

THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

September 26, 2021

GATHERING AND PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader: Christ is risen!

People: He is risen indeed!

PRELUDE

“Aria”

G.F. Handel

Readying Our Hearts (A time of silent prayer and reflection in preparation for worshipping God together.)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Revelation 15:3-4)

Leader: Great and marvelous are Your deeds, Lord God Almighty!

People: Just and true are Your ways, King of the ages.

Leader: Who will not fear You, O Lord, and bring glory to Your name?

People: For You alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous acts have been revealed.

INVOCATION

*OPENING SONG:

“Come Thou Fount/Come Thou King”

Robinson/Miller

Acoustic Worship Team

Verse 1:

**Come, Thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing call for songs of loudest praise;
Teach me some melodious sonnet sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it mount of Thy redeeming love.**

Chorus:

**Come, Thou Fount, come, Thou King; come, Thou precious Prince of Peace;
Hear Your bride, to You we sing; come, Thou Fount of our blessing.**

Verse 2:

**I was lost in utter darkness `til You came and rescued me;
I was bound by all my sin when Your love came and set me free;
Now my soul can sing a new song, now my heart has found a home;
Now Your grace is always with me and I'll never be alone. (Chorus)**

Verse 3:

**O, to grace, how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be;
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee;
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it; seal it for Thy courts above. (Chorus)**

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 9:18-26 (Pew Bible p. 1609)

Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “God’s Messiah.”

Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”

Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.”

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison prayer after a time of silent personal confession.)

O Lord Jesus Christ, who did give Your life for us that we might receive pardon and peace; mercifully cleanse us from all sin, and evermore keep us in Your favor and love, that we may live by Your grace and walk in Your ways, the ways of the One who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (based on 1 Timothy 1:15, 17)

Leader: Here are words you may trust, words that merit full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. To all who confess their sins and resolve to lead a new life, He says, “Your sins are forgiven.” He also says, “Follow me.” Now to the One who rules all worlds, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.

***All:** (*Gloria Patri*)

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.

ENCOUNTERING GOD THROUGH GOD’S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 8:4-8a, 11-15 (Pew Bible pp. 1605-1606)

While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground,

and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.”

[Then Jesus said] . . . “This is the meaning of the parable: the seed is the word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.”

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

ANTHEM:

“Our God Is Love”
Choir

Mary MacDonald

SCRIPTURE READING: John 6:60-71 (Pew Bible pp. 1658-1659)

On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?”

Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you -- they are full of the Spirit and life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

“You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

Then Jesus replied, “Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!” (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON: “God’s Vaccine against the Death of Spiritual Defection”

**RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD THROUGH AFFIRMATION,
OFFERING, AND PRAYER**

*SONG OF REFLECTION AND RESPONSE:

“Rescue”
Acoustic Worship Team

Jared Anderson

Verse:

**You are the source of life and I can't be left behind.
No one else will do, and I will take hold of You.**

Chorus:

**`Cause I need You, Jesus, to come to my rescue.
Where else can I go?
There's no other name by which I am saved.
Capture me with grace; I will follow You.**

Bridge:

**I will follow You; I will follow You.
This world has nothing for me; I will follow You.**

Tag:

**Capture me with grace; capture me with grace.
I will follow You; I will follow You.**

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AND OFFERING

Invitation

Affirmation of Faith: The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Institution

Partaking of the Elements and the Giving of Our Offering

“Adagio from Symphony #5”

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

(For those joining with us in the Sanctuary this morning, you are invited, as you come forward to receive the Communion Elements, and as you feel so led, to place your offering in one of the plates up front. For those unable to be with us physically, you are encouraged to partake of the elements in your home at this time. Also, as you are able, we invite you to set aside your offering as an act of personal dedication at this time, either to be mailed in, dropped off at the church, or brought in when you are able to join us in worship. Let this time be one of receiving from and offering yourself up to our Lord -- to the praise of His holy name.)

Prayer of Commitment

*Sung Response (Doxology)

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

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

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.

BRINGING OUR WORSHIP INTO OUR WORLD

*CLOSING SONG: #672 “This Is the Threefold Truth”

**This is the threefold truth on which our faith depends;
And with this joyful cry worship begins and ends:
Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

**Made sacred by long use, new-minted for our time,
Our liturgies sum up the hope we have in Him:
Christ is died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

**On this we fix our minds as, kneeling side by side,
We take the bread and wine from Him, the Crucified:
Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

**By this we are upheld when doubt and grief assails
Our Christian fortitude, and only grace avails:
Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

**This is the threefold truth which, if we hold it fast,
Changes the world and us and brings us home at last.
Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!**

*BENEDICTION: (Galatians 1:3-5)

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE:

“Finale in D”

Malcolm Archer

Memory verse: John 6:68-69

“Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that You are the Holy One of God.’”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. As a faith family we continue to support the work of Hope 7 in our local community (primarily the Albia area of Troy). If you would like to help support their work we encourage you to drop off **non-perishable food items, toiletries and other hygiene items** either at Third Church (and we will get the items to Hope 7), or at Hope 7 directly (M-W-Th 9:30-11:45), or call Sue Laz (518-892-4042) or John McAuley (518-894-7771) to arrange for a pick-up.
2. We continue to collect **new or gently used clothes** for the Capital City Rescue Mission (CCRM). You may bring your items to the church or call Sue Laz to see about having someone pick them up for you. And, of course, if you wish you can bring your items directly to the CCRM.
3. The Wednesday evening Bible Study will meet this coming Wednesday, September 29th, at 6:45pm via Zoom. We will begin recording those gatherings for access by those who wish to partake of that study but might not be free at that time. We will keep the study accessible up until the next study. For our upcoming Wednesday study we will be examining John 7:1-13.
4. During the month of September we will receive a special mission offering. Funds received will go to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance as they provide hurricane relief both nationally and internationally. Envelopes are available in each pew and in the narthex. Checks should be made payable to “Third Presbyterian Church”.
5. We will be holding our October congregational meeting on Sunday, October 10th. The primary purpose of that meeting will be for the electing of officers to serve on the Session beginning in January of 2022. We will also conduct any other business that needs to come before the congregation at that time. We will inform you next week (10/3) regarding the exact time for that meeting and how it will be conducted – whether via Zoom only or through a combination of in-person and Zoom. [Note: If the meeting will be via Zoom only it will most likely occur in the evening of 10/10 at 6:30. If we conduct a combined in-person and Zoom meeting it will most likely be held shortly following our 10:30 service.]