-deem-er's blood,
 4. Sa - vior, if of Zi - on's ci - ty, I, through grace, a mem-ber am,



he whose word can - not be bro - ken formed thee for his own a - bode.
 well sup - plies thy sons and daugh-ters, and all fear of want re - move.
 Je - sus, whom their souls re - ly on makes them kings and priests to God.
 let the world de - ride or pi - ty, I will glor - y in thy name.



On the Rock of A - ges found - ed, what can shake thy sure re -
 Who can faint, while such a ri - ver ev - er flows their thirst to
 'Tis his love his peo - ple rais - es o - ver self to reign as
 Fad - ing is the world-ling's plea-sure, all his boast - ed pomp and



pose? With sal - va - tion's walls sur - round - ed,
 quench? Grace which, like the Lord, the gi - ver,
 kings, and as priests, his sol - emn prais - es,
 show; sol - id joys and last - ing trea - sure



thou may'st smile at all thy foes.
 ne - ver fails from age to age.
 each for a thank off - 'ring brings.
 none but Zi - on's chil - dren know.

Zion
 Hebrew: "Fortress"

Used in the Old Testament for Jerusalem. In both Old and New Testaments it is used to refer to God's heavenly city, the dwelling place of God's people.

God declares the promise and guarantee of his tender care for us through the great Shepherd of the sheep

Leader: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

People: Amen

Please stay and join us for a time of refreshment and enjoying each other's company.

*This is a time to share in life together as the gospel calls us
 as we reconnect with those we know and as we meet someone new.*

Hebrews 13



Welcome to Free Grace

We are a broken church full of broken people. We know we need God's free grace. Some of us have accepted this grace, some are exploring what it's all about. All of us are still trying to understand it. We are a church that seeks to proclaim this free grace of God with both our words and our lives. Not satisfied with simply talking about it, we want to live it out. We invite you to come, explore, and live God's free grace with us.

Our Connections



Free Grace is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a family of churches that seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures, true to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Our Leadership

Free Grace is lead by her elders, men called by God and set apart by the church to care and lead her as individual members, families, and as a whole. Our elders are:

Rev. Per Almquist (pastor)
Brian Cosgrove
Ken Morris



Credits

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Millie Barnard , voice; Connor Crawford, voice; Beth Almquist, piano, voice; Brad Hendrickson, guitar; Joanne Crosby, flute

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Elders aren't old guys who make all the decisions, but men with spiritual maturity who give their lives to care for Christ's sheep.

broken people
bound together in Christ
for God's glory