



July 6, 2025

**Welcome to
Community.**

*We are glad you are
here. While here we
hope you will feel
welcome and
find the service
meaningful.*

*Childcare (infants
through 4 year olds)
is available. Worship
boxes for younger
children to borrow
during worship are
located at the entrance.*

*Large Print bulletins
are available. Please see
an usher for assistance.*

*Pillows are available in
the narthex for those
who need extra comfort
and support while
sitting in the pew.*

*Hearing Assistance is
available through a
T loop system that has
been installed.*

*If you have a hearing
aid device that is T-coil
compatible, please turn
your hearing piece to
the t-position.*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

– We Gather For Worship –

(Allow the opening music and prayer of preparation to turn your focus to God. Listen for God's spirit calling you into the Divine presence. Be still and know that God is God.)

PRAYER OF PREPARATION – *(pray silently)*

Gracious and Holy God, we come before you seeking your presence and your peace. You have called us blessed not for power or pride but for meekness. In a world that often prizes power and status, you remind us that true strength is found when we walk in faithful obedience to you. Shape us by your word and Spirit. Let your love fill our hearts, and your peace rule our communities and world. Amen.

– We Are Called Into God's Presence –

CALL TO WORSHIP – *(based on Psalm 33)*

Leader: Rejoice in the Lord, faithful ones. Sing to the Lord a new song.

People: **You word is upright, O God; the earth is full of your steadfast love.**

Leader: Let the earth worship the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of your presence.

People: **Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people you have chosen to be your own.**

All: **Let us worship God!**

*OPENING SONG

For This Land in All Its Wonder

(Sung to the tune of "God of Grace and god of Glory")

**For this land in all its wonder, for each city, farm and town,
For each mountain filled with splendor, for each place where love is found,
For the freedoms we enjoy here,
God, may thanks to you abound! God, may thanks to you abound!**

**For your peace and love unending, breaking barriers that divide;
For the joy of cultures blending as we live here side by side;
God, we thank you and we pray now:
May we all be unified! May we all be unified!**

For your hand to lead and guide us, for your work in history,
For your vision born inside us of a just society,
God, we thank you and we pray now:
May this vision come to be! May this vision come to be!

May we be a nation seeking ways that are both wise and fair,
May our living and our speaking serve your purpose everywhere.
May we follow where you lead us;
God, this is our hope and prayer! God, this is our hope and prayer!

Biblical References: Psalm 147; Micah 6:8; Colossians 1:19-20
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– We Confess Our Sins –

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader:

How grateful we are, O God,
for our great country,
for the blessings you lavish upon our land.

How concerned we are, O God,
that our very nation may become our god
and that we worship the gifts
rather than you the Giver!

Is it possible, O God,
that our laws may circumvent your will?
that our freedom may place chains on others?
that our wealth may impoverish some?
that our power may come by way of another's weakness?
that our self-interest neglect others?
that our enemies may be those who are also obedient to you?

Dare we pray, O God,
that you take away those things that
come between us, one another and you?

O God, you have indeed been good to us.
You have opened your heart to us in love.
You have forgiven our sins
and adopted us as your sons and daughters.

But now our country is in turmoil.
We now have little confidence in our leaders.
We cannot find ways to work together for the common good.
We fixate on what divides us rather than on what brings us together as one people.
Even as Christians we are allowing our political positions to divide us as a body of Christ.

People are turning away from you and following their own ways.

*In the presence of a
forgiving God,
We become aware of the
ways we fall short
of God's best hopes
for us, and ways we
have hurt others.
As you pray the prayer
of confession; think
how the words express
specific sins in your
life and the life of the
church. We turn to God
asking forgiveness.*

*Claim the truth that
through God's grace
and Christ giving of
himself on the cross,
we are forgiven. Let this
truth set you free
from your sins so you
may be restored to
God and one another.*

We know that you have not turned away from us.
You stand ready to show your salvation to all who will trust in you.
You will give us what is good and will prosper us with gifts from your hand.
You are holy and just. You love your children and will guide them in your course for their lives.

Renew our faith, O God.
Forgive us our many failures and unfaithfulness.

Help us to repent our wrongdoing,
and to choose your way for renewal.

Draw us together as one people, who do your will,
so that we may be a light to our nation,
leading the way to your promised kingdom,
which is even now coming among us.

