

WORSHIP SERVICE

Northampton Presbyterian Church

Second Sunday in Lent

February 25, 2024

10:00 AM

PRELUDE

Descend, Celestial Dove

Shea

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Christian Life Groups, today following the worship service.
- Bible Study for Everyone, Tuesday (2/27) at 11 AM.
- Women's Breakfast at Manny's, Wednesday (2/28) at 9 AM.
- Red Cross Blood Drive, Wednesday (2/28) from 1 PM—6 PM.
- Session Retreat at NPC, Saturday (3/2) at 8:30 AM.

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: God welcomes the dreamers and the doubters,

MANY: The courageous and the fearful,

ONE: The hungry and the hopeful,

MANY: The impatient and the reserved.

ONE: God welcomes the young and the old,

MANY: The poets and the prophets,

ONE: The faithful and the tired,

MANY: The curious and the convicted.

ONE: Wherever you are on your journey, wherever your boat is
at sea,

**MANY: There is room for all to gather here. This is God's house.
Let us worship the one whom even the seas obey.**

HYMN

God Is Here!

ABBOTT'S LEIGH

**God is here! As we your people
Meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure
What it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us,
All our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of the Spirit
Into open minds and hearts.**

**Here are symbols to remind us
Of our lifelong need of grace;
Here are table, font and pulpit;
Here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching,
Here in silence, as in speech,
Here, in newness and renewal,
God the Spirit comes to each.**

**Here our children find a welcome
In the Shepherd's flock and fold;
Here as bread and wine are taken,
Christ sustains us as of old.**

**Here the servants of the Servant
Seek in worship to explore
What it means in daily living
To believe and to adore.**

**Lord of all, of church and kingdom,
In an age of change and doubt,
Keep us faithful to the gospel;
Help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication,
All we have to give, receive:
We, who cannot live without you,
We adore you! We believe!**

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, there are days that threaten to swallow us, days when the storms of life feel too big. In those moments, we often cling to the sides of our ships in fear, spending more energy hiding from storms than looking for you. Forgive us for doubting ourselves. Forgive us for doubting you. Rescue us from the storms of today and from the fears that trap us. With hope in our hearts we pray, amen.

We pause for a moment of silent, personal confession.

RESPONSIVE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: Family of faith, you could get out of the boat and walk on water like Peter, or fall to your knees and stay in one place. No matter what you do, Christ's love for you is unchanging. Fearful or brave, faithful or doubting, Christ is always walking toward you. So hear and believe this good news: God's love is stronger than any storms. On our best days, and on our worst days, we are seen, forgiven, and loved. God is always walking toward you.

MANY: Thanks be to God! Amen.

HYMN

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me *GLORY TO GOD*

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.**

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen

World without end, without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

PSALTER READING

Psalm 22:23-31

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Matthew 14:22-33

SERMON

Beyond the Wind

Rev. Judith A. Dwyer

UNISON AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in a God who moves toward me when storms rage. I believe in a God who invites me to be brave. I believe in a God whom the wind and waves obey. I believe in a God who knows my name. I believe in a God of love. I am not afraid. Amen.

HYMN

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

PRECIOUS LORD

Precious Lord, take my hand;

Lead me on, help 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;
Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me home.**

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

(Scan the QR Code to give online →)



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

On Eagles' Wings

Joncas and Wagner

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.**

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

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 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

My Life Flows On

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

**My life flows on in endless song,
Above earth's lamentation.
I hear the clear, though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?**

**Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing?
No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?**

What though my joys and comforts die?

I know my Savior liveth.

What though the darkness gather round?

Songs in the night he giveth.

No storm can shake my inmost calm

While to that Rock I'm clinging.

Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,

How can I keep from singing?

**The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,
A fountain ever springing!
All things are mine since I am his!
How can I keep from singing?
No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?**

BENEDICTION

Blessing that Bears the Wind, the Wave

I pray...

That we will risk

The drenching by which we

Are drawn toward the voice that calls us,

The love that catches us, (and)

The faith that carries us beyond the wind,

The wave. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Cantabile

Beethoven

CLG Questions

1. Where are you in this story? Who are you in this story? Imagine the scene and place yourself in it. What message do you hear from God?
2. When have you felt overwhelmed by life's storms? How did you get through it? How do you find calm even in the middle of the storm?
3. Does it help you to remember the end of this story? How does knowing the outcome give you strength in the moment?
4. Do you admire Peter for getting out of the boat or do you lament his doubt once he is on the water? Both? When have you gotten out of the boat, metaphorically speaking? What happened as a result?

WORSHIP NOTES:

This Lenten season, we are focusing on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples. In Peter, we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter, we often see ourselves. By following Peter's journey, we watch the story of Jesus unfold through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out—just like us.

In studying Peter's faith journey, the lyrics of "Come Thou Fount" come to mind. It's as if Peter himself wrote this song. And so, for each step in Peter's journey, a phrase from this hymn has been selected. As we follow Peter's story, we will sing our way through Lent, binding our wandering hearts to God.

As we journey, we want to affirm that faith is a constant walk of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows. We want to affirm that wandering is exploration, not necessarily distance from God. We want to affirm the ways Peter keeps going: he drops his nets, he walks on water, he runs to the empty tomb, he swims to the shore to meet the risen Christ. He keeps searching and yearning and loving, even after missteps or mistakes. Ultimately, in Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people—in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls.

This Lent, we will look for ourselves in the stepping stones of Peter's story. We will reflect on the stages of our own faith journeys as well as who and what has shaped us along the way. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.

WORSHIP NOTES:

The **Call to Worship**, **Prayer of Confession**, **Assurance of Pardon** and **Prayer for Illumination** are written by Rev. Sarah A. Speed and posted on *A Sanctified Art*. A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

The **Psalm Setting** is composed by Emily R. Brink using fragments of the hymn, “What Wondrous Love Is This?” and found in *Psalms For All Seasons*, Martin Tel, Editor. Harm. © 1987 Faith Alive Christian Resources.

The **Prayers of the People** are written by Thom M. Shuman and posted on his blog, *lectionaryliturgies*. blogspot.com. © Thom M. Shuman

The **Benediction** is written by Jan Richardson and posted on her blog, *The Painted Prayerbook*, at paintedprayerbook.com. ©Jan Richardson.

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