FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

Traditional Service
The Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 10, 2024

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE Meditation — Betty Jackson King

WELCOME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O God, you are my God; I seek you.
People: My soul thirsts for you as in a dry land where there is no water.
Leader: I will bless you as long as I live;
People: I will lift up my hands and call on your name!

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN — #459

Father, We Praise Thee — CHRISTE SANCTORUM

1 Father, we praise Thee, now the night is over;
Active and watchful, stand we all before Thee;
Singing, we offer, prayer and meditation:
Thus we adore Thee.

2 Monarch of all things, fit us for Thy mansions;
Banish our weakness, health and wholeness sending;
Bring us to heaven, where Thy saints united
Joy without ending.

3 All holy Father, Son and equal Spirit,
Trinity blessèd, send us Thy salvation;
Thine is the glory, gleaming and resounding
Through all creation.

*Please stand if you are able.

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSON

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Holy God, we often find ourselves moving through a world that does not make sense. We want to control scenarios beyond our reach. We want to hold your world in our hands. Forgive us for the moments when we lead with declarations instead of curiosity. Forgive us for arguing when we could listen. Forgive us for fixating on one truth, when we could open ourselves up to many. Soften our hard edges and teach us how to listen. With hope in our hearts we pray, amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

WE LISTEN

CHILDREN'S SERMON

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Matthew 22:1-14 Kate Arrington

Leader: The word of the Lord;

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON The Rev. J.C. Austin

"Come As You Are (But Don't Stay That Way)"

WE RESPOND

MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

*SERMON HYMN #370

Just as I Am, Without One Plea WOODWORTH

1 Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

2 Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

3 Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

4 Just as I am, Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (the Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

CALL FOR OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory United in Purpose — Rollo Dilworth

Chancel Choir

The onus is upon us all to work to
improve the human condition.
Perform good deeds, for that is truly
the way to battle the forces of entropy
that are at work in our world.
The composite of all our efforts can
have an effect. Good done anywhere
is good done everywhere.
When we unite in purpose,
we are greater than the sum of our parts.

Text by Maya Angelou

*Doxology #592

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow — OLD HUNDREDTH

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

*Prayer of Dedication

*SENDING HYMN #343

Called as Partners in Christ's Service BEECHER

1 Called as partners in Christ's service
Called to ministries of grace
We respond with deep commitment
Fresh new lines of faith to trace
May we learn the art of sharing
Side by side and friend with friend
Equal partners in our caring
To fulfill God's chosen end

2 Christ's example Christ's inspiring
Christ's clear call to work and worth
Let us follow never faltering
Reconciling folk on earth
Men and women richer poorer
All God's people young and old
Blending human skills together
Gracious gifts from God unfold

3 Thus new patterns for Christ's mission
In a small or global sense
Help us bear each other's burdens
Breaking down each wall or fence
Words of comfort words of vision
Words of challenge said with care
Bring new power and strength for action
Make us colleagues free and fair

4 So God grant us for tomorrow
Ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow
With a calm that conquers strife
Make us partners in our living
Our compassion to increase
Messengers of faith thus giving
Hope and confidence and peace

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Postlude on "All Creatures of Our God and King" arr. David N. Johnson

Flowers given by Barbara Burger in honor of what would have been her and Ted's 60th wedding anniversary.