

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

- 11:00 A.M. Morning Service
- 6:00 P.M. Revival Prayer at the church

NO Q&A CLUB OR CONFESSION CLASS.

TONIGHT – REVIVAL PRAYER, AT THE CHURCH AT 6:00.

Revival prayer, as displayed by Daniel, Nehemiah, Anna and the Apostles.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WILL START-UP NEXT WEEK

Mr. McGowan will begin a series on American Presbyterian History for the Adult Sunday School class.

***BOOK OF THE MONTH:** *License to Kill: A Field Manual for Mortifying Sin* by Brian G. Hedges*

Westminster Presbyterian Church

THE FESTIVAL OF THE EPIPHANY

eleven o’clock
Lord’s Day, January 4, 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.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

THE EPIPHANY

From the fourth century Western Christendom has celebrated on January 6 the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles in the person of the Magi of St. Matthew 2. Let us understand both the implication for world missions and the absolute nature of revealed Truth in the observance of the Epiphany on this first Lord’s Day after Epiphany (Anglicization of the Greek for *manifestation*).

PARTICIPATION AT THE LORD’S TABLE

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is for the redeemed People of God who have received by faith the unmerited righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and his atonement for their sin, do now repent of sin, desire to live a holy life, and are members in good standing of an evangelical church. Those without a personal saving relationship with Jesus Christ are to refrain from the sacrament and are implored now to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior by faith and repentance.

COMMUNION OFFERING

All loose cash received in the morning offering will be given to the work of Tallahassee’s Chelsea House.

The Prelude

- Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming 16th century German melody, harm. Praetorius
- O Little Town of Bethlehem Traditional English melody, arr. Vaughan Williams
- What Child Is This 16th century English melody
- As with Gladness Men of Old Kocher, adapt. Monk
- Earth Has Many a Noble City Witt, adapt. Havergal

**The First Lesson – St. Matthew 2:1-12*

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,

Saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;

And assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

“‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.”

After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. (ESV)

**The Hymn – “Earth has many a noble city” Stuttgart*

Earth has many a noble city; Bethlehem, you do all excel: out of you the Lord from heaven came to rule his Israel.

Fairer than the sun at morning was the star that told his birth, to the world its God announcing seen in fleshly form on earth.

Eastern sages at his cradle make oblations rich and rare; see them give, in deep devotion, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Jesus, whom the Gentiles worshipped at your glad epiphany, unto you, with God the Father and the Spirit, glory be. (by Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 405)

**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. (St. Matthew 6:9-13)

**The Response (Sung by all) Divinum mysterium*

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 M. Neale, 1854, Henry W. Baker, 1859)

+The Interlude – The First Noel 17th century English carol, harm. Stainer

**The Ascription of Praise (Sung by all) St. Michael*

God from on high hath heard; let sighs and sorrows cease; lo! from the opening heav’n descends to man the promised Peace. Art Thou the Christ? the Son? The Father’s Image bright? And see we him whose arm upholds the earth and starry height? Yea, faith can pierce the cloud which veils thy glory now; we hail thee God, before whose throne the angels prostrate bow. (by Charles Coffin)

**The Law of God – The Ten Commandments (Unison)*

You shall have no other gods before me.
You shall not make for yourself a carved image.
You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
Honor your father and your mother.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
You shall not covet. (Ex. 20:3-17, ESV)

**The Psalm (Sung by all) Kingsfold*

O how I love Thy law; it is my study all the day. It makes me wiser than my foes; its precepts with me stay. More than my teachers or the old Thy servant understands; Thy testimonies I consult and follow Thy commands. I stayed my feet from evil ways that I Thy word observe; I have been taught by Thee and from Thy judgments will not swerve. How sweet in taste Thy promises, than honey far more sweet! Thy precepts understanding give; I therefore hate deceit. (Psalm 119, Trinity Psalter)

**The Second Lesson – Romans 3:23-25a; 8:1-3 (Responsively)*

23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
24 **And are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,**
25a Whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.
1 **There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**
2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.
3 **For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,** (ESV)

**The Silent Prayers of God’s People*

**The Response* (Sung by all)*Darwall*
Arise, my soul, arise, shake off your guilty fears; the bleeding Sacrifice in my behalf appears: before the throne my Surety stands, my name is written on his hands. by Charles Wesley, 1742)

***Westminster Shorter Catechism:**

Pastor: Q. 61. What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?
Congregation: A: The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omission, or careless performance, of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleness, or doing that which is in itself sinful, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about our worldly employments or recreations.
Pastor: Q. 62. What are the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment?
Congregation: A. The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God’s allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, his challenging a special propriety in the seventh, his own example, and his blessing the Sabbath day.

