

Order of Worship Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026 Tables Jesus Flipped: The Table of Religious Respectability
10AM Zoom Gathering

Key Memory Verse: “[Jesus said] *For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*” – Luke 14:11 NASB 1995

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOYS AND CONCERNS - PASTORAL PRAYER (The Lord’s Prayer – “trespasses”)

SELECTED SCRIPTURE Micah 6:8 // Luke 14:7-14 // Matthew 9:10-13

MESSAGE Jesus Flipped the Table of Religious Respectability

Self-Guided Study: The Table of Religious Respectability

Read the scripture slowly. Sit with the questions honestly. There are no “churchy” answers here—only truthful ones.

1. Returning to the Table: Scripture Reflection

Read:

- **Matthew 21:12–17** – Jesus cleanses the temple
- **Luke 14:7–11** – Choosing the lowest seat
- **Matthew 9:9–13** – Jesus eats with sinners

Reflect:

- What emotions do you notice in Jesus across these passages?
- Who is uncomfortable when Jesus restores, welcomes, or heals—and why?
- Where do you see freedom offered? Where do you see control being challenged?

Write one sentence that describes what Jesus seems to value most in these moments.

2. Recognizing the Table of Religious Respectability

Religious respectability often looks good on the outside—but quietly restricts who feels welcome.

Consider:

- Where do you feel pressure to look spiritually “put together”?
- When have you chosen silence or distance to protect your reputation?
- What does “respectable faith” look like in your church culture? Your family? Yourself?

Finish this sentence honestly:

“I feel most tempted to perform spiritually when I am around _____.”

3. The Cost of Polished Faith

The message named real consequences of respectability culture.

Reflect on each:

- **People pretending instead of confessing**
- **Reputation valued over repentance**
- **Image over intimacy with God**

Ask yourself:

- Which of these feels most present in my life right now?

- What do I lose when I choose polish over honesty?
- What might God be inviting me to let go of?

Prayer prompt:

“God, I’m tired of pretending about _____.”

4. Remembering Your Own Seat at the Table

Jesus often sat with those who believed they weren’t allowed near Him.

Reflect:

- When have you felt spiritually “out of place”?
- Who made room for you when you needed it most?
- How does remembering your own story change how you see others?

Write the name of someone who helped you feel welcome when you didn’t feel worthy. _____

5. Who’s Missing from the Table?

Jesus didn’t just critique the head table—He moved to a different one.

Ask honestly:

- Who do churches unintentionally exclude today?
- Who do *I* tend to overlook, avoid, or silently judge?
- Who feels unsafe, unseen, or uninvited in faith spaces?

List one person or group Jesus might be sitting with today that makes you uncomfortable—and ask why.

6. Living This Out: One Simple Act of Faith

This isn’t about fixing people. It’s about presence.

Choose one for the coming week:

- Sit with someone you usually pass by
- Listen without correcting or advising
- Invite someone to church—or coffee—without an agenda
- Share your own faith story honestly, without polish
- Offer welcome without explanation or expectation

Write it down:

“This week, I will _____.”

PENNS VALLEY CHARGE ANNOUNCEMENTS – Calendar also on PennsValleyParish.info

January 28 – Soup Kitchen ministry at St. James UMC. For details, contact Paula Smith.

February 18 – Ash Wednesday

March 29 – Palm Sunday - April 2 – Maundy Thursday - April 5 – Easter Sunday

ABOUT OUR CHURCH: Visit our church’s website at PennsValleyParish.info

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