

THE WORSHIP OF GOD
MARCH 7, 2021
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

PRELUDE

Wondrous Love

David N. Johnson
(1922-1987)

As the prelude is played, prepare your home, yourself, and your family to enter into this time of worship.

OPENING PRAYER (IN UNISON)

O God, your glory is always to have mercy. Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with repentant hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast to the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed
Aldersgate Praise Band

HUDSON

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed" in E-flat major, 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble and bass staff with lyrics: 1. A - las! and did my Sav - ior bleed, 2. Was it for crimes that I have done, 3. Well might the sun in dark - ness hide, 4. Thus might I hide my blush - ing face, 5. But drops of tears can ne'er re - pay. The second system continues the melody with lyrics: and did my Sov-ereign die? Would he de - vote that he groaned up - on the tree? A - maz - ing pit - y! and shut its glo - ries in, when God, the might - y while his dear cross ap - pears; dis - solve my heart in the debt of love I owe. Here, Lord, I give my - . The score includes chord markings above the treble staff: Eb, Eb, Eb, Ab, Eb/G, Bb7/F, Eb, Bb, Eb, Eb.

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Eb Ab Eb/Bb Bb⁷ Eb
 sa - cred head for sin - ners such as I?
 Grace un-known! And love be - yond de - gree!
 mak - er, died for his own crea - ture's sin.
 thank - ful - ness, and melt mine eyes to tears.
 self a - way; 'tis all that I can do.

Refrain

Eb Bb
 At the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the light,

Bb⁷ Eb Ab
 and the burden of my heart rolled away; it was there by faith I re-

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Eb Fm/Ab Bb⁷ Eb
 ceived my sight, and now I am hap-py all the day.

CALL TO CONFESSION

The Lord, who is gracious and merciful and abounding in unconditional love, calls us to himself to confess our sins and to discover the true depths of God's love for us. Let us therefore confess our sins before God and each other.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (IN UNISON)

Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PERSONAL CONFESSION AND MEDITATION (IN SILENCE)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: Hear the good news: "Christ died for us while we were still sinners." That proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

All: Glory to God! Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (IN UNISON)

Gracious God, as we hear your word read and proclaimed, speak to us of the power made perfect in weakness that you reveal in the cross of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Send your Holy Spirit on this Word and on us, that we may be renewed in faith. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON

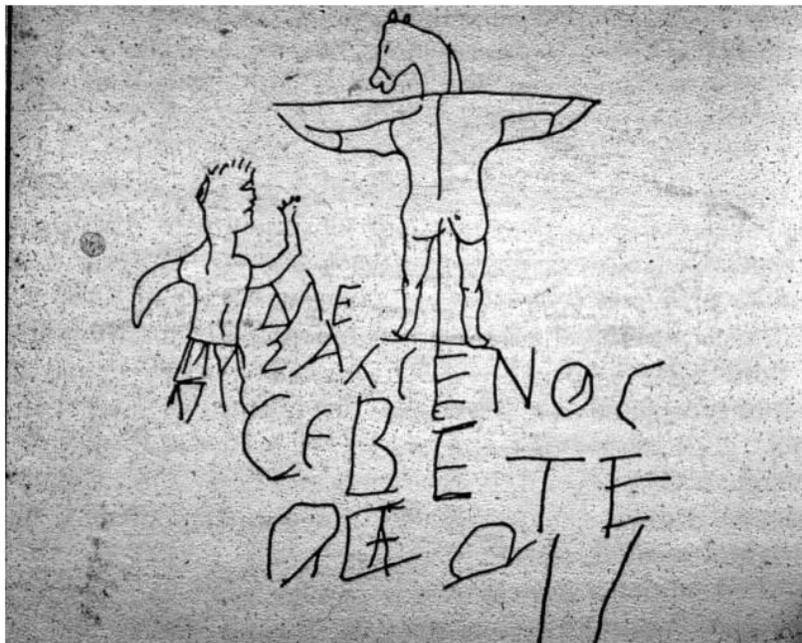
I Corinthians 1:18-25

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

SERMON

"Foolishness"

Rev. Patrick Murphy



CALL TO PRAYER

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Let us pray.

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

GIVING



OFFERTORY

Call to Lent
Chancel Choir

J. Jerome Williams
(b. 1938)

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul; what wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul. What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what wondrous love is this, O my soul. What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to lay aside his crown for my soul, for my soul, to lay aside his crown for my soul.

-American Folk Hymn

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride. See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down. Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown, for my soul?

-adapted by J. Jerome Williams

BENEDICTION

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Bulletin Image: This is a rubbing of a second century piece of graffiti called the "Alexamenos graffito", which can be found on the Palatine Hill of Rome. It depicts the mocking of a Christian named Alexamenos for worshipping a crucified God.

WORSHIP NOTES

Prelude

David N. Johnson was an American organist, composer, educator, choral clinician, and professor. During his career, he taught at St. Olaf College, Syracuse University, and the University of Arizona. He wrote over 300 compositions, including this arrangement of "Wondrous Love" (publ. 1965). The tune WONDROUS LOVE first appeared in the valleys of the Southern Appalachians, where William Walker (1809-1875) recorded it and included it in his historic *Southern Harmony*, 1835. This arrangement includes two full statements of the tune with a brief introduction, interlude, and coda. The second statement utilizes a solo stop that is played on a separate manual of the organ.

