

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

FEBRUARY 21, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

WELCOME

OPENING VOLUNTARY

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart
Based on the hymn tune MORECAMBE

Frederick Atkinson
Setting by Roy Brunner

CALL TO WORSHIP

God meets us in the night—

**Before the sun rises,
Before the wound heals,
Before there are answers,
Before there is closure.**

God meets us in the light—

**Where joy is effervescent,
Where laughter is contagious,
Where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
And where people gather around the table.**

God meets us at the threshold—

**At the edge of the water,
At the beginning of the wilderness,
At the start of something new,
On the edge of faith.**

And if God meets us in all those places,
Then surely God meets us in between—

Staying with us through the wilderness.

We are not alone. God is all around.

Let us worship the God of the here and now.

HYMN

I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

TOULON

I greet thee, who my sure Redeemer art, my only trust and Savior of my heart,
Who pain didst undergo for my poor sake; I pray thee from our hearts all cares to take.

Thou art the King of mercy and of grace, reigning omnipotent in every place:
So come, O King, and our whole being sway; shine on us with the light of thy pure day.
Thou art the life, by which alone we live, and all our substance and our strength receive;
Sustain us by thy faith and by thy power, and give us strength in every trying hour.

Thou hast the true and perfect gentleness; no harshness hast thou and no bitterness.
O grant to us the grace we find in thee, that we may dwell in perfect unity.

Our hope is in no other save in thee; our faith is built upon thy promise free;
Lord, give us peace, and make us calm and sure, that in thy strength we evermore endure.

CONFESSING OUR SIN

God who meets us where we are— there is nowhere we can go that you are not.

**You were with Jesus at his baptism. You were with him in the wilderness,
And even in between, you were there, saying aloud, “This is my beloved.”**

We know that you are with us too—

In the good, the bad, and everything in between— but so often we act like we are alone.

Instead of coming to you with our hurt, we hold it in or cast it onto others.

Instead of coming to you with our joy, we credit ourselves and offer you nothing.

How can we long for a deeper relationship with you while living like you are nowhere to be found?

Forgive our self-centered ways.

Remind us that in every breath, in every step, you are there.

You are the God who meets us where we are.

Before and behind, above and below, within and around.

Silence is kept for personal prayers of confession

CHORAL PETITION

O Lord, Hear My Prayer
O Lord, hear my prayer.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
All my hope comes from you.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
O Lord, hear my prayer.
Come and listen to me.

HEAR MY PRAYER

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Family of faith, if you hear nothing else today, hear this:
God is here. God sees you. God knows you. God meets you at the edge of every new beginning,
And God calls you beloved.

We are washed by the water.

We are called beloved.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Tom Evans

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 9:8-17

MUSICAL OFFERING

GOSPEL READING

Mark 1:9-15

CHILDREN'S LESSON

SERMON

Again & Again, God Meets Us

Rev. Camille LeBron Powell

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a God who is everywhere and right here,
Bigger than the sky and in the smallest details,
All at once and in every moment.
We believe that God meets us where we are—
In heartbreak and high hopes,
Around crowded tables and in quiet homes,
In joy and in suffering,
In loneliness and in connection,
In sanctuaries and in living rooms,
In marches and in waiting rooms.
We believe that nothing we do or leave undone
Can distance us from God's love.
God is forever drawing us close and pulling us in.
Again and again, God meets us where we are
And invites us into wholeness.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF GOD'S CHURCH, COMMUNITY AND WORLD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Loving God, we remember that Jesus taught us to pray saying, "Our Father..."

You created us, you made this world, and you called your Creation very good. Yet, often we forget that you are our loving Parent who continues to bless your world.

Jesus told us that you are "...in heaven..."

Yet, we fail to live in awe of you. We take you for granted, and we don't see the awesome beauty of the world you have made.

We pray, "hallowed be your name..."

We confess that our reverence for you does not always lead us to care reverently for your earth, sky and sea.

We pray, “your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...”

We confess that we often put our own interests first – exploiting your Creation and living for our own convenience and self-interest.

We pray, “Give us today our daily bread.”

We confess that we consume more than our share of the world’s resources, while billions go hungry every day and your whole Creation suffers.

We pray, “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.”

We confess that we see these words only in spiritual terms, while the Bible is filled with teachings about economic justice and Creation care.

