

WORSHIP SERVICE

Northampton Presbyterian Church

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 26, 2023

10:00 AM

PRELUDE

Be Thou (My Vision)

Corinne Kauermann, violin

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- “Hunger in America” documentary, today at 11:30 AM.
- “Bible Study for Everyone,” Tuesday (3/28) at 10:30 AM.
- Sharing Session: “The Work and Faith of J.R.R. Tolkien” (pt. 2) with Corinne Kauermann, Tuesday (3/28) at 2 PM.
- Session Visioning Retreat, Saturday (4/1).

CALL TO WORSHIP

El Banquete Ya Está Listo /

Come, the Banquet Hall Is Ready

CANTO DE COMMUNION

Verses 1 & 2 - Choir

Come, the banquet hall is ready, preparations are complete.

Christ himself has spread the table, see how lavish is the feast.

Ev'ryone has been invited, There's enough to go around.

Here the sweetest Bread is given, here the finest Wine is found.

Here the sweetest Bread is given, here the finest Wine is found.

*God, we're hungry for an honest wage,
For housing and for bread.
Strengthen us with this Communion
For the struggles still ahead.*

*We accept the way of Jesus at this gath'ring in his name;
He who gave his life for others calls us now to do the same.
He is living still among us in the people seeking truth.
He is living in our struggles, in the righteous things we do.
He is living in our struggles, in the righteous things we do.*

*God, we're hungry for an honest wage,
For housing and for bread.
Strengthen us with this Communion
For the struggles still ahead.*

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ONE: In the midst of fear and anger; in the midst of mayhem and destruction, God calls us. And we respond:

MANY: “With everything else going on, who has time for a feast? We're busy, we'll get around to eating eventually.”

ONE: In the midst of our anxiety, our worry; in the midst of bill-paying and appointments, God invites us. And...

MANY: We are tempted to just grab a bite, a sandwich between errands, a snack we can eat while driving, or checking email, or working on today's big project.

ONE: And God says, “The feast is spread! All are invited, all are welcome!”

MANY: We are invited. We are welcome. We are worthy.

ONE: How will we respond?

(We pause for a moment of silent, personal confession.)

RESPONSIVE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: God pours blessings upon us, even as we choose to go our own way. God is present and seeks to bring healing and wholeness to all.

MANY: Praise be to God, our sins are forgiven. God's steadfast love endures forever! Amen!

HYMN

Glory Be to the Father

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.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING (IN UNISON)

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they

comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Luke 14:15-24

SERMON

No More Lame Excuses!

Rev. Judith A. Dwyer

HYMN

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

ST COLUMBA

**The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
And he is mine for ever.**

**Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul he leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.**

**Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
Thy unction, grace bestoweth;
And O what transport of delight
From thy pure chalice floweth!**

**And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
Within thy house for ever.**

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

(Scan the QR Code to give online →)

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

When You Prayed Beneath the Trees

Larson



DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**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.**

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 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

HYMN

A King Planned a Party

ASH GROVE

A king planned a party — a feast, rich and hearty.

He sent invitations to all of his guests.

So what could be better than getting a letter

And being invited and welcomed and blessed?

“My work needs attention,” said one, “Not to mention,

My family is growing. There's so much to do.”

“My farm,” said another, “Is big, and — oh, brother —

I'm busy with hobbies I want to pursue.”

“The wedding is ready! My guests are not worthy!”

The king told his servants when nobody came.

“So go search the alleys, the hills and the valleys,

And bring in the poor and the blind and the lame.”

That day there was singing and halls that were ringing

With laughter and joy in that wonderful place.

For those who attended knew how they depended

Upon the king's generous mercy and grace.

**O God, you invite us! You seek to delight us.
Your table is ready for those who say “Yes!”
Do we make excuses when you want to choose us
To sit at your table, forgiven and blessed?
And, Lord, as you welcome us into your kingdom,
May we reach to welcome the world by your grace.
You love the outsider. Now may we reach wider
To welcome the world with your loving embrace.**

BENEDICTION

El Banquete Ya Está Listo /

Come, the Banquet Hall Is Ready Broken *CANTO DE COMMUNION*

Verses 3 & 4 – Sung by ALL

How can we begin to thank you for this sacrifice of love;

For this great and gentle myst'ry, giving up yourself as food?

Food to fill a starving people longing for a better day,

Organizing with their neighbors, struggling hard to find their way.

Organizing with their neighbors, struggling hard to find their way.

**God, we're hungry for an honest wage,
For housing and for bread.
Strengthen us with this Communion
For the struggles still ahead.**

This is how we wish to thank you for the life you freely give:

We will follow your example in the way we choose to live.

We will share with one another, we will not let justice wait.

We will sow the seeds of freedom in the place where once grew hate.

We will sow the seeds of freedom in the place where once grew hate.

**God, we're hungry for an honest wage,
For housing and for bread.
Strengthen us with this Communion
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POSTLUDE

Be Still My Soul

arr. Marilyn Ham

During Lent, we have been exploring the meaning of “the table” and who and what we hunger for, in our church, our community, our nation and our world.

Today following coffee hour we will be watching the film documentary “Hunger in America,” a powerful documentary tackling the hunger epidemic in America. The film seeks to answer the question of who is hungry in our nation.

For more information about who is hungry in America and how you can help, go to: [Feeding America](#)

WORSHIP NOTES:

The hymn sung as the **Call to Worship** was translated from Spanish into English by Bret Hesla and William Dexheimer-Pharris. In the mid-1980s, composer Guillermo Cuéllar composed the folk mass *La Misa Popular Salvadoreña* as a result of a commission from Archbishop Oscar Romero. Romero was assassinated while celebrating mass in El Salvador. Cuéllar himself was forced into exile for ten years due to threats on his life.

The **Prayer of Confession** is adapted from a prayer written by Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy, Pastor at First Church Congregational, Rochester, NH. She blogs at <http://sermonizing.wordpress.com>

The **Sermon Hymn**, “A King Planned a Party,” is written by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette and used with her permission. Text: Copyright © 2014 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. Included in *I Sing to My Savior: New Hymns from the Stories in the Gospel of Luke* (2022)

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The **Opening Hymn**, “Come, the Banquet Hall is Ready,” is licensed for use by CCLI.

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WORSHIP NOTES:

The **Prayers of the People** include the prayer commonly known as “The Romero Prayer.” This prayer was composed by the late Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw, drafted for a homily by Cardinal John Dearden in November 1979 for a celebration of departed priests. As a reflection on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Bishop Romero, Bishop Untener included in a reflection book a passage titled "The mystery of the Romero Prayer." The mystery is that the words of the prayer are commonly attributed to Oscar Romero, but they were never spoken by him. Pope Francis used the “magnificent” prayer in December 2015 in his Christmas address to the Roman Curia.

The confusion seems to have arisen from a major paper on Catholic education given by Westminster’s Cardinal Basil Hume on 6 January 1997 where he quoted the prayer but, for reasons it is now impossible to fathom, misattributed it to Archbishop Romero. His paper was subsequently published in a the ‘Briefing’ documentary service on 20 February 1997. The prayer was then picked up by Caritas Internationalis in Rome and CAFOD in London – both of whom included it (together with the misattribution to Archbishop Romero) in materials being used for their strategic planning processes in the run-up to the Millennium Jubilee. Thereafter the beautiful prayer went around the global Church and, not surprisingly, it became known as ‘The Romero Prayer’.