Offertory

Jim Williams, a native of Morganton, North Carolina, is a former high school band and choral director and the Chancel Choir Director Emeritus of First United Methodist Church in Hickory, North Carolina. He earned degrees from Mars Hill College, East Carolina University, and Appalachian State University. His numerous accomplishments include NC Teacher of the Year in 1982-83, the Lara Hoggard Award from the NC-ACDA in 1991, and the NC High School Choral Hall of Fame in 2013. The "Call to Lent" is a quodlibet for two-part mixed choir that uses the tunes WONDROUS LOVE and HAMBURG. A quodlibet is a musical composition that combines several different melodies in counterpoint.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Scripture Readers Wanted for Online Worship: Thank you for those who have responded! We would love to include any more of you in the congregation who are comfortable assisting in worship by reading scripture. We record worship on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. You can come at that time and we will record you leading the prayer of illumination and then sharing the scripture, just as we used to do when worship was in-person. The prayer of illumination is already written, and we will send you the scripture passage ahead of time so you can practice if you want to. We will record your part of the worship service first, and then you would be free to go while we record the rest of the service. If this is something you would like to do, or ask more questions about, please contact me at ross@frontstreetumc.org. We would like to start this as soon as possible.

Bible Study Opportunities: Join Pastor Ross on **Wednesday mornings at 10 a.m.** for a Bible study on the book of Luke and Pastor Patrick on **Thursday nights at 7 p.m.** for a Lenten Bible study on walking through the book of Ruth. Both studies meet via Zoom. Look for the Zoom links in Tuesday's *Front Street Happenings* email. If you would like to participate, but are unable to join us on Wednesday morning or Thursday evening, these gatherings are recorded and posted on our website and available to view at a time that suits you.

Daylight Saving Time Begins: It's that time again! Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on **Saturday, March 13.**

UMCOR Sunday Offering on March 14: UMCOR Sunday (formerly called “One Great Hour of Sharing”) supports the work of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, the denomination’s humanitarian relief and development organization. This offering ensures 100% of gifts to UMCOR help those who need it most. The United Methodist Church can respond quickly through UMCOR with funds to address immediate needs and grants to support long-term recovery. This is only possible with your support. UMCOR focuses on disaster preparedness, recovery, and response as well as migration and sustainable development in both the United States and globally. Your gift to UMCOR is an example of extravagant grace. Please give generously by mailing a check to the church with “UMCOR Sunday” written in the memo line. Thank you!

United Methodist Women: Circle #2 is collecting donations for Peg’s PJs. Peg’s PJs is a nonprofit organization that provides pajamas, bed linens, underwear, and blankets to displaced children in Alamance County. Children’s new pajamas, underwear (all sizes), sheets, pillowcases, blankets, and bedspreads are needed. Please place items in the blue bins located in the Welcome Center in front of the bulletin board. Porch drop offs or checks payable to Peg’s PJs are accepted at 2017 Shirley Drive, Burlington. Questions? Call Kathy Roberson at 336-380-5664. The last date to contribute is **March 15**.

March Mission Food Distribution: Beginning in March, we will have a monthly mission focus. Our March mission will provide two opportunities for members of our church family (all ages) to join us in packing up and distributing food to the community. 1) At 1:00 p.m. on **Thursday, March 18**, volunteers are needed to pack 200 bags of food in Aldersgate Hall—all the food will be provided and packing stations will be spaced apart for physical distancing. 2) These bags will be distributed on **Saturday, March 20** (10 a.m.-noon) to families and individuals in a drive-thru line. Both events will be physically distanced and gloves will be provided. Please wear a mask. Contact Marcy McAdams (marcy@frontstreetumc.org) for more information.

Project AGAPE Collection: Our Conference and the Western NC Conference have been asked to help our friends in Armenia, who have been forced to abandon their property due to military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The following is a list of supplies needed by the end of March 2021. These are items that are very hard to find in the mountainous areas of Eastern Armenia.

- New bed linens, pillows, and blankets
- New or like-new children’s clothing (up to age 16)
- New shoes (old shoes cannot be shipped)

Donations may be dropped off in the Welcome Center. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, please send a check to the church office with Project AGAPE noted in the memo line. The deadline for donations is **Friday, March 19**.

Easter Sunday Lilies: Help beautify the worship space of our outdoor Easter sunrise service by purchasing a lily* (\$24). Make checks payable to FSUMC and mark for lilies. Checks can be mailed (PO Box 2597, Burlington, NC 27216-2597) or dropped off in the church office (Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm). **The deadline to order is March 21**. Lilies can be picked up after the sunrise service on April 4. Questions? Contact Pamela in the

church office or email pamela@frontstreetumc.org. Please note that checks will be held until we have received the flowers. This is so that if there is any issue with supply, you can easily be reimbursed. ***not for memorials or honorariums**

Fill a Dozen Easter Eggs: Want to bring a little joy to our children this Easter? Fill one or two dozen eggs with candy, and the occasional \$1 bill (no coins please) and bring them to the church office by **March 26**. They will be hidden for the children to find at our Easter Egg Hunt on March 27. Thank you for your support.

Easter Egg Hunt: Bring your children and grandchildren for an egg hunt on **Saturday, March 27**. In order to keep the groups small, there will be two sessions: preschool age (10-10:30 a.m.) and elementary age (11-11:30 a.m.) Masks are required for anyone over the age of five. Gather on the grassy area by the playground, and don't forget your basket! Looking forward to seeing you there! **(Rain date: April 3.)**

Sanctuary Flowers: The following dates are available to place flowers in the Sanctuary in honor or in memory of a loved one: **March 14 and 21 and April 4, 11, and 18**. For more information, please contact Linda Paul at 336-543-5081 (cell) or kpaul5@triad.rr.com (email).

Cereal and Canned Goods for the Salvation Army: We continue to collect cereal and canned/dry goods for the Salvation Army. Please feel free to drop off these items any time during the month. You may deposit cereal or other canned/dry goods in the tubs in the cabinet in the Welcome Center or call Betty Huneycutt (336-212-0704) for porch pick up. Thank you for your continued support of stocking the food pantry at the Salvation Army.