



Grace First

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Together – Worshipping, Witnessing, Working



The Reverend Ashley Drake Mertz, Pastor
The Reverend David Slyter, Associate Pastor
Marialice Parish, M.M., Organist and Director of Music

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

February 21, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Welcome and Announcements

Let us lift up our voices in song and prayer that we may be refreshed and that we may walk in the newness of life.

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Come, let us worship the God of rainbows and covenants.

We praise our God, Creator of all living things.

Come, let us walk with Jesus through these forty days of Lent.

We pray that this season of reflection and repentance will lead us to new and abundant life.

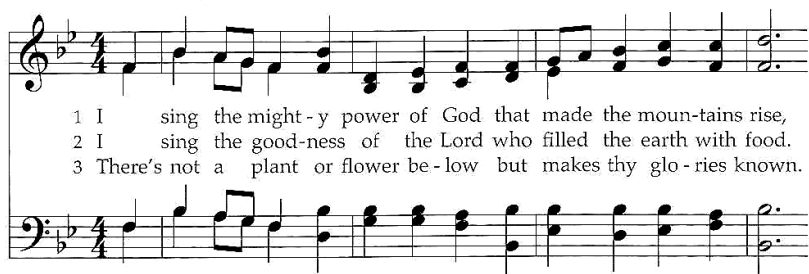
Come, let us open ourselves to the power of the Holy Spirit.

We worship the One who brings us healing, wholeness, and transformation!

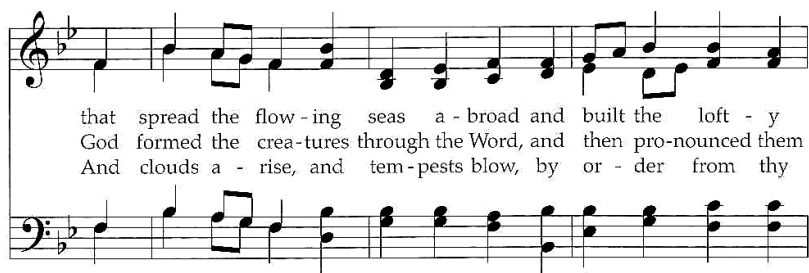
Prayer of Invocation

Creator God, we come before you on this first Sunday in Lent asking for your guidance. Be with us as we continue to prepare our hearts, our minds, and our souls during this season of reflection. As we search and tease out who we are in this world and to whom we belong. In our searching, help us to find new depths for our compassion and caring. Give us the words and the wisdom to proclaim that our love knows no bounds. Amen.

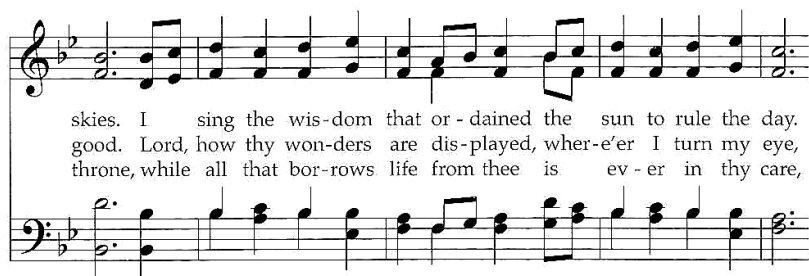
32 I Sing the Mighty Power of God



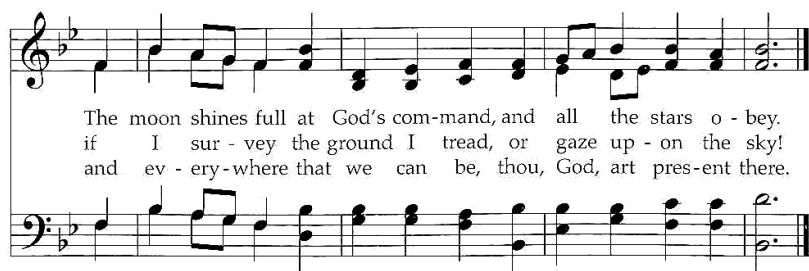
1 I sing the might - y power of God that made the moun-tains rise,
 2 I sing the good-ness of the Lord who filled the earth with food.
 3 There's not a plant or flower be-low but makes thy glo-ries known.



that spread the flow-ing seas a-broad and built the loft-y
 God formed the crea-tures through the Word, and then pro-nounced them
 And clouds a-rise, and tem-pests blow, by or-der from thy



skies. I sing the wis-dom that or-dained the sun to rule the day.
 good. Lord, how thy won-ders are dis-played, wher-e'er I turn my eye,
 throne, while all that bor-rows life from thee is ev-er in thy care,



The moon shines full at God's com-mand, and all the stars o-bey.
 if I sur-vey the ground I tread, or gaze up-on the sky!
 and ev-ery-where that we can be, thou, God, art pres-ent there.

With minimal revision this text brings together six of the eight four-line stanzas in an 18th-century hymn written for children and originally headed "Praise for Creation and Providence." The anonymous German tune provides a fitting sense of breadth and wonder.

TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1715; alt.