SUNG PRAYER OF CONFESSION

In An Age of Twisted Values

(sung to the tune of Beach Spring)

Written by Martin E Leckebusch

**In an age of twisted values, we have lost the truth we need.
In sophisticated language we have justified our greed.
By our struggle for possessions, we have robbed the poor and weak.
Hear our cry and heal our nation; your forgiveness, Lord, we seek.**

**We have built discrimination on our prejudice and fear.
Hatred swiftly turns to cruelty if we hold resentments dear.
For communities divided by the walls of class and race,
Hear our cry and heal our nation; show us, Lord, your love and grace.**

**We who hear your word so often choose so rarely to obey.
Turn us from our willful wandering; give us truth to light our way.
In the power of your Spirit come to cleanse us, make us new;
Hear our cry and heal our nation till our nation honors you.**

"In An Age of Twisted Values", words and music by Martin E. Leckebusch

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DECLARATION OF PARDON

– We Hear God's Word –

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

ANTHEM

This Is My Word

Words and music by Pepper Chopin

As the snow falls from heaven,
As it comes in swirling showers from the sky, So is my Word.
As the rains bring the water to the earth that is thirsty and dry,
So is my Word.

*All children are invited
to come forward for the
Children's Moment.*

(Chorus) And the Word of my mouth, it shall not return empty:

It will bless the earth wherever it is heard.

This is my Word.

As the rain brings renewal

And the tender buds begin to come alive, So is my Word.

Giving seed to the sower,

And the bread to the hungry 'til they thrive,

So is my Word. (Chorus)

O Lord, when I am weary,

When I feel the days I'm living are in vain,

My God, help me be faithful to the Word You have given to proclaim.

Proclaim the Word, and you will go out in joy,

And be led forth in peace,

And the hills will break before you into song.

So be faithful, brave and true,

For I will go before you,

And when your earthly journey here is done.

I'll say well done, well done!

As the snow falls from heaven,

And the rain comes in showers from the sky,

This is my Word.

The Scripture bears witness to the word of God. Listen beyond the human word for the Word of God. Pray that the Spirit will speak to you through the text.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

READING FROM THE WORD OF GOD – *Matthew 5:5*

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
2 Timothy 3:16-17*

SERMON

Rev. Rod Stone

Blessed are the Meek

– Celebrating Christ's Life and Love –

*HYMN OF PREPARATION

Come to the Table of Grace

Come to the Table of grace,

Come to the Table of grace.

This is God's table; it's not yours of mine.

Come to the table of grace,

Come to the Table of peace,

Come to the Table of peace.

This is God's table; it's not yours of mine.

Come to the table of peace.

The small communion wafers are free of gluten, wheat, dairy, yeast, egg, soy, nuts and corn.

**Come to the Table of love,
Come to the Table of love.
This is God's table; it's not yours of mine.
Come to the table of love.**

"Come to the Table of Grace" words and music by Barbara Hamm
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INVITATION TO THE TABLE

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING 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 forever. Amen.

– We Share Our Gifts –

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

PRESENTATION OF TITHES & OFFERINGS

FRIENDSHIP RECORD – *(Please sign and pass)*

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

God Whose Giving Knows No Ending

**Treasure too You have entrusted,
Gain through powers Your grace conferred;
Ours to use for home and kindred,
And to spread the gospel Word.
Open wide our hands in sharing,
As we heed Christ's ageless call,
Healing, teaching, and reclaiming,
Serving You by loving all.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*The giving of an offering
not only supports the
ministry of Christ
but it is the symbolic
dedication of our life
and all that we have to
give to God in response
to his love. Remember
that all things belong to
God, and that we are
entrusted to use all
that we have to bring
glory to God.*

*CLOSING SONG

For Freedom, Christ Has Set Us Free
(Sung to the tune of "I Sing the Mighty Power of God")

"For freedom, Christ has set us free!"
What joy is ours to claim!
No more enslaved, humanity
Finds life in Jesus' name.
We try, Lord, to be justified
Through all the works we do.
Yet you adopt us, saying, "Child,
It's Christ who makes you new."