We pray, “Save us from the time of trial.”

Help us to resist the temptations of spending more, using more, acquiring more and wasting more.

We pray, “Deliver us from evil...”

Free us from greed and self-centeredness that separate us from you and others.

We pray, “For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.”

Help us to know that in caring for your wonderful world, we are working for your kingdom, being good stewards of your creative power and giving you glory.

We pray, “Amen.”

We end our prayers with “Amen,” a word that means “let it be so.” We know we can be faithful disciples by your grace. Amen!

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Offertory Response

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

TALLIS’ CANNON

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

Prayer of Dedication

HYMN

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

ST. FLAVIAN

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|---|---|
| 1. Lord, who throughout these forty days
For us did fast and pray,
Teach us with you to mourn our sins
And close by you to stay. | 2. As you with Satan did contend
And did the victory win,
O give us strength to persevere,
In you to conquer sin. |
| 3. And through these days of penitence,
And through this Passiontide,
O Lord, with us abide.
Set our hearts on fire. | 4. Abide with us, till when this life
Of suffering shall be past,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last. |

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

BENEDICTION IN SONG

Peace of God Be With You

AS-SALAAMU LAKUM

Peace of God be with you.
Peace of God be with you.
Salaam, Salaam.
Peace of God be with you.

BENEDICTION IN MUSIC

Ich ruf’ zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ

Johan Sebastian Bach

I call to thee, Lord Jesus Christ

Notes on Today's Music

The musical basis for the **Opening Voluntary** is the hymn tune MORECAMBE composed by Frederick Cook Atkinson (1841-1896) and first published in the *Congregational Church Hymnal* (London, 1887). He is said to have originally created this tune for "Abide with Me" for use in the parish where he was then organist in a town in northern England. It was apparently printed on leaflets that have not survived. The tune name is after a Lancashire city on the northwest coast of England.

Roy Brunner (b. 1945), an American composer and organist who is currently organist of historic Park Street Church (Congregational) on the Boston Common. He recently retired as Professor of Music at Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts.

The author of the text of the **first hymn** *Je te salue, mon certain Rédempteur* is unknown; it first appeared in a 1545 Strassburg Psalter but essentially remained unknown until it was discovered in the 1860s. It was translated from the French by Elizabeth Lee (1817-1898) for a hymnal published in Boston in 1886.

Ironically, the composer of the tune TOULON is also unknown. It was first published in *Pseasmes octane trois de David* (Eighty-three Psalms of David) in Geneva in 1551. There is no known connection between this tune and the city in southern France for which it is named.

The text for the **Choral Petition** comes from the Taizé Community set to music composed by Jacques Berthier (1923-1994) and first published in *Music from Taizé, vol 2* (Chicago, 1982)

The text of the **second hymn** was authored by Claudia Hernamann (1838-1898) in *The Child's Book of Praise* (London, 1873). It has been through several adaptations from the archaic second-person forms to the hymn we know today. Interestingly, as with the first hymn, the composer of this tune is also unknown. It first appeared in *The Whole Booke of Psalmes Collected into Englysh Metre*, a collection compiled by John Day (London, 1562). It was harmonized by Richard Redhead (1820-1901) for a collection published in London in 1853. The tune name dates from the latter collection. No connection with Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople (d. 449) has been discovered. He is not commemorated in the Anglican calendar and no London churches are named for him.

The text of the **Benediction in Song**- *As-salaamu lakum*- is the Arabic form of the customary style of greeting in the ancient Near East. It can be found in Scripture as early as the greeting of Joseph's steward to his brother (Genesis 43:23) and it is the greeting of the risen Christ to the disciples (John 20:19, 21, 26).

The music was composed by Richard Colligan (b. 1967) and first published in *Sing! Prayer and Praise* (Cleveland, 2009).

The setting for the **Benediction in Music** is from the pen of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). It is from the *Orgelbüchlein* (Little Organ Book), a set of 46 chorale preludes for organ. They are intended as introductions for the hymn to be sung. Bach originally planned for a collection of 164 settings of existing Lutheran chorale tunes sung during the Church year so that each part of the year was represented.

The *Orgelbüchlein* was also intended as a pedagogical exercise to demonstrate the many various means to compose hymn preludes. It is regarded by Bach scholars as one of the composer's most important achievements and by organ scholars as a milestone in the development of the chorale.