



MIDTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Evening Worship

Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

02.12.2023

Welcome to Worship at Midtown! We are really glad to have you with us for worship today. Whether you have been a Christian for many years, or are trying to sort out what the Christian faith is all about, or are just here as a favor to your friend, we're happy to have you.

We have a nursery provided for little ones. You are welcome to keep them in the service with you if you prefer.

Reflection

Kate said to her Jewish colleague: Perhaps I'm a natural pagan. I don't go in for all this emphasis on sin, suffering and judgment. If I had a God I'd like Him to be intelligent, cheerful and amusing." He said: "I doubt whether you'd find him much of a comfort when they herded you into the gas chambers. You might prefer a God of vengeance."

— P.D. James, Original Sin

God's "justice" is not simply a matter of dispassionate bookkeeping in which human actions are tallied, but a passionate involvement on the side of good against evil. Thus, an appeal to God's justice is often a cry for the rectification of a world gone awry through human wickedness.

— Luke Timothy Johnson

The Word

Call to Worship

Psalm 84:1-4

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord. My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise!

Worship begins with God's call to us to worship him. As always, God initiates with us, such as we are, and invites us to be with him out of sheer mercy.

The Gloria Patri

Music: Charles Meineke

In the Gloria Patri we join our voices with Christians around the world and through the centuries in this ancient (cf. 380 AD) song of praise to the Holy Trinity.

Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly

6

Ghost. As it was in the be - gin-ning, is now, and ev - er

10

shall be, world with-out end. A - men, A - men.

Crown Him With Many Crowns

Music: George J. Elvy; Lyrics: Matthew Bridges



Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne; hark!



how the heav'n - ly an - them drowns all mu - sic but its own; a -



-wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee, and



hail him as thy match - less King through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Crown him the Lord of love; behold his hands and side,
Rich wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified:
No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends his burning eye at mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of peace; whose pow'r a scepter sways
From pole to pole, that wars may cease,
absorbed in prayer and praise:
His reign shall know no end; and round his pierced feet
Fair flow'rs of paradise extend their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown him the Lord of years, the Potentate of time;
Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime:
All hail, Redeemer, hail! For thou hast died for me:
Thy praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity.

Prayer of Invocation

Call to Confession of Sin

John 3:17

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Confession of Sin

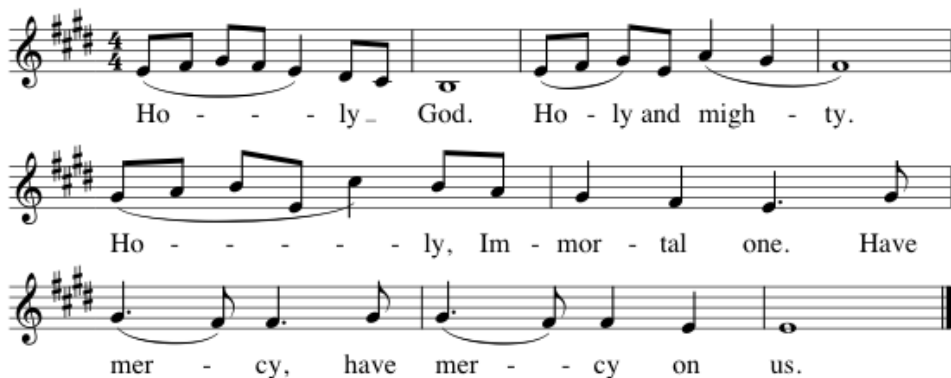
[Please pray aloud together]

**Gracious God,
You know what kind of people we are.
We judge others harshly
and fail to see our own sin.
We look with suspicion and fear,
and neglect to show hospitality
to strangers. We treasure things that are worthless and
squander your precious gifts. We withhold the grace and love
that you give us so freely. Forgive us.
Pour out your grace upon us
and heal us of our brokenness. Amen.**

[You are invited to confess your sins silently at this time.]

Trisagion

Music: Fernando Ortega



Ho - - - ly - God. Ho - ly and migh - ty.
Ho - - - - ly, Im - mor - tal one. Have
mer - cy, have mer - - cy on us.

We confess our sins as a group and individually because we need to. We come to worship God even though we are morally broken, in certain hope that he is merciful to people like us, and able to change us by his grace.

Assurance of Forgiveness

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Minister: May the peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

It Is Well With My Soul

Lyrics: Henry Lyte; Music: Bill Moore



When peace like a ri - ver at - tend - eth my way, when sor - rows like



sea bil-lows roll; What - e - ver my lot, thou hast taught me to



say, it is well, it is well, with my soul! It is well,



with my soul, it is well, it is well, with my soul!

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,

Let this blest assurance control:

That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,

And has shed his own blood for my soul. [Refrain]

My sin oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more;
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! [Refrain]

O Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend;
Even so, it is well with my soul. [Refrain]

The Prayers of the People

[Pray the bold portions aloud together]

[Led by Dave Adams]

Leader: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
Leader: Let us pray.

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.
Grant, Almighty God,

**that all who confess your Name may be
united in your truth, live together in
your love, and reveal your glory in the
world. We especially pray for the healing
of our doctrinal and racial divisions.**

(Please pray silently for the unity of the Church.)

Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

The prayers of the people enable us to join our minds and hearts in one voice to God, like we do when we sing. Be careful about merely repeating the words without engaging your whole self in prayer.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations,
in the ways of justice and peace;

**that we may honor one another
and serve the common good.**

(Please pray silently for justice and peace in all nations.)

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours,

**and grant that we may serve them,
and love one another as Christ loves us.**

(Please pray silently for our love and service of others.)

