



Grace First
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Together – Worshipping, Witnessing, Working



THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

February 28, 2021

Second Sunday in Lent

Welcome and Announcements

Thank you for joining us in worship at Grace First Presbyterian Church. Let us lift up our voices in song and prayer so that we may walk in the newness of life.

Prelude

J.S. Bach

“Hark! A Voice Saith, All Are Mortal”

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Christ died for our trespasses but was
raised for our justification.

Thanks be to God.

Prayer of Invocation

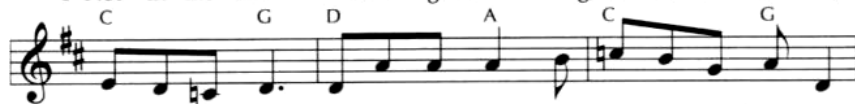
God, your son Jesus Christ bore the cross for our Salvation and was raised from the dead for the redemption of the world. Give us the courage to take up our cross and follow him, that through his grace we may accept the cost of faithful discipleship and receive the joy of everlasting life with Christ, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Here in This Place

Gather Us In



- 1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing; now is the dark-ness
- 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-tery. We are the old who
- 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter; here we will take the
- 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



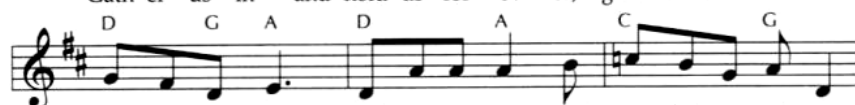
van-ish'd a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his-tory,
bread of new birth. Here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
light years a-way: here in this place the new light is shin-ing;



brought here to you in the light of this day.
called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
call us a-new to be salt for the earth.
now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en; gath-er us in, the
Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in, the
Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion; give us to eat the
Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er; gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en;
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low-ly;
bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.
give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.
lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

The "you/your" mentioned in every stanza is never identified, but this 1979 hymn is clearly a corporate prayer to God on behalf of the diverse congregation who have assembled for worship, longing to be transformed and used as God's witnesses and for God's purposes.

Call to Confession

Trusting in God's promise of salvation, let us confess our sin and repent as we pray together the prayer of confession printed in your bulletin followed by your own silent prayer.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Merciful God, we confess that we have not been sincere Christians. We claim to follow Jesus but have not taken his path of sacrificial love. We profess to be disciples, but we are not willing to bear the cost of discipleship. We affirm the virtue of self-denial, but we indulge our selfish desires and seek earthly gain. Forgive us, we pray free us for sincere repentance.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news: God deems as righteous all who trust that Jesus has been raised from the dead for our salvation. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Amen.

Prayer of Illumination

Holy Spirit, open our hearts to receive your Word, reveal to us the good news, and enable us to trust in the promise of Salvation in Jesus Christ. Amen.

First Reading

Romans 4:13-25

The word of God for the people of God
Thanks be to God

Music Ministry

Carl F. Muller

“Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God”
Sanctuary Choir, 2011

Create in me a clean heart, O God;
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence;
and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation;
and uphold me with Thy free Spirit.
Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways;
and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.
Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Second Reading

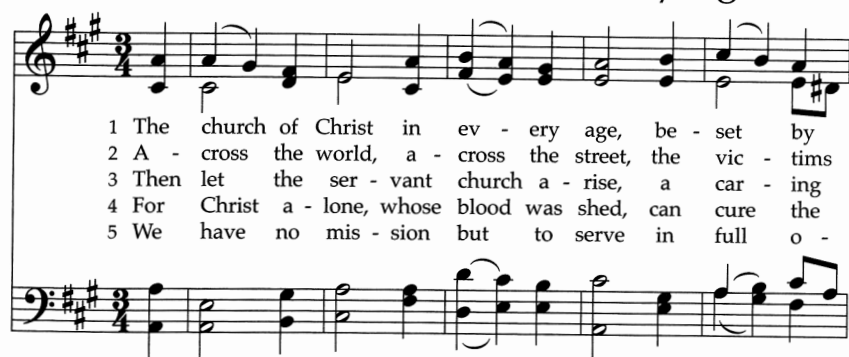
Mark 8:31-38

The word of God for the people of God
Thanks be to God

Sermon

The Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz

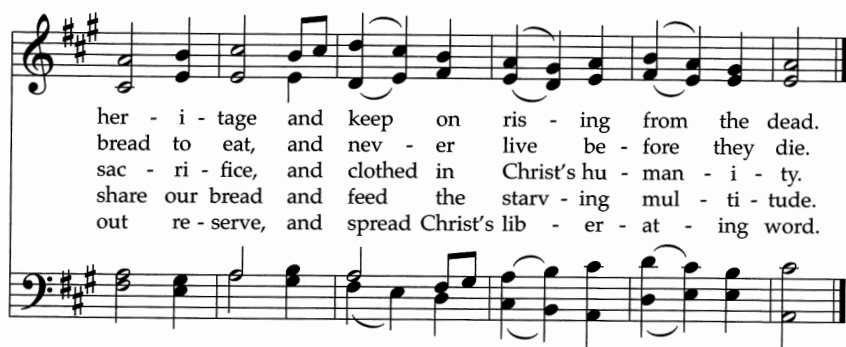
320 The Church of Christ in Every Age



1 The church of Christ in ev - ery age, be - set by
2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
4 For Christ a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -



change but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
be - dience to our Lord: to care for all, with -



her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
out re - serve, and spread Christ's lib - er - at - ing word.

