

Growing Together through Faith, Love, and Fellowship.

3rd Sunday in Lent

March 12, 2023

The asterisk () indicates to please rise in body or spirit.*

Silent Prayer of Preparation

O God, Fountain of Life, to a humanity parched with thirst you offer the Living Water of Grace which springs up from the Rock, our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant your people the gift of your Spirit, that we may learn to profess our faith with courage and announce with joy the wonder of your love. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Gathering Music

The Gathering of God's People

Prelude - a time to prayerfully prepare oneself for worship

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

arr. Gilbert M. Martin

Welcome and Announcements

Introit

"Nearer, My God, To Thee"

Arthur Sullivan, 1872

Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee;
Even though it be a cross that raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be: Nearer, my God, to thee.

***Call to Worship**

Leader: The Messiah is come, not to meet our expectations, but to bring us the unexpected, not to be known according to our definition, but to define us and reveal our true identity.

People: The Messiah is come, hidden among the poor and lowly, not to be readily understood, but to understand our need, not to defend our descriptions, but to stretch our imaginations, intrude into our settled arrangements, and challenge our conceptions.

Leader: Let us open our hearts and minds to receive the mysterious Christ, present in our midst, moving unpredictably in our lives.

People: Let us worship God.

***Hymn** "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" #81

The Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon

***Call to Confession**

***Prayer of Confession** (*in unison*)

Lord Jesus, you come to us in a surprise encounter, and like the Samaritan woman at the well, we only gradually recognize who it is that you must be! You reveal your knowledge of us, and our past lies bare before you, even as you speak to our present need. Help us to see our lives as you know them and to acknowledge the sin within us. We confess the arrogance in thinking that what we humans have discovered about God and creation is all there is. We confess that we close our minds to your ongoing revelation of who you are, of what life is about, and to the possibilities beyond what we now conceive. We confess the limits of our mental constructs and experiences, in this life and concerning the next. Save us, forgive us, and free us, we pray.

Amen. (Silent prayer of confession.)

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Response Hymn** "Lord, Have Mercy" #551

Ministry of the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Children's Sermon

First Scripture Reading

Psalm 95

Choir Anthem

“You, Lord”

Deborah Governor, 2001

(refrain) You, Lord, are all I have; You, Lord, are all I need.

My life is in your hands; How wonderful your gifts to me!

You turn my darkness into light;

Keep me sheltered through the night;

I put my hope in You, my trust in You,

Shield me with your might. (refrain)

Many, O Lord, are your mercies;

Many the gifts of your hand;

Great is your love, great is your power,

Praise to You forever. (refrain)

Second Scripture Reading

John 4:5-42

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

“Can This Be the Christ?”

Rev. Désirée M. Youngblood

The Response to the Word

***Affirmation of Faith**

The Confession of 1967 (9.15)

God’s sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God’s love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God’s love.

***Hymn**

“Ho, All Who Thirst”

#479

Prayers of the People and the 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.

Invitation to Offering

***Response**

“We Lift Our Voices”

#710

***Prayer of Dedication**

The Sending of God’s People

***Closing Hymn**

“I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say”

#182

***Charge and Blessing**

***Congregational Response**

“We Are the Church”

I am the church! You are the church! We are the church to - geth-er!

All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes, we're the church to - gether!

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

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***Postlude**

"The Solid Rock"

arr. Anna Laura Page

Pastors: Rev. Désirée M. Youngblood
Steve Watters

Music Director: Thomas Lloyd

Organist: Carol Welk

Liturgist: Carole Sue Ames

Acolyte: Devin Griggs, Darren Cox

Carole Sue Ames is a lifelong resident of this area. She grew up in Lafayette and attended the Methodist Church. When she moved into London at the age of 15, she began to attend the First Presbyterian Church when it was located on Walnut Street. That was about 1952. She loves her church family dearly and following the path that God has laid out for her.

Carole married Bill Ames in 1956, and they had 5 sons. They enjoyed being involved with their children in school and sports. Bill & Carol have 18 grandchildren, and 15 great grandchildren with another one on the way. Bill went to be with the Lord in 1998.

Carole enjoyed tennis and softball in her younger years. Today, she enjoys swimming and golfing. She loves to travel whenever possible, and has been active in our church choir since 1970.