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit;

**give them courage and hope in their troubles,
and bring them the joy of your salvation.**

(Please pray silently for those who suffer.)

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

And teach us to pray as You taught Your disciples to pray, saying:

**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.**

Old Testament Reading

[Reader: Nikki Smith]

Isaiah 2:12-18

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Mark 13:32-36

Reader: The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

People: **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

O Love That Will Not Let Me Go

--Lyrics: George Matheson; Music: Kevin Twit

Voice

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'O Love That Will Not Let Me Go'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are: 'O love that will not let me go I rest my wear - y soul in Thee. I give Thee back the life I owe that in Thine o - cean depths its flow may rich - er ful - ler be.'

O love that will not let me go I rest
my wear - y soul in Thee. I give Thee back
the life I owe that in Thine o - cean depths
its flow may rich - er ful - ler be.

O Light, that follow'st all my way, I yield my flick'ring torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day, may brighter, fairer be.

O Joy, that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain, And feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross, that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red, Life that shall endless be.

New Testament Reading

2 Peter 3:1-18

This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, ³ knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. ⁴ They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, ⁶ and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

11Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, **12**waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! **13**But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. **14**Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. **15**And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, **16**as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

17You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. **18**But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

Rev. Charles Garland

The Table

Confession of Faith

--The Heidelberg Catechism, Question #1

We use the ancient creeds to reinforce our confidence in God's grace, and to highlight our connection to his people around the world who worship him with these same words every Lord's Day.

Minister: What is your only comfort in life and death?

People: **That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by His Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for Him.**

Invitation and Prayer

[Communion, also called The Lord's Supper or the Eucharist, is the family meal of Christians. We invite all committed followers of Jesus Christ to partake of this sacrament: those who are baptized members of a congregation which proclaims the gospel, 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 spend this time in prayer.]

The Sursum Corda (Lift Up Your Hearts)

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to our Lord God.

All: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

The Words of Institution

The Mystery of Faith

Minister: Therefore, let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

**All: Christ has died. Christ is risen.
Christ will come again!**

Minister: Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

Minister: The gifts of God for the people of God.

The Giving of the Bread and Cup

[As you are ready please come forward down the center aisle.. Take bread and eat it, then take a cup and drink. If you prefer grape juice and/or a gluten free wafer, they are available on the middle table. Please return down the outside aisles.]

Come Ye Sinners

Lyrics: Joseph Hart Music: Southern Harmony



Come ye sin-ners, poor and need-y, weak and wounded, sick and sore;



Je-sus rea-dy stands to save you, full of pit - y, - love and power.

Refrain



I will a-rise and go to Je-sus; he will em-brace me in his arms;



in the arms of my dear Sav - ior,



O there are ten - thou - sand charms.

Come, ye thirsty; come and welcome, God's free bounty glorify,
True belief and true repentance, Every grace that brings you nigh.
[Refrain]

Come, ye weary, heavy laden, Lost and ruined by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better, You will never come at all. [Refrain]

Lo! The incarnate God ascended Pleads the merit of His blood;
Venture on Him, venture wholly; Let no other trust intrude. [Refrain]

On Jordan's Stormy Banks

Lyrics: Samuel Stennett; Music: Christopher Miner

4 On Jor - dan's stor - my ba-nks I stand and
7 cast a wish-ful eye, to Can - aan's fair and
11 hap-py land, where my pos-ses-sions lie. I am bound, I am
14 bound, I am bound for Prom-ised La - nd. I am
bound, I am bound, I am bound for Prom-ised La - nd.

O'er all those wide extended plains, shines one eternal day;
There God the Son forever reigns, And scatters night away.

No chilling winds nor poisonous breath can reach that healthful
shore; Sickness, sorrow, pain and death, are felt and feared no more

When shall I reach that happy place, and be forever blessed?
When shall I see my Father's face, and in His bosom rest?

Benediction

Notes



Offering: We have placed an offering box at the back of the sanctuary that you can use as you enter or leave. Online, you can give at (www.mpctucson.org/donate). —>>

Email List: We send out the bulletin and announcements every week before worship and would love to include you. You can email Charles (charles@mpctucson.org) to get on the list.

New Small Group: Cameron Ward is going to lead a new small group for studying the Heidelberg Catechism and prayer. We will meet twice monthly at 7 p.m. beginning February 13th at the Jankowski's home ([317 E Canyon View Dr](#)). All are welcome. Keep in mind that we won't be serving dinner. Cameron will be using Kevin DeYoung's *The Good News We Almost Forgot* as a resource, but it's optional reading for the group. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Cameron at camward@gmail.com.

Ladies Spa Night @ the McRae's: (409 E. Lester St). Feb 17, 7pm. Bring your nail polish, face masks, foot baths, etc to share in a night of pampering.

Men's Book Group: Wednesday Night, 2/15 at 7:00 at the McReynold's ([1241 E Sobre Lomas](#)). We are reading Christ and Culture by Richard Niebuhr.

Nursery Changes: Beginning on 2/26 we are going to be separating our nursery during the service between Ages 0-3 and Ages 3-6. We are working on adding a children's church for Ages 6-7 during the sermon, but aren't ready to roll that out just yet. Stay tuned!

Church Potluck: February 26th after church. Please bring your favorite dishes to share! The only request is to bring a serving utensil for your dish. We will have back up ones if need be! Sign up for food on the Google doc —>>, and talk to Cara Scott with any questions.



Super Bowl Party: (Tape Delay!) Tonight after church at the Garland's (1324 N Norton Ave). We'll have snacks and drinks, but if you need more food bring it. Everyone is welcome.