MUSIC: *Gesangbuch der Herzogl. Württembergischen Katholischen Hofkapelle*, 1784; alt. 1868

ELLACOMBE
CMD

Call to Confession

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Trusting in God's grace, let us join together in the prayer of confession followed by our own silent time.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Wilderness surrounds us on every side and temptation abounds. Our struggle is great. Forty days and forty nights seem an endless time as we fight to exist amidst grief, fear, and pain. We cannot save ourselves. Helps us, tend to us in our brokenness.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

The Spirit of God surrounds you and waits upon you in your suffering. The Spirit of God calls you anew to places of healing and righteousness. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Prayer of Illumination

Draw us close, Holy Spirit, as the Scriptures are read and the Word is proclaimed. Let the word of faith be on our lips and in our hearts, and let all other words slip away. May there be one voice we hear today — the voice of truth and grace. Amen.

First Reading

Genesis 9:8-17

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

Second Reading

Mark 1:9-15


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

Sermon


The Rev. David Slyter

JESUS CHRIST: LIFE

166 Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days



1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us did fast and
2 As you with Sa - tan did con - tend and did the vic - tory
3 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through this Pas - sion -
4 A - bide with us, till when this life of suf - fering shall be



pray, teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.
win, O give us strength to per - se - vere, in you to con - quer sin.
tide, yes, ev - er - more, in life and death, O Lord, with us a - bide.
past, an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.

Like many of this author's hymns, this text was written primarily for children but works equally well in reminding adults how Lent connects us with Christ's temptation in the wilderness and prepares us for Easter. The 16th-century English psalm tune provides sturdy support.

TEXT: Claudia F. I. Hernaman, 1873, alt.
MUSIC: Day's Psalter, 1562

ST. FLAVIAN
CM

Prayers 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

Out of our great love and gratitude for God, we bring our tithes and offerings. With joy let us gather and dedicate our gifts.

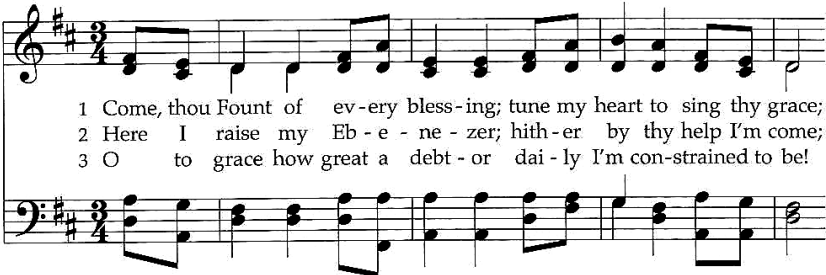
Congregational Response Hymn 606 Old Hundredth

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

God, for all that you give to us – the beauty of creation, the comfort of community, and the reassurance of your love and faithfulness – we give you thanks and offer these gifts to you. Bless them and guide us as we strive each new day to be good stewards in your image. Amen.

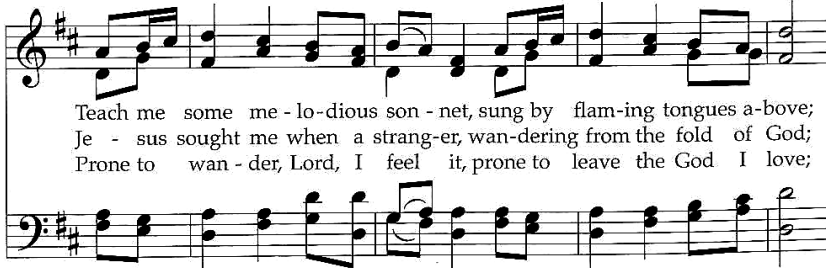
475 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing



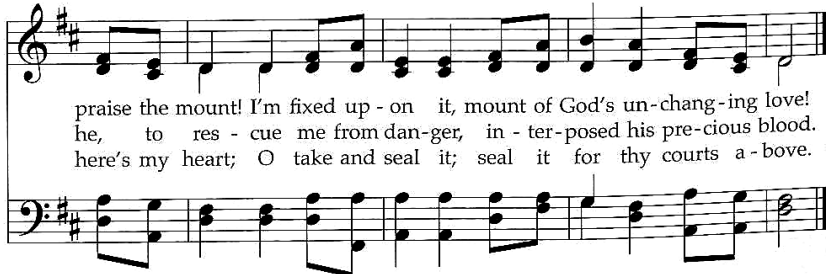
1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
 2 Here I raise my Eb - e - ne - zer; hith-er by thy help I'm come;
 3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be!



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.
 and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar - rive at home.
 Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee.



Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove;
 Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;



praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un-chang-ing love!
 he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter-posed his pre-cious blood.
 here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Written for Pentecost by a British Baptist pastor, this text is full of biblical terms like "Ebenezer" (1 Samuel 7:12), Hebrew for "a stone of help" set up to give thanks for God's assistance. The tune name honors hymnal compiler Asahel Nettleton, who probably did not compose it.

TEXT: Robert Robinson, 1758, alt.
 MUSIC: Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, 1813

NETTLETON
 8.7.8.7.D

Benediction

As we leave this place on our Lenten journey to Jerusalem:

May the angels attend you in whatever wilderness you find yourself.

May the waters of baptism renew you.

May you hear the good news for you.

May you find a new forgiveness and a new faith in this holy season of Lent, and may you know that the Kingdom of God is near.

May it be so.

The Peace of Christ

The peace of Christ be with you

And also with you

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Liturgy adapted from The Journal of Worship Resources
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