We're clothed in Christ and we belong;
Now no one waits outside.
In him we find our common song;
Old ways no more divide.
"It is no longer I who live,
But Christ who lives in me."
He died for us, new life to give —
And new identity.

Now, Spirit-filled, may we be led
From ways that would destroy.
May we your people turn instead
To lives of love and joy.
May we find peace that makes us whole
And patience everywhere.
God, give us kindness, self-control,
And hearts and hands that share.

Biblical Reference: Galatians 5:1, 19, 22-23

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– We Go Out to Be God's Presence in the World –

*BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

The Postlude is considered the final Alleluia of Worship

*Please stand if you are able.

Accompanist: Cindy Hughes

Ushers: David and Josh Butler, Pam and Mike Jankowski

Greeter: Harlan McCaskill

Audio: Steve Lapping

The flowers are given to the glory of God by Gary and Sandy Carroll in celebration of their 50th anniversary on July 26th.

*Our worship does
not end at the
conclusion of this
service. We go forth
to love and serve the
LORD in daily living.
In so doing, we seek to
fulfill our mission to
"love God and make
God's love known".*

Children's Church:

If you are a visitor here and have a child that would like to attend children's church they are more than welcome to join us! After the children's sermon, all children ages kindergarten through fifth grade are dismissed to go downstairs with the teachers. We have a snack, game, Bible lesson and a craft. If your child has any food allergies or other health/behavior concerns please come downstairs with your child and let the teachers know. We have visitor forms as well that are located by the worship boxes and bulletins. When church is finished please come downstairs to pick your child up. We also have a nursery that is available from birth-preschool age. Thank you!

Prayer from Our Care Team

Each month, Pastor Meg and your congregational care elders, Patty Franklin, John Liles, and Cindy Ward, meet to pray through the requests that have been offered on our congregational prayer list. If you have new requests to bring to our team for prayer and care, please contact Cindy Ward via phone or email: at (910) 986-0491 or ryw20042004@yahoo.com

The Mission of Community Presbyterian Church:

"We exist not for ourselves, but to love God and make God's love known."

– Developing Spiritual Character through the Beatitudes – Matthew 5:1-12

RECOMMENDED BOOK FOR FURTHER STUDY:

The Beatitudes For Today by James C. Howell
Westminster John Knox Press, 2006

INTRODUCTION

Following the sermon series on the Beatitudes, this guide is provided to assist in your meditations and prayers related to the Sunday Scripture lesson. Find a time to

- Slow down, center and pause to be with Jesus.
- Meditate on the Scripture text, allowing the words to soak into the depth of your being. Ask, what has the Lord said to you in the passage?
- Listen attentively to God as you reflect on the passage and pray. Seeking the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, ask God to help you understand the implications of the passage and how to apply it to your life,
- It is not enough to hear these words or even read and study them. We are to be transformed by them. Consider what you can do or say to live God's truth that is being considered.

Open your Spirit being receptive to God's word!

Read the text!

Meditate on its meaning!

Kneel and **Pray**!

Live its truth!

READ – Matthew 5:1-12, focus on Matthew 5:5

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

BACKGROUND

The dictionary defines meek as “deficient in spirit or courage, mild in temper.” Most often when we hear the word meek, we think of a word which rhymes with meek – weak! We think of someone feeble or wishy-washy, lacking strength or courage or purpose, someone who is a doormat or a pushover to others.

However, when Christ is talking about meekness he is not referring to weakness. There is great power associated with meekness – but it is power under control. It means to possess power, but to surrender that power to the uses determined by God. Meekness, in other words, is power under the direct guidance of God. The meek rely on God's power, and not their own.

In his commentary on this text William Barclay translates this verse to say, “Blessed is the one who has every instinct, every impulse, and every passion under control. Blessed is the one who is entirely self-controlled.”

And, of course in the context of the Beatitudes, we learn that complete self-control is beyond our human capacity. Therefore, Jesus was saying blessed is the person who is God-controlled. When it comes to Christian discipleship, a meek person is someone who moment by moment, yields one's power, one's life, and one's will, to the will of God. In meekness we declare that we are God's servants, and with Christ we pray, “Not my will, but your will be done”.

Meekness is also a disposition that recognizes that no earthly power will ultimately succeed. Aligning ourselves with Christ we set ourselves against the world's idea of power and position ourselves to be co-inheritors with Christ, who will one day overturn all powers that are not his own.

