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## DISCOVERING DIVINE PLAN AND OUR PURPOSE

*Thru Ephesians*

a sermon series

*Ebensburg Presbyterian Church*  
*2nd Sunday of Christmas*  
*January 3, 2021*

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/EbensburgPresbyterianChurch>

Webpage Site: <https://www.ebgpresby.org/>

## GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER

TOLLING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER (in unison)

**We praise God, who is known to us in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We pray for God to bless us so that we may be a blessing to others. We pray for Jesus to be with us, as he promised to be, whenever we gather in his name. We pray for the Spirit to make our worship holy, joyful, and true in his precious name. Amen**

CALL TO WORSHIP: (responsively)

From distant lands and faraway shores,  
**shout and sing together for joy.**  
**Jesus Christ is born!**  
Come, let us sing praises.  
**Let us worship the Lord!**

HYMN #28 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (in unison)

**O Holy One,  
forgive us when we fail to live in the good news of your Christmas story: when we hear the choir sing, "Rejoice!" but we do not join their chorus; when we know the angels say, "Do not fear," yet fear is all we can muster; when we see a star rising in the east, but we turn away from its light. Forgive us, O Lord, of the sins of our lives and the sins of the systems we fail to disrupt. Convict us with the cry of a child from a manger,  
and free us to try again. Amen [silent confession]**

\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

Here is the good news! As Jesus healed the afflicted and restored those who have died, he also forgives our sins and gives us new life.

Friends, believe the Good News of the gospel

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven, renewed and sent!**

\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST: (responsively)

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

**And also with you.**

(Please share the peace of Christ with those around you.)

**GOD'S WORD IS PROCLAIMED**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:

FIRST READING: Acts 19:1-21 Page 903

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:3-14 Page 949

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: EPHESIANS: DISCOVERING DIVINE PLAN AND PURPOSE

**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE (responsively)

God of grace and mercy,

Lord you are a compassionate God and a present tower in times of troubles. We thank you for the gift of Christ on Christmas and your plan to redeem the world through him.

As we look back to last year, it is true that many of our friends have lost their loved ones, countless have gone through hardships and the virus has invaded our homes and our congregation.

Despite of all the challenges, Lord, we have seen you and your presence in our untrodden paths and trails. You have sustained us through all our trials and troubles. You have guided us and protected us. Your comfort and console have

been our strength in our weary world, so we give you glory and praises for your love for us.

Now as we look forward to the new year, and yet continue in this uncertain world, with the coronavirus lingering, the cyberwar increasing and hostility contesting our unity in our country and around the world, Lord help us to know and be sure of your sovereignty. We have confidence in your care, and that you will hold us close to your heart in our distress and anxieties. Your providence continues to sustain our lives and we pray that you claim our hearts to yourself. We understand your love and our hope in you stands firm.

Therefore, we pray for...

*Our leaders....*

Lord in your Mercy,

**Hear our prayers.**

*Health care worker...*

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayers.**

*For healing and our seniors,*

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayers.**

*Our congregation and church members*

Lord in your mercy,

**Hear our prayers.**

And we pray in unison as our Lord and savior Jesus Christ taught us to pray—

**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.**

\*HYMN #466 O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

\*BLESSING AND CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION 2 Thessalonians 5:16

Now may the Lord of peace himself  
give you peace at all times in all ways.  
The Lord be with all of you. Amen

\*CHORAL BENEDICTION

\*Please rise in body or in spirit.

**New Prayer List for 2021**

We will be starting a new prayer list for 2021. If you have any names you would like added to the Prayer List, please call the church office at 472-6920 or place the names in the Offering Baskets near each of the front entrances. Thank you.



# Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO 6.6.7.7.8.5.5

Medieval Latin

Trans. and para. John Mason Neale, 1853; alt.

German folk tune, 14th century  
Harm. David Hugh Jones, 1953

1. Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice      With heart, and soul, and voice;  
 2. Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice      With heart, and soul, and voice;  
 3. Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice      With heart, and soul, and voice;

Give ye heed to what we say:      Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 Now ye hear of end - less bliss:      Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 Now ye need not fear the grave:      Je - sus Christ was born to save!

Ox and ass be - fore Him bow, And He is in the man - ger now.  
 He hath o - pened heav - en's door, And we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all To gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day!      Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this!      Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save!      Christ was born to save!

# O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing 466

AZMON CM

Charles Wesley, 1738; alt.

Carl Gotthelf Gläser, 1828  
Arr. Lowell Mason, 1839

1. O for a thou-sand tongues to sing My dear Re-deem-er's praise,  
2. Je - sus, the name that charms our fears, That bids our sor - rows cease;  
3. Christ breaks the power of reign - ing sin, And sets the pris - oner free;  
4. My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, As - sist me to pro - claim,

The glo - ries of my God and King, The tri-umphs of God's grace!  
'Tis mu - sic in the sin-ner's ears, 'Tis life, and health, and peace.  
Christ's blood can make the sin - ful clean, Christ's blood a - vailed for me.  
To spread through all the earth a - broad The hon - ors of Thy name.