In this challenging text by a British Methodist minister, the odd-numbered stanzas develop the image of "the servant church," while the second surveys the many needs and the fourth describes the true source of strength for the task.

Affirmation of Faith (Unison)
Confession of Belhar 10.7-10.8

WE BELIEVE

(Isaiah 42:1–7)

**that God has revealed God's self as the one
who wishes to bring about justice and true
peace among people;**

(Luke 6:20–26)

**that God, in a world full of injustice and
enmity, is in a special way the God of the
destitute, the poor and the wronged**

(Luke 4:16–19)

**that God calls the church to follow God in
this; for God brings justice to the oppressed
and gives bread to the hungry;**

(Luke 7:22)

**that God frees the prisoner and restores sight
to the blind;**

(Psalm 146)

**that God supports the downtrodden, protects
the stranger, helps orphans and widows and
blocks the path of the ungodly;**

(James 1:27)

**that for God pure and undefiled religion is to
visit the orphans and the widows in their
suffering;**

(Micah 6:8)

that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;

(Amos 5:14–15, 23–24)

that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;

(Psalm 82:1–5)

that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged;

(Leviticus 19:15)

that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

THEREFORE, WE REJECT ANY IDEOLOGY

which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.

Prayer for the People and 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.

Call to Stewardship

What will it profit us to gain the whole world and forfeit our life? With all humility let us make our offering to God, trusting not in worldly gain, but in God's sustaining grace.

Offertory

J.S. Bach

"I Call to Thee, Lord Jesus Christ"

Congregational Response Hymn 606 Old Hundredth

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Offertory Prayer

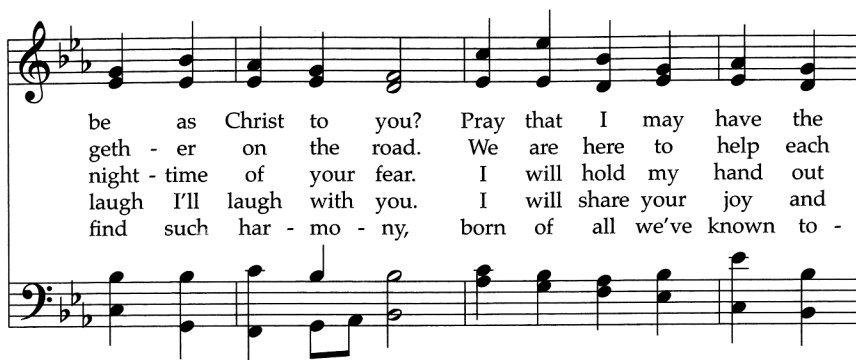
Almighty God, we thank you for the covenant you established with Abraham and Sarah, which you have opened to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Accept these offerings with the dedication of our lives, that we may be for the world a sign of your abiding love and a testament to your enduring promise. In Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen

727 Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

The Servant Song



1, 6 Will you let me be your ser - vant, let me
 2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney; we're to -
 3 I will hold the Christ - light for you in the
 4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you shall
 5 When we sing to God in heav - en, we shall



be as Christ to you? Pray that I may have the
 geth - er on the road. We are here to help each
 night - time of your fear. I will hold my hand out
 laugh I'll laugh with you. I will share your joy and
 find such har - mo - ny, born of all we've known to -



grace to let you be my ser - vant too.
 oth - er walk the mile and bear the load.
 to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
 sor - row till we've seen this jour - ney through.
 geth - er of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.
 (repeat stanza 1)

The opening and closing stanza expresses the essence of this folk-style song about the mutuality of servant ministry: those who serve must also be willing to be served. This is what Christ intended when he commanded the disciples to "wash one another's feet" (John 13:14).

Benediction

The Peace of Christ

The peace of Christ be with you
And also with you

Postlude

J.S. Bach

“He Who Will Suffer God to Guide Him”

Music Note

One of the best known anthems in church music literature is Carl Mueller’s “Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God”. It is one of the best selling anthems of its publisher, G. Schirmer. It was written in 1941 and has been sung by Grace First Choirs for many years. The text is taken from Psalm 51: 10-13, and its meditative text is perfect for Ash Wednesday and any time in Lent.

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Liturgy taken from: Feasting on the Word: Worship Companion,
Liturgies for Year B, Volume 1
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Cover Art: Mount of Olives photo by Ashley Drake Mertz