



A joyful church, guided by God, loving our neighbors.

Again & Again, We Are Reformed/Virtual Service
Sunday, 21 March 2021

THE GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

INTROIT

Good Friday v. 2

Merrill

Not so those women loved
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee;
Not so fallen Peter, weeping bitterly;
Not so the thief was moved;

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. K. Nicholas Yoda

PRELUDE

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling -John Stainer

Theresa Merrill

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: Every week is a new week, another chance to say:

All: "Here I am. Use me."

One: Every day is a new day, another chance to say:

All: "Thank you for yesterday. Thank you for tomorrow."

One: Every hour is a new hour, another chance to say,

All: "Again and again, make me new."

One: We do not come to this place to stay the same.

All: We come to this place to be changed.

One: So, let us worship holy God, who created yesterday, will create tomorrow, and even now is creating something new.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER: Holy God, scripture tells us that your word is written on our hearts, but we struggle to hear it.

Is it possible that we have covered up your words with our own self-narratives? Is it possible that we have erased your truth to write our own? Is it possible that we have forgotten your words entirely? Take us back to the beginning. Remove the self-talk that distracts. Clear away the cobwebs of doubt. Show us how to look inside ourselves for your truth, and then write on our hearts once more. We are listening. We are hopeful. We are here. Speak now. Amen.

Take up your cross, the Savior said, if you would my disciple be; take up your cross
with willing heart, and humbly follow after me.

Take up your cross; let not its weight fill your weak spirit with alarm; Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up
and brace your heart and nerve your arm.

Take up your cross; heed not the shame, and let your foolish pride be still;
the Lord for you accepted death upon a cross, on Calvary's hill.

Take up your cross, then, in Christ's strength, and calmly every danger brave:
it guides you to abundant life and leads to victory o'er the grave.

CALL TO CONFESSION: In the gospel of John, a group of Greek people approach the disciples and say, "We would like to see Jesus." It's a brief, beautiful moment that the text doesn't spend a lot of time on, and yet, it always catches my eye. It catches my eye, because the phrase, "I want to see Jesus," feels like it should be my constant prayer. Help me see Jesus. I'd like to see Jesus. Bring me closer to Jesus. In the prayer of confession, we take a moment to recognize how much space exists between us and those words, trusting that even when we forget to seek out God, God is seeking us out. So, join me in the prayer of confession today as we take one step closer to the Divine . . .

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: **Gracious God, we want to see you. We want to be known as the people who looked for Jesus; But not only that, we want to be people who have your covenant written on our hearts. Why do we feel so far away from that at times? What went wrong? Where did we lose our way? Could you, would you, once again, write on our fragile hearts? We would be so grateful. Amen.**

(Pause for silent confession)

*THE KYRIE: **Lord, have mercy upon us, Christ, have mercy upon us, Lord, have mercy upon us.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

One: Friends, despite our wonderings, despite our distractions, despite wrong turns time and time again, we are known and loved by God. Like a lighthouse keeper by the sea, God will never stop waving us home. So, hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

All: Our fragile bones are held by the Great Creator. Our fragile hearts are loved by the Great Creator. Our tender spirits are forgiven by the Great Creator.

One: Today is a new day.

All: Again, and again, we are forgiven; again and again, we are reformed thanks be to God. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI #581: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

GIFT OF THE WORD

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON:

Jeremiah 31:31-34

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband,^[a] says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

Wash Me Thoroughly

Samuel Wesley

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness and forgive me all my sin.
For I acknowledge my faults, and my sin is ever before me.

SERMON

"Again & Again, We Are Reformed"

Dr. K. Nicholas Yoda

THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

**We believe that flowers need the rain. We believe that humans need community.
We believe that bodies need rest. We believe that hearts need connection.
We believe that mornings need sunrise. We believe that seasons need change.
We believe that grief needs space. We believe that change needs time.
We believe that love needs security. We believe that pain needs art.
We believe that joy needs company. We believe that our spirits need God.
Again, and again, our spirits need God. Fortunately for us, we trust that
God is here. God is at work in our lives. God is a lighthouse keeper that never gives up.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN #209

My Song Is Love Unknown

LOVE UNKNOWN

My song is love unknown, my Savior's love to me, love to the loveless shown that they might lovely be.
O who am I that for my sake my Lord should take frail flesh, and die?
He came from heaven's throne salvation to bestow; the world that was his own would not its Savior know.
But O my Friend, my Friend indeed, who at my need his life did spend!
Sometimes we strew his way, and his sweet praises sing, resounding all the day hosannas to our King.
Then "Crucify!" is all our breath, and for his death we thirst and cry.
Unheeding, we will have our dear Lord made away, a murderer to save, the prince of life to slay.
Yet steadfast he to suffering goes, that he his foes from thence might free.
Here might I stay and sing, no story so divine: never was love, dear King, never was grief like thine.
This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise I all my days could gladly spend.

BENEDICTION

Dr. K. Nicholas Yoda

POSTLUDE

Peace I Leave With You - Jean Pasquet

Theresa Merrill

Artwork Credit: *Written on Our Hearts* by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman *Inspired by Jeremiah 31:31-34* | Digital drawing

REMEMBER THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

New Prayer Concerns:

- **The Fenker family**, passing of Marian Fenker
- **Cooper-Pytel Family**, passing of Monroe Pytel, friend of Jennifer Sullivan
- **All Families who have suffered a loss**

Ongoing Prayer Concerns:

- **Denise Bien**, Health concerns
- **Darryl Davis**, health concerns, brother of Diana Hargrave
- **Dorothy Fisher**, Health concerns
- **Sue Imm**, Health concerns
- **Vera Lambert**, Health concerns, hospitalized

- **Glenn Montague**, Health concerns

- **Tom Wise**, Health concerns

Serving in the Armed Forces:

- **Zachary Huffman**, Friend of Barb Imm
- **Brian Montague**, grandson of Glenn Montague

Mission Coworkers:

- **McGill Family**, back in the United States

****Please notify the church office of any prayer requests you may have including those of you who have loved ones in the Armed Forces or in Mission.**

BLESSED BIRTHDAY WISHES TO:

Month of March: 5 Anna Goldhahn, 9 Ginger Todd, 13 George Horning, 15 Jane Eyler, 17 Pam Savas, 18 Vera Lambert, Lynn Adams, 22 Sara Jane King, 23 Valerie Mohr, 26 Joyce Horning.