**The Response* (Sung by all) *Carol*
It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold: “Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heav’ns all gracious King”; the world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing. And ye, beneath life’s crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow, look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing: O rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing. (Edmund H. Sears, 1850)

The Interlude – Greensleeves 16th century English melody

The Third Lesson – Daniel 10:1-11:1 (Pew Bible, p. 748, Large Print, p. 888)

The Sermon – SPIRITUAL WARFARE Mr. McGowan

XIV. AN UNSHAKEABLE KINGDOM: AN EXPOSITION OF DANIEL

The Morning Prayer

***The Communion Hymn** – “Come, take by faith the body of the Lord”*Toulon*
Come, take by faith the body of the Lord, and drink the blood of Christ for us outpoured. Praise and confess the wonders of his grace: to rescue us, he suffered in our place.
Led to the slaughter as the Lamb of God, our Savior bought us with his precious blood. Remember how he bore our curse and shame; until he comes, let us his death proclaim.
Come, let us then with contrite hearts draw near to seek the pledges of his mercy here. He, who his saints in this world rules and shields, to all believers life eternal yields.

With heavenly bread he makes the hungry whole, gives living waters to the thirsty soul. Let us his holy supper celebrate and, so refreshed, our coming King await. (Based on a seventh century Latin hymn)

***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) *Greatorex*
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 Words of Institution – I Corinthians 11:23-29a

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:
And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, “Take, eat: this is my body for you: this do in remembrance of me.”
After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, “This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”
For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.
Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of *profaning* the body and blood of the Lord.
But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.
For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh *judgment* to himself.

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

**The Hymn No. 226* – “As with gladness men of old” *Dix*

**The Benediction*

**The Response* (Sung by all, Hymn No. 162, vv. 2-3) *Divinum mysterium*
O that birth forever blessed, when the Virgin, full of grace, by the Holy Ghost
conceiving, bore the Savior of our race; and the babe, the world’s Redeemer, first
revealed his sacred face, evermore and evermore! This is he whom heav’n-taught
singers sang of old with one accord, whom the Scriptures of the prophets promised in
their faithful word; now he shines, the long expected; let creation praise its Lord,
evermore and evermore! (by Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 405, tr. John M.
Neale, 1854, Henry W. Baker, 1859)

The Postlude – Antioch G. F. Handel, 1742, adapt. Mason, 1836

THE GOSPEL *: WHAT IS SALVATION AND HOW DO I GET IT?

The Bible teaches that there is a message of Good News to all who repent and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior. The fullest expression of the gospel message is found in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, physically became man and descended to Earth to announce the Good News that the promised kingdom of God had now come. It is this news of the kingdom that forms the foundation of the gospel message (*Matt.* 4:17, 23). In establishing the kingdom by his own death, resurrection and ascension (*Lk.* 9:21-36; *Acts* 1:1-11), Jesus lived out the very content of the gospel message—a message that was to be announced to the whole world (*Jn.* 1:1-14; *Acts* 2:22ff.).

But what exactly is the gospel message? The gospel message may be summarized as follows: God has provided a way of escape from the eternal punishment that awaits sinners. If we have a true sense of our sin and misery and an apprehension of his mercy in Jesus Christ, and if we turn with grief and hatred away from sin and receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation, we will be spared from God’s righteous wrath against sinners. Instead, we will be united to Jesus, our sins will be forgiven, God will accept us as righteous in his sight and he will bless us abundantly for all eternity (*WLC* 72, *WSC* 86, 87).

Sometimes a Christian may mistakenly assume that many other doctrines are essential to the gospel message as well, but the Bible nowhere indicates that we must possess a mature theology before we can be saved. Rather, it demonstrates the necessity of only a bare minimum of knowledge for the possession of saving faith (*Lk.* 23:39-43; *Acts* 10:34-43; 16:25-34). Others err by thinking that the gospel needs to be heard only by the lost. In fact, every believer must constantly renew his or her trust in the truths of the gospel and, through ongoing faith and repentance (*Phil.* 1:25; *Col.* 1:23; *III Jn.* 3), continue to be changed by the gospel’s power.

—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. 1892

**“Good News,” from Old English gōdspel, from gōd “good” + spel “news, a story,” from the Greek euangelion, “good news.” The Old English term was retained as “gospel” in Middle English Bible translations and continued in Modern English use.*

HOW CHRIST GIVES HIMSELF TO BELIEVERS

In order to give himself to us, Christ gives us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was given to him to live in all his fullness by the Father. This Spirit, dwelling in Christ in all his fullness, Christ in turn gives to all believers to dwell in them (*John* 14:14-20; *I Cor.* 6:17; *Rom.* 8:9). Thus the glorious union between Christ and believers is brought about. For as in his incarnation he took our nature into personal union with his own, so by the Holy Spirit he takes us into a mystical union with himself.

—John Owen (1616-1683), vice chancellor Oxford, the Puritans “theologian’s theologian”
From *The Glory of Christ: Abridged*, ed. R. J. K. Law, (Banner, 1994), pp. 87-88

JUSTIFICATION AND MERIT

The doctrine of justification, the storm center of the Reformation, was for Paul the heart of the gospel (Rom. 1:17; 3:21-5:21; Gal. 2:15-5:1), shaping his message (Acts 13:38-39) and his devotion (II Cor. 5:13-21; Phil. 3:4-14). Though other New Testament writers affirm the same doctrine in substance, the terms in which Protestants have affirmed and defended it for almost five centuries are drawn primarily from Paul.

