



GRACE COVENANT

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Service of Worship March 10, 2024 9:30am
Fourth Sunday in Lent

Gathering

PRELUDE

“Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus”

Music by Paul Manz

Linda Dover, organist

Text by Sigismund von Birken

*Let us ever walk with Jesus, full of faith, and hope, and love,
let us do the Father's bidding. Faithful Lord, abide with me;
Savior, lead, I follow thee.*

In worship following reflective music, we are requesting a response of quiet or a contemplative “amen.” Any music that elicits a response of applause is to the glory of God.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Karen Wright

*CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Friends of God, believe this — God loved the world,
God loves the world, we are the beloved!

**ALL: May the truth of this great love story, shine through our worship today,
and renew our sense of calling.**

ONE: So come, with your tiredness, your frustrations, and your discouragements;
come with your doubts, your fear, and your longings; come to discover yet
again how Jesus reveals God's love and mercy.

**ALL: Come, in friendship to God and to each other, and in friendship to the world,
to listen for God's Word to us, to offer our prayers, and to renew our calling.**

ONE: Friends of God,

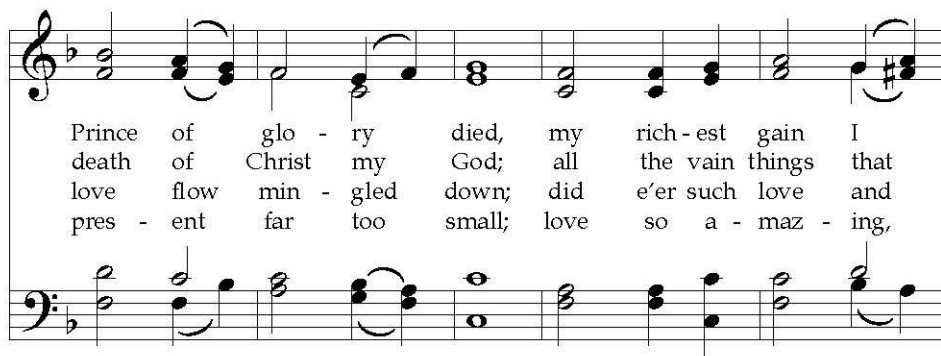
ALL: let us worship!

JESUS CHRIST: PASSION AND DEATH

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross 223



1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the
 2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the
 3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and
 4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a



Prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I
 death of Christ my God; all the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down; did e'er such love and
 pres - ent far too small; love so a - maz - ing,



count but loss, and pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.
 sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

This familiar text from the beginning of the 18th century grew out of Isaac Watts's desire to give Christians the ability to sing about gospel events. It is set here to a very restrained tune from the early 19th century inspired by the patterns of Gregorian chant.

TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1707
 MUSIC: Lowell Mason, 1824

HAMBURG
 LM
 (alternate tune: ROCKINGHAM, 224)

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN (*Noisy Offering*)

(Children ages 4 through 1st grade may go to Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time. Greeters at the back of the Sanctuary will go with children to Room 12 downstairs where parents may pick up their children following worship. Our Nursery welcomes young children and our ushers can assist families to the nursery located in the children's wing. Worship bags are available for children who stay in worship.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Karen Wright

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*Together*)

O God of Comfort and God of Challenge, we come to you this morning the way the Israelites did, full of complaints and dissatisfaction. Nothing is enough; we do not recognize your blessing at work in our day-to-day lives. Forgive us when we become so comfortable that we moan and groan about the most insignificant details of our lives. In our complaints, challenge us as you did the Israelites, to consider the bigger picture of oppression, injustice, and inequality around us. Forgive us when we close our eyes for fear of what you might show us; keep sending loving and compassionate leaders to open our eyes until we see what you see in our world. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you and all others!

*HYMN 137

"He Came Down"

HE CAME DOWN

He Came Down

137

He came down that we may have love; he

came down that we may have love; he came down that we may

have love; hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er-more.

Leader: Why did he come?

Additional stanzas:

... that we may have light
 ... that we may have peace
 ... that we may have joy

Because this traditional Cameroon piece begins with the refrain, it does not initially reveal that it is cast as a call-and-response song. Assigning the answers to the congregation rather than to the leader is a notable affirmation of the corporate wisdom of God's people.

Equipping

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 3:14–21 (NRSVue)

Terri Monrad

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

ANTHEM

“God So Loved the World”

by John Stainer

Chancel & Exaltation! Singers

based on John 3:16-1

*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,
that whoso believeth, believeth in him should not perish,
should not perish but have everlasting life.*

*God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world;
but that the world through him might be saved.*

God so loved the world.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Numbers 21:4–9 (NRSVue)

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom, but the people became discouraged on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” So Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole, and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Snakes, Why Did It Have to Be Snakes?”

Rev. Karen Wright

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.

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

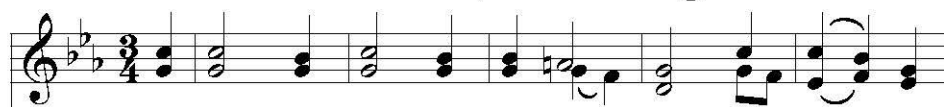
OFFERING OF GIFTS AND MUSIC “He Leadeth Me” by William Bradbury
Linda Dover, organist arr. Samuel Wellman
*He leadeth me; by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful foll’wer I would be, for by his hand he leadeth me.
(Text by Joseph Gilmore)*

[Sending](#)


*HYMN 618 “O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High” DEO GRACIAS
(Sing stanzas 1 - 3 and 5)

ADORATION


618 O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High



1 O love, how deep, how broad, how high, be - yond all
 2 For us bap - tized, for us he bore his ho - ly
 3 For us by wick - ed - ness be - trayed, for us, in
 4 For us he rose from death a - gain; for us he
 5 All glo - ry to our Lord and God, for love so



thought and fan - ta - sy, that God, the Son of
 fast and hun - gered sore; for us temp - ta - tions
 crown of thorns ar - rayed, he bore the shame - ful
 went on high to reign; for us he sent the
 deep, so high, so broad: the Trin - i - ty whom



God, should take our mor - tal form for mor - tals' sake.
 sharp he knew, for us, the tempt - er o - ver - threw.
 cross and death; for us gave up his dy - ing breath.
 Spir - it here to guide, to strength - en, and to cheer.
 we a - dore for - ev - er and for - ev - er - more.

Reducing a twenty-three-stanza Latin text to these five English stanzas intensifies this survey of the mystery of the Incarnation and strengthens the repeated reminder that all was done "for us." A comparable tone of proclamation animates this 15th-century song celebrating a military victory.

TEXT: Thomas à Kempis, 15th cent.; trans. Benjamin Webb, 1854, alt.
 MUSIC: "The Agincourt Song," c. 1415; harm. Alfred V. Fedak, 1993
 Music Harm. © 1993 Selah Publishing Co., Inc.

DEO GRACIAS
 LM
 (alternate harmonization, 189)

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Rev. Karen Wright

POSTLUDE (*seated*)

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

by John Hughes
arr. Barry Braman

Linda Dover, organist

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land.

I am weak, but thou art mighty. Hold me with thy powerful hand.

Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more.

(Text by William Williams)

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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