MEDITATE

- Before looking at the Biblical understanding of “meek”, what was your impression of the word?
- Did you view it as a desirable attribute? Why or why not?
- From a world's point of view, why would it be surprising that the meek will inherit the earth? From a world's point of view who will inherit the earth? What qualities do they possess and how is that in opposition to the Biblical understanding?
- Consider John 5:19-23. How does Jesus describe the relationship between himself and the Father? Does this relationship further explain the nature of meekness? What do you think a passage like this might have to do with our own attitude of meekness?
- One study guide makes the statement “the meek are constrained, not by self-discipline alone but primarily by God’s love.” How would focusing on God’s love add to our efforts to be meek?
- Give some examples of how one would demonstrate the characteristics of meekness.
- Jesus says the meek will inherit the earth. What does he mean and how does that apply to us today?

PRAY

Make me a captive, Lord, and then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword, and I shall conqueror be.
I sink in life’s alarm when by myself I stand;
Imprison me within thine arms, and strong shall be my hand.

My heart is weak and poor until it master finds;
It has no spring of action sure, it varies with the wind.
It cannot freely move till thou hast wrought its chain;
Enslave it with thy matchless love, and deathless it shall reign. Amen.

Words by George Matheson, 1890 (based on Eph. 3:1)

LIVE

- What is Jesus seeking to teach you, through this beatitude?
- How would you like to grow in meekness, personally? What would be one thing you could do to develop the characteristics of meekness in your life?
- Think about your own relationship to power. Are you able to list those places where you have earthly power? What does it mean to surrender these features to the authority of Jesus?
- If one understanding of meekness is strength under control, what usually causes you to lose your self-control? What would strength under control look like for you in those situations?

SERMON SERIES

| Date | Scripture | Theme |
|------|-----------|---|
| 7/13 | 5:6 | “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness” |
| 7/20 | 5:7 | “Blessed are the merciful” |
| 7/27 | 5:8 | “Blessed are the pure in heart” |
| 8/3 | 5:9 | "Blessed are the peacemakers" |
| 8/10 | 5:10-11 | “Blessed are those who are persecuted” |

– Community Happenings –

Weekly Calendar

Sunday

10:30 a.m. Worship – Sanctuary
11:45 a.m. Handbell Rehearsal – Chapel

Monday

6:30 p.m. Barbershop – Fellowship Hall

Tuesday

Wednesday

5:45 p.m. Bible Study – Conference Room
6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal – Chapel

Thursday

9:00 a.m. Property & Grounds Meeting – Conference Room
10:00 a.m. Presbyterian Purls – Library

Friday

8:30 a.m. Prayer Garden

Sunday (July 13)

10:30 a.m. Worship – Sanctuary

Vacation Bible School 2025

True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World.
When: July 14th, 15th and 16th from 5:15-7:30
 (dinner included).
Where: Community Presbyterian Church:
 Fellowship Hall.
Ages: Pre-k-5th grade. We welcome middle
 school and high school helpers!

Registration forms located by the worship boxes or see Molly Towers for one!

Thank You!

Sunday, July 20 is Molly's last day with us. We will have a time together in the parlor following the worship service. This will provide Molly and her family a special opportunity to thank them for being such a special part of our community.

Volunteers needed for Children's Ministry

With Molly leaving her position as Director of Children's Ministry to move to Virginia, we are in need of volunteers to assist with the Sunday morning children's church program. We are looking for individuals or couples who would serve on a rotation with a team to provide 1 hour of Christian nurture downstairs in the children's center while worship is occurring. A minimum time commitment would be one Sunday a month. Curriculum and supplies will be provided. Emma Lassiter, our Associate for Children's Ministry, would be present to assist in this program.

If you are interested or have further questions, please contact Rod Stone at (910) 295-6848 or rstone@communitypres.com

– Community Presbyterian Staff –

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Terri Sinclair

Director of Music Emeritus

Matthew Best

Facility Manager

– Contact Information –

Church Office: (910) 295-6848

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday – 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Friday – Closed

If you need a Pastor after hours, the following can be reached:

Rod Stone, Pastor: (910) 585-0828

Meghan Vail, Associate Pastor: (732) 804-4907

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