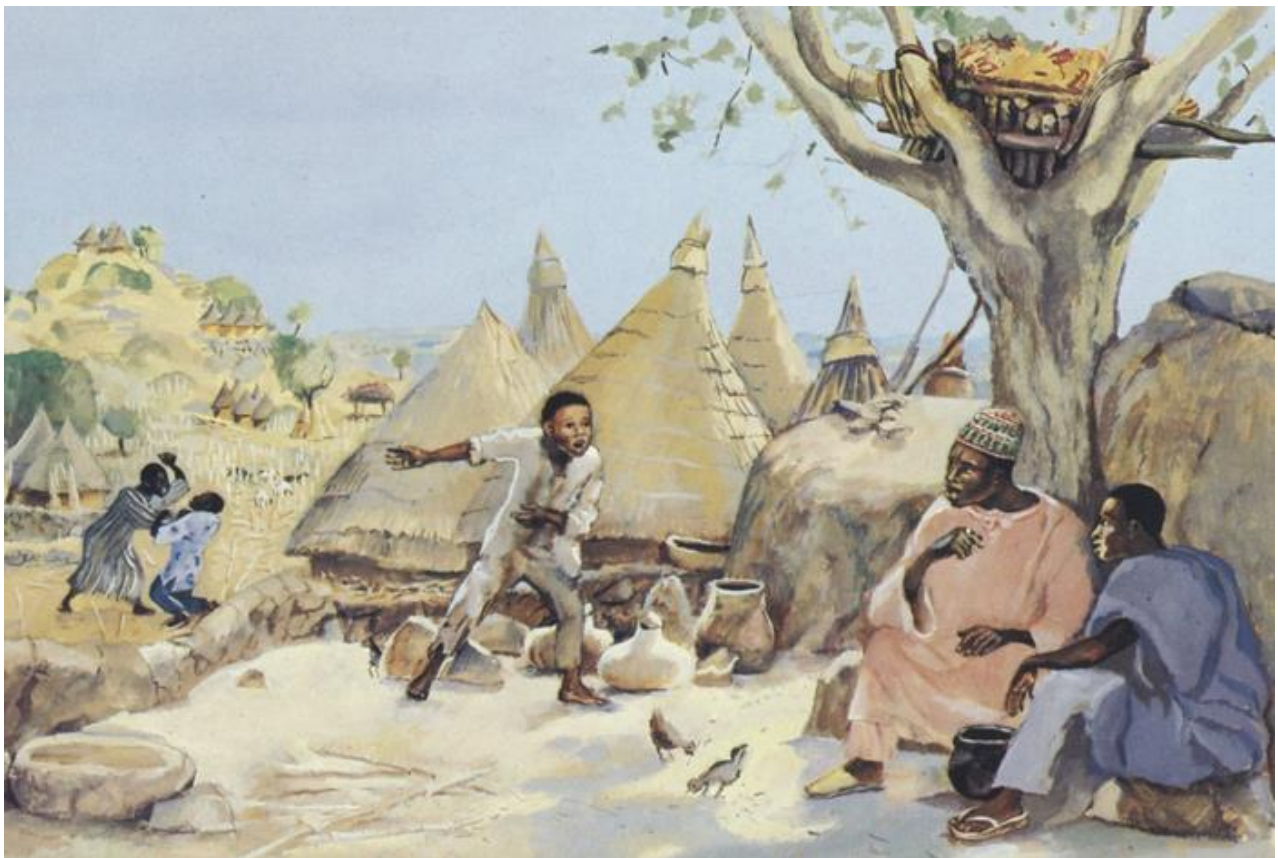


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Gathering those who fear they are not enough,  
so we may experience grace, wholeness, and renewal as God's beloved.

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*The Unforgiving Servant*, Jesus Mafa Community, 1973  
from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN

## PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

*Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.*

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

# *We Gather to Praise God*

## PRELUDE AND RINGING OF THE BELL

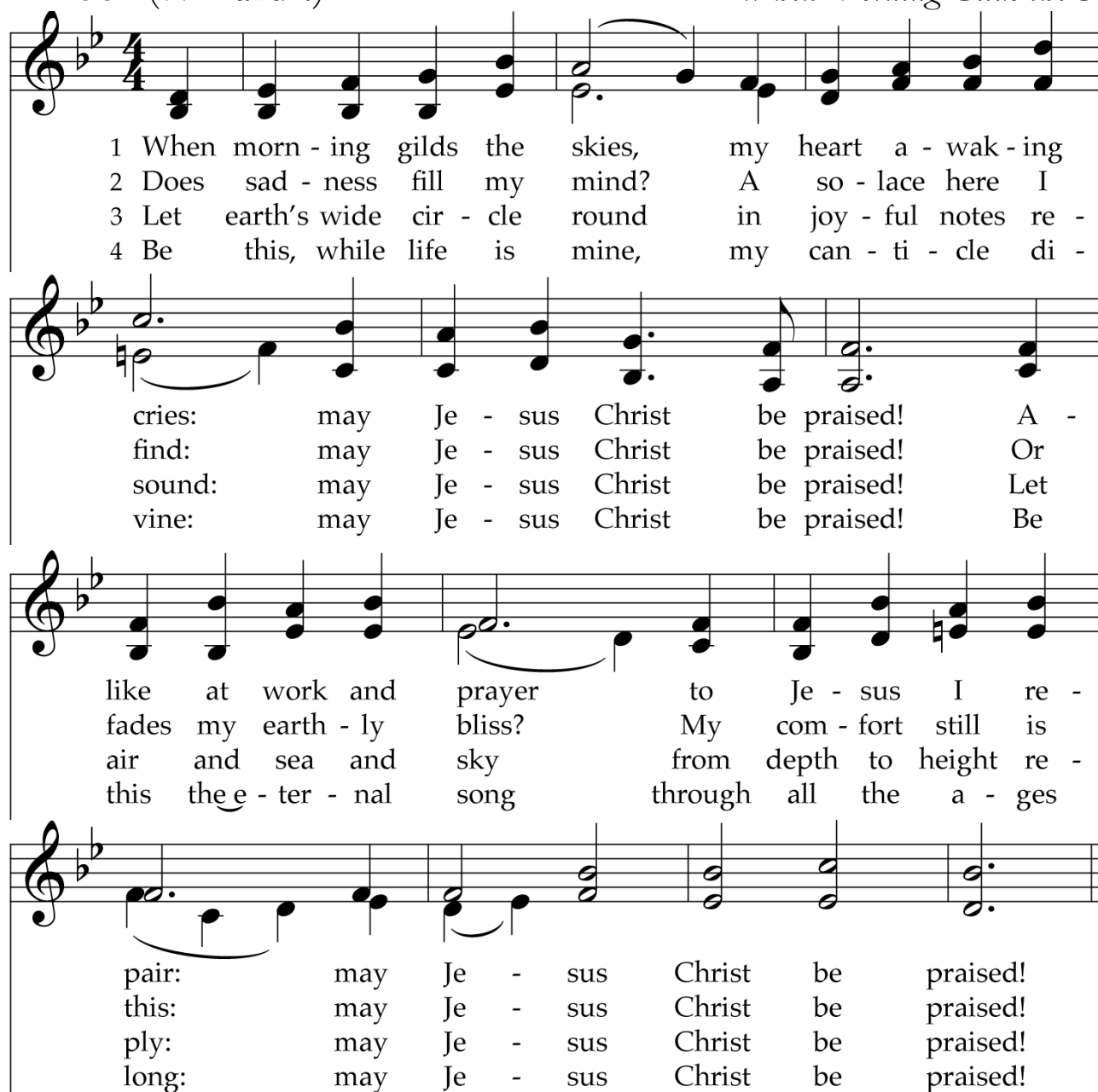
*To a Wild Rose*

Edward MacDowell (1860-1908)

## WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

### \* HYMN 667 (vv. 1 and 4)

*When Morning Gilds the Skies*



1 When morn - ing gilds the skies, my heart a - wak - ing  
2 Does sad - ness fill my mind? A so - lace here I  
3 Let earth's wide cir - cle round in joy - ful notes re -  
4 Be this, while life is mine, my can - ti - cle di -

cries: may Je - sus Christ be praised! A -  
find: may Je - sus Christ be praised! Or  
sound: may Je - sus Christ be praised! Let  
vine: may Je - sus Christ be praised! Be

like at work and prayer to Je - sus I re -  
fades my earth - ly bliss? My com - fort still is  
air and sea and sky from depth to height re -  
this the e - ter - nal song through all the a - ges

pair: may Je - sus Christ be praised!  
this: may Je - sus Christ be praised!  
ply: may Je - sus Christ be praised!  
long: may Je - sus Christ be praised!

This is not just a morning hymn, though this excerpt from an English translation of an early 19th-century German text may not convey how thoroughly the original deals with different kinds of time throughout the day. The tune was composed as a setting for this English text.

