



CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

February 28, 2021

Second Sunday in Lent

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“A theology of faithful presence is a theology of engagement in and with the world around us. It is a theology of commitment, a theology of promise. It is disarmingly simple in concept yet in its implications it provides a challenge, at points, to all of the dominant paradigms of cultural engagement in the church. At root, a theology of faithful presence begins with an acknowledgement of God’s faithful presence to us and that his call upon us is that we be faithfully present to him in return.”

— JAMES DAVISON HUNTER

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, we confess that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities that happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

PSALM: Psalm 22:23-31

SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38

ORDER OF WORSHIP

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

In Scripture, the Call to Worship comes from God. We need to be called because it is not our natural response to come to God. God takes the initiative, moves towards us with grace, and invites us to worship him.

Jeremiah 29

LEADER Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:

PEOPLE **Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce.**

LEADER Multiply there, and do not decrease.

PEOPLE **Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.**

LEADER For thus says the LORD: I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.

PEOPLE **For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.**

HYMN

And Can It Be

Charles Wesley · Arr. Dr. Seth Ward

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain,
For me, who scorned His perfect love!

*Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me?
Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me?*

You left Your Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite Your grace.
Emptied Yourself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race. *Chorus*

Boldly I come before Your throne
To claim Your mercy, immense and free.
No greater love will e'er be known—
For, O my God, it found out me! *Chorus*

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine.
Alive in Him, my living Head
And clothed in righteousness divine. *Chorus*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Aware of God's holiness and our sinfulness, the Prayer of Confession invites us to honestly confess our sins. We are free to confess even our most grievous faults because no matter how deep our sin may be, God's grace in Jesus Christ is deeper still. Confession both acknowledges our need for grace and celebrates its abundant provision in Christ.

Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have our being, your face is hidden from us by our sins, and we forget your mercy in the blindness of our hearts. Cleanse us from all our offenses, and deliver us from proud thoughts and vain desires. With lowliness and meekness may we draw near to you, confessing our faults, confiding in your grace, and finding in you our refuge and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The Words of Assurance should be received with gratitude and joy because these words of Scripture assure us that God has promised to forgive and restore those who confess their sins through the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

LEADER Hear and receive the good news of the gospel:
in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**

HYMN

How Marvelous (I Stand Amazed)

Charles H. Gabriel · Chris Tomlin · Arr. John Wasson

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

*Singin' how marvelous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful!
Is my Savior's love for me!*

He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them His very own;
He bore the burden to Calvary,
And suffered and died alone. *Chorus*

When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me. *Chorus*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world.
Please let the prayer ministry know of your prayer requests by visiting centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest.*

OFFERING

Please text [centralchurchnyc](http://centralchurchnyc.org) to 77977 or visit our website in order to give electronically.

OFFERTORY

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Thomas A. Dorsey · George N. Allen

Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand;
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
Through the storm, through the night,
Lead me on to the light.

*Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me home.*

When my way grows drear,
Precious Lord, linger near,
When my life is almost gone,
Hear my cry, hear my call,
Hold my hand lest I fall. *Chorus*

When the darkness appears,
And the night draws near,
And the day is past and gone;
At the river I stand,
Guide my feet, hold my hand. *Chorus*

THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

The Word of God is the primary means by which God speaks to us and the ultimate authority for what we believe and how we live. All Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

1 Peter 2:11-12

¹¹Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

SERMON

The Spirit makes the reading and preaching of God's Word a powerful means of challenging, comforting, and strengthening God's people and awakening people to new faith.

A Better Resistance | You're Not From Around Here

Rev. Jason Harris

THE THANKSGIVING

From the earliest days of the church a prayer of Thanksgiving preceded Holy Communion. The Thanksgiving includes the "Sursum Corda" which means "Lift up your hearts" or literally, "Hearts lifted," in Latin. The Thanksgiving bids us to acknowledge our absolute dependence on the God who desires to commune with us.

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist) is the family meal of baptized Christians. We invite all to partake of this sacrament who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to use the prayers printed below and spend this time in reflection or prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the church. For health reasons, an individually packaged wafer and cup can be found in the pew for those who wish to participate in the Lord's Supper. Once consumed, please place empty cups in the back of the pew.

We take it as a sign of a healthy congregation to have regular attenders who love our community but who do not profess faith in Christ and so refrain from receiving the elements. If you are a Christian and have not yet been baptized, please talk with our pastors. We would be honored to baptize you.

Children are welcome to partake of communion. To receive the Lord's Supper, a child must have been baptized and been formally received as a communing member by the Session of this church or the governing body of the church to which you belong.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

We sing the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray to our Heavenly Father.

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.

HYMN

What a Beautiful Name

Ben Fielding · Brooke Ligertwood

You were the Word at the beginning,
One with God the Lord Most High.
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ.

What a beautiful Name it is,
What a beautiful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ my King.
What a beautiful Name it is; nothing compares to this.
What a beautiful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

You didn't want Heaven without us,
So Jesus, You, brought Heaven down.
My sin was great, Your love was greater;
What could separate us now?

What a wonderful Name it is,
What a wonderful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ my King.
What a wonderful Name it is; nothing compares to this.
What a wonderful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

Death could not hold You; the veil tore before You.
You silenced the boast of sin and grave.
The heavens are roaring the praise of Your glory,
For You are raised to life again.
You have no rival; You have no equal.
Now and forever, God You reign.
Yours is the Kingdom, Yours is the glory;
Yours is the Name, above all names.

What a powerful Name it is,
What a powerful Name it is, the Name of Jesus Christ my King.
What a powerful Name it is; nothing can stand against.
What a powerful Name it is, the Name of Jesus.

BENEDICTION

We begin our worship with God's gracious invitation, and we conclude with God's blessing, his good word. It is appropriate to look up and open our palms as we receive the Benediction to symbolize how Jesus Christ lifts our heads and to demonstrate our eagerness to receive God's blessing.

DISMISSAL

God never draws us into relationship with himself without also sending us out into the world to be his representatives and ambassadors.

LEADER Let us go forth to serve the world as those who
 love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL **Thanks be to God!**