



# Surprising Acts of God

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Third Sunday of Easter  
May 4<sup>th</sup>, 10:30am  
Southminster Presbyterian Church (USA)

## GATHERING

### CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE                      “This Joyful Eastertide”

WELCOME    Rev. Dr. Tom Bryson

GATHERING SONG                      “Shout for Joy!”

CALL TO WORSHIP    John Liddle

Come, you who hunger for transformation!

**We come, burdened by old ways,  
seeking new sight.**

Gather together, you who have wandered away.

**We gather to meet the risen Christ,  
who redirects our paths.**

Worship, you who are curious, who long for truth.

**We worship the God of second chances,  
changed perspectives, and transformed lives.**

\*HYMN 828                      “More Love to Thee, O Christ”

*1 More love to thee, O Christ, more love to thee!  
Hear thou the prayer I make on bended knee.  
This is my earnest plea: more love, O Christ, to thee;  
more love to thee, more love to thee!*

*2 Once earthly joy I craved, sought peace and rest.  
Now thee alone I seek; give what is best.  
This all my prayer shall be: more love, O Christ, to thee;  
more love to thee, more love to thee!*

*3 Then shall my latest breath whisper thy praise;  
this be the parting cry my heart shall raise.  
This still its prayer shall be: more love, O Christ, to thee;  
more love to thee, more love to thee!*

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Merciful God, we confess our resistance to your call. We cling to familiar hatreds like Saul clutching his letters. In the light of your glory, we see the evil we have done, the suffering we have caused, the good we have refused, and the truth we have denied. Forgive us, Lord. Open our eyes and send us out in the good news of Jesus.**

## **SILENCE**

## **ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

**Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel:  
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

## **\*SUNG RESPONSE**

***Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to his name!***

## **\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.  
And also with you.**

## **WORD**

## **TIME FOR CHILDREN**

Robert Newman

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

## **FIRST READING**

**Psalm 30:1-4**

**I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit. Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name.**

**The Word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.**

## **ANTHEM**

## **"Sometimes A Light Surprises"**

### **READING FROM ACTS**

**Acts 9:1-20**

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 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. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. 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. For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." 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, 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." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." 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; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." 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." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*HYMN 761    “Called As Partners in God’s Service”**

*1 Called as partners in Christ’s service, called to ministries of grace,  
we respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,  
equal partners in our caring to fulfill God’s chosen end.*

*2 Christ’s example, Christ’s inspiring, Christ’s clear call to work and worth,  
let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.  
Men and women, richer, poorer, all God’s people, young and old,  
blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.*

*3 Thus new patterns for Christ’s mission, in a small or global sense,  
help us bear each other’s burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.  
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,  
bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.*

*4 So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life  
that surround each person’s sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.  
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,  
messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.*

**EUCHARIST**

**OFFERING**

**COMMUNION SONG**

*Here, O our Lord, we see you face to face.  
Here would we touch and handle things unseen,  
here grasp with firmer hand eternal grace,  
and all our weariness upon you lean.*

**THE LORD’S SUPPER**

*Invitation to the Table*

## *Great Thanksgiving*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## *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, the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

## *Breaking of the Bread*

## *Communion of the People*

## **SENDING**

### **\*HYMN 720**

### **"Jesus Calls Us"**

*1 Jesus calls us: o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea;  
day by day his sweet voice soundeth saying, "Christian, follow me."*

*2 Jesus calls us from the worship of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us, saying, "Christian, love me more."*

*3 In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures, "Christian, love me more than these."*

*4 Jesus calls us: by thy mercies, Savior, may we hear thy call,  
give our hearts to thy obedience, serve and love thee best of all.*

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**\*POSTLUDE**                      **“Great God of Every Blessing”**

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### **Leading Today's Worship**

Rev. Leanne Pearce Reed, Co-Pastor

Rev. Dr. Tom Bryson, Co-Pastor

Kyle Henderson, Director of Worship Arts

Ty Thornton, Pianist and Interim Choir Director

John Liddle, Liturgist

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### **Coming Up**

#### **Lunch Bunch today following the 10:30 Service**

Enjoy lunch and fellowship with friends at Newk's in Vestavia Hills.

#### **Ty Thornton Piano Recital**

Join us this afternoon at 4:30pm in Grace Hall as Ty presents “Potpourri,” a program mixing piano music from Austria, England, France and Spain.

#### **Wednesday Night Connect, 5:30 pm**

Join us on Wednesday evening for dinner and a program, “Sew Powerful,” about Debbie Pope's ministry making purses for young girls in Zambia. Call the Church Office to make a dinner reservation.

#### **Bright Sunday Worship**

Next Sunday our 8:15 and 10:30 worship services will be led by our children and youth. We hope you will make plans to join us for this special time of worship.

#### **Called Congregational Meeting**

We will have a Called Meeting Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, at 10am in the sanctuary to hear a report from the Nominating Committee to elect new elders. See the May newsletter for the slate of nominees.

### **Welcome to Southminster**

**Connect:** If you are new to Southminster, we are glad you are here! Fill out a connect card and visit us online at [southminsterpcusa.org](http://southminsterpcusa.org) to learn more about what's coming up.

**Children:** We welcome children of all ages in worship. Childcare is also available for infants through age three in our Nursery (Room 213), staffed by caring, experienced workers. Worship bags for children are available in the entryway.

**Communion:** All are welcome at the table as we celebrate the Lord's Supper each week. The bread and juice are alcohol-free and gluten-free. If you prefer to remain seated during communion, an elder will be glad to bring the elements to you.

**Prayer concerns:** Fill out a card to share prayer concerns with our pastoral staff. You can pick up a copy of prayer concerns at the entrances to the sanctuary each week.

**Offering:** Offerings may be placed in the offering boxes located at the sanctuary entrances, or you may give securely online by visiting [southminserpcusa.org/give](https://southminserpcusa.org/give).

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## **This Week**

### **SUNDAY / MAY 4**

8:15 & 10:30am / Worship Service  
9:15am / Sunday School  
11:45am / Lunch Bunch – Newk's  
11:45am / Young Families Lunch – Tillman Field  
4:30pm / Ty Thornton Piano Recital  
5:00pm / BYG at McCallum Park  
5:30pm / Serve dinner at First Light

### **MONDAY / MAY 5**

10:30am / Centering Prayer  
11:30am / Congregational Care Committee

### **TUESDAY / MAY 6**

4:30pm / Facilities Team Meeting

### **WEDNESDAY / MAY 7**

4:30pm / Worship Committee  
5:30pm / Wednesday Night Supper: Beef Tips & Rice, Green Beans, Peach Cobbler  
6:15pm / Program: Sew Powerful  
7:00pm / Chancel Choir Practice

### **THURSDAY / MAY 8**

11:00am / Bible Study  
12:00pm / Lunch and Learn  
4:00pm / Property Committee

### **SUNDAY / MAY 11**

8:15 & 10:30am / Worship Service – Bright Sunday  
9:15am / Sunday School