TEXT: German hymn, c. 1800; trans. Edward Caswall, 1853, 1858, alt.  
MUSIC: Joseph Barnby, 1868

LAUDES DOMINI  
6.6.6.D

*\* Please stand in body or spirit*

## DRAW NEAR TO GOD'S LOVE AND GRACE

O God who is love, you have called us to love you with heart, soul, and being,  
and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

The faith Jesus proclaimed is the active faith of discipleship.

But we seem to have misunderstood the nature of faith.

All too often, we turn faith into something private and personal,  
something that exists only in our minds, invisible to those around us.

All too often, church congregations act as though discipleship is optional.

Forgive us when we fail to be Christ's body in the world.

Grant us your Spirit. Empower us to be a community that nurtures disciples,  
living out our faith for all to see.

*Silence for personal reflection*

## SUNG RESPONSE

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly.

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Al-le-lu - ia!

TEXT and MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1982

Text and Music © 1991 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

CONFITEMINI DOMINO

Irregular

## RECEIVE GOD'S LOVE, GRACE, AND PEACE

### \* SING GLORY TO GOD

Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry in the high-est!  
Glo-ri-a, glo-ri-a, in ex-cel-sis De-o!

Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!  
Glo-ri-a, glo-ri-a, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text

MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1979

Music © 1979, 1981 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

GLORIA (Taizé)

# **We Listen for God's Word**

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

### **FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON**

Exodus 14:19-31

*The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. <sup>20</sup>It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.*

*<sup>21</sup>Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided.*

*<sup>22</sup>The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. <sup>23</sup>The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. <sup>24</sup>At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. <sup>25</sup>He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."*

*<sup>26</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." <sup>27</sup>So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. <sup>28</sup>The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. <sup>29</sup>But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.*

*<sup>30</sup>Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup>Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.*

**ONE:** The Word of the Lord.

**ALL:** Thanks be to God.

### **WORD IN MUSIC**

*Come to Me*

arr. Dan Forrest (b. 1978)

## SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 18:21-35

*Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’* <sup>22</sup>*Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.*

<sup>23</sup>*‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.’*

ONE: The Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

**SERMON**

EMPOWERED TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE

James Sledge

## *We Respond to God's Word*

### **\* HYMN 444** (vv. 1, 2, 4)

*Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive*

1 "For - give our sins as we for - give," you taught us, Lord, to pray,  
2 How can your par - don reach and bless the un - for-giv - ing heart  
3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals the truth we dim - ly knew:  
4 Lord, cleanse the depths with-in our souls and bid re-sent-ment cease.

but you a - lone can grant us grace to live the words we say.  
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?  
what triv - ial debts are owed to us, how great our debt to you!  
Then, by your mer - cy rec - on - ciled, our lives will spread your peace.

Few petitions of the Lord's Prayer are as difficult to pray as this one, and we would not dare to pray it if we had to depend on ourselves rather than the example of forgiveness we are given in Jesus Christ. The shape note tune sets these words with appropriate sparseness.

TEXT: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1969, 1983, alt.

MUSIC: *Supplement to Kentucky Harmony*, 1820; harm. Margaret W. Mealy, 1985

Text © 1969, 1983 Rosamond E. Herklots

Music Harm. © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

DETROIT

CM

### **\* RESPONSE OF FAITH**

*adapted from Brian McLaren*

We believe that God the Father, Good Creator and giver of life, calls us to love all creation and care for it as respectful stewards, to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. We believe that Jesus Christ is God come to save and lead us, who teaches us to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We see Jesus in the poor, oppressed, condemned, and forgotten, and so we embrace all people with God's true compassion. We believe that by the Holy Spirit, God unites us in the eternal dance of love, empowers us diversely to serve and love, and fills us that we may overflow with grace, truth, beauty, and life as Christ's agents in this world.

## **BLESSING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**

Diane Maloney

*This Blessing of the School Year is extended to all teachers, students, counselors, administrators, parents, and families in our community working through the complexities of a new, virtual school year.*

ONE: Oh Lord of Life and Love,

**ALL: Hear our prayer.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Tim Stufft

ONE: Lord in your mercy,

**ALL: Hear our prayer.**

*The Prayers of the People are offered on behalf of and with the congregation, usually by an elder currently serving on Session (governing council) or other members of the congregation.*

*Please keep in your prayers...*

Audrey McDowell, mother of Shelly Skomra, in treatment for multiple myeloma  
Educators, administrators, and students, as they face the challenges of online learning during the pandemic