Justification is God's act of pardoning sinners and accepting them as righteous for Christ's sake. In it, God puts permanently right their previously estranged relationship with Himself. This justifying sentence is God's bestowal of a status of acceptance for Jesus' sake. (II Cor. 5:21).

God's justifying judgment seems strange, for pronouncing sinners righteous may appear to be precisely the kind of unjust action by a judge that God's own law forbids (Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15). Yet it is a just judgment, for its basis is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. As "the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45), our representative head acting on our behalf, Christ obeyed the law that bound us and endured the punishment for lawlessness that we deserved and so "merited" our justification. Our justification is on a just basis (Rom. 3:25-26; I John 1:9), with Christ's righteousness reckoned to our account (Rom. 5:18-19).

God's justifying decision is in effect the judgment of the Last Day regarding where we will spend eternity, brought forward into the present and pronounced here and now. It is a judgment on our eternal destiny; God will never go back on it, however much Satan may appeal against the verdict (Zech. 3:1; Rom. 8:33-34; Rev. 12:10). To be justified is to be eternally secure (Rom. 5:1-5; 8:30).

The necessary means of justification is personal faith (*trust*) in Jesus Christ as crucified Savior and risen Lord (Rom. 4:23-25; 10:8-13). Faith is necessary because the meritorious ground of our justification is entirely in Christ. As we give ourselves in faith to Jesus, Jesus gives us His gift of righteousness, so that in the very act of "closing with Christ," as older Reformed teachers put it, we receive the divine pardon and acceptance we can find nowhere else (Gal. 2:15-16; 3:24).

Historic Roman Catholic theology includes sanctification in the definition of justification, considered as a process rather than a single decisive event, and affirms that while faith contributes to our acceptance with God, our works of sanctification, and merit must contribute too . . . On the Roman Catholic view, believers effect their own salvation with the help of the grace that flows from Christ through the church's sacramental system. The Reformers pointed out that this view of salvation undercuts the sense of confidence that only free grace can provide to those who have no merit. Paul had already showed that all people, of whatever piety, are without merit, and need a free justification if they are to be saved (*Rom. 3:10-12, 23-25a*). A justification that needs to be completed by the recipient is no resting place.

—The Rev. J. I. Packer, D. Phil. (Oxford)
from *The Reformation Study Bible*, 2d. ed., p. 1695

THE BEST VERSE IN THE BIBLE: ROMANS 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

Now you'll notice that it begins with the word therefore, and as you all know by now, the question you ask when you see that word therefore is "What is the therefore there for? Why is it there?" Now Paul is drawing a conclusion. He's drawing a conclusion in the particular context. He's drawing a conclusion from something that he has said in this epistle. If you turn back with me to chapter 5 and verse 16, there seems to be a link between what he's saying now in Romans 8:1 and what he's been saying in 5:16. He says in 5:16, "The free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin..." [that one man's sin of course being Adam] "...for the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification." There is condemnation; there is justification. And then if you drop down to verse 18, you'll see Paul repeating it again: "Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness (*Christ's work on the cross*) leads to justification and life for all men . . .

Now Paul seems to be reflecting on that in the first verse of Romans 8: 'In Christ there is no condemnation. This is what I've been saying. This is what I've been telling you. This is what I've been writing about. In Jesus Christ, therefore, on the basis of all that I've said, there is no condemnation.' Now it's important for us to see that Paul means this in relationship to Jesus Christ. We will see it repeated again in verse 2, but "there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are Christ Jesus." I'm reminded of something John Calvin writes in *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*: that so long as Christ remains outside of us, all that He has accomplished for us remains useless and of no value to us. That which Christ has accomplished for us on the cross needs to be internalized. It needs to be actualized. *We need to be brought into a relationship with Jesus Christ . . .

. . . the great question arises that's the greatest question that we can ever ask given the fact that there is none righteous, given the fact that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (*Rom. 3:23*): How can a sinner be found in a right relationship with God? Not just God, but a holy God, a righteous God? That's the greatest question that we can ask. How is it possible for a sinner to be made right with God?

. . . Tell me a more glorious statement this morning than this one, that for the man or woman who is in Jesus Christ there is no condemnation! The verdict of the Last Day before the grand assize of God has been brought forth into the now, so that what is true of me now will be true of me then: that on that Day of Judgment, to the man or woman in Jesus Christ there is no condemnation. There is no condemnation.

—The Rev. Derek W. H. Thomas, Ph.D. (Wales)
Pastor, First Presbyterian Church (ARP), Columbia, SC
Chancellor's Professor of Systematic Theology, Reformed Theological Seminary
From a sermon delivered at First Presbyterian Church (PCA), Jackson, MS, June 7, 2009

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
Pregnancy Help & Information Center Tallahassee
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.