Laura Rainey and Meg Foreman on the celebration of their marriage on August 22  
Theresa Brown, following foot surgery on August 17, and for her family as they support her in her recovery

Those who have lost jobs because of the coronavirus pandemic

Staff and residents of elder care facilities everywhere

First responders, health care providers, caregivers, essential employees, and all who are putting their lives at risk during the coronavirus pandemic

*Continued prayers for...*

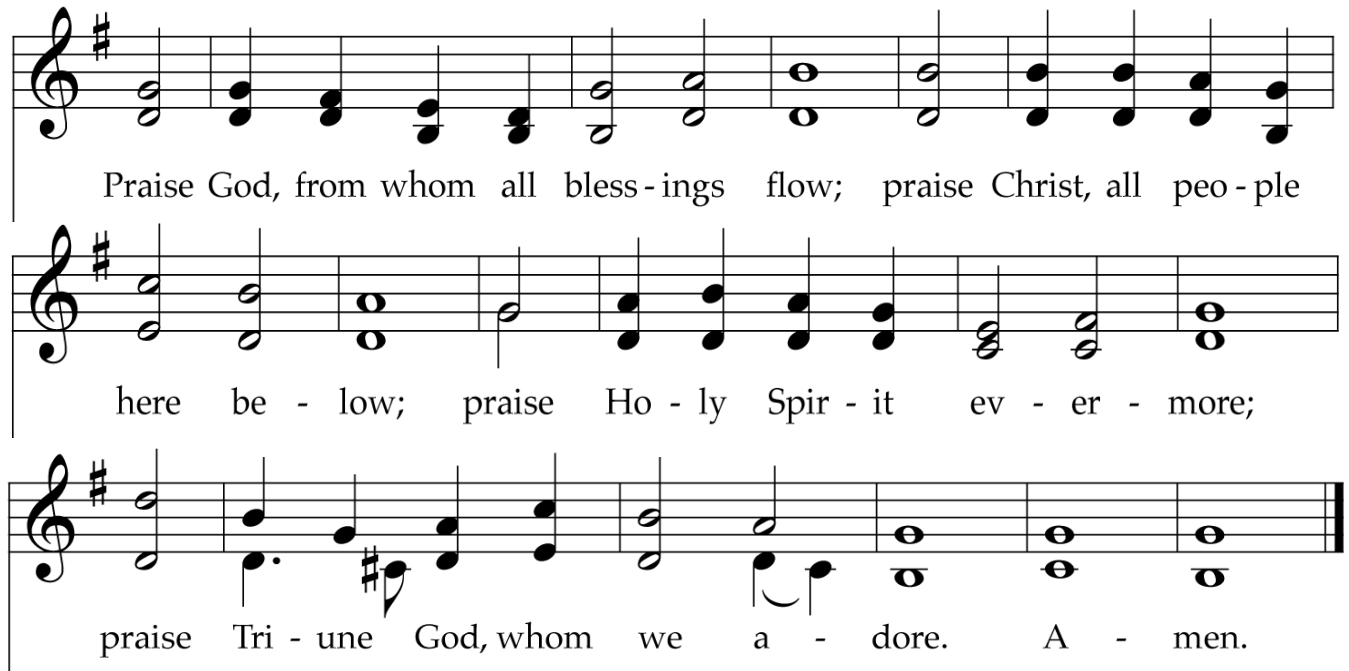
Kris Barth, Brenda Buchly, Avery Burns, Chuck and Marty Campbell, Bobbie Conlan, Judy Cornier, Soledad Cuzzi, Sgt. John R. Goldsmith, Steve Graff, Mike Hugo, Linda Issacson, Doug Jonas, Nora Long, Nancy Lundien, Ruth Mileham, Bob Moore, Cheryl Naderman, Ruth Nowjack-Raymer, Cort Peret, Clint Peters, Laura Rainey, Stanley Rusher, Mark Seklecki, James Steele, Cathy Stewart, Lawson Swift, Doris Webb, Doris Williams, Charles Wirth, Christa Young

*Prayer requests can be sent to Pastor James at [prayers@fallschurchpresby.org](mailto:prayers@fallschurchpresby.org).*

## **OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD**

*Offertory*

## \* DOXOLOGY



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Christ, all peo - ple  
here be - low; praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more;  
praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore. A - men.

TEXT: Neil Weatherhogg, 1988  
MUSIC: Genevan Psalter, 1551  
Text © 1990 Neil Weatherhogg

OLD HUNDREDTH  
LM

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING 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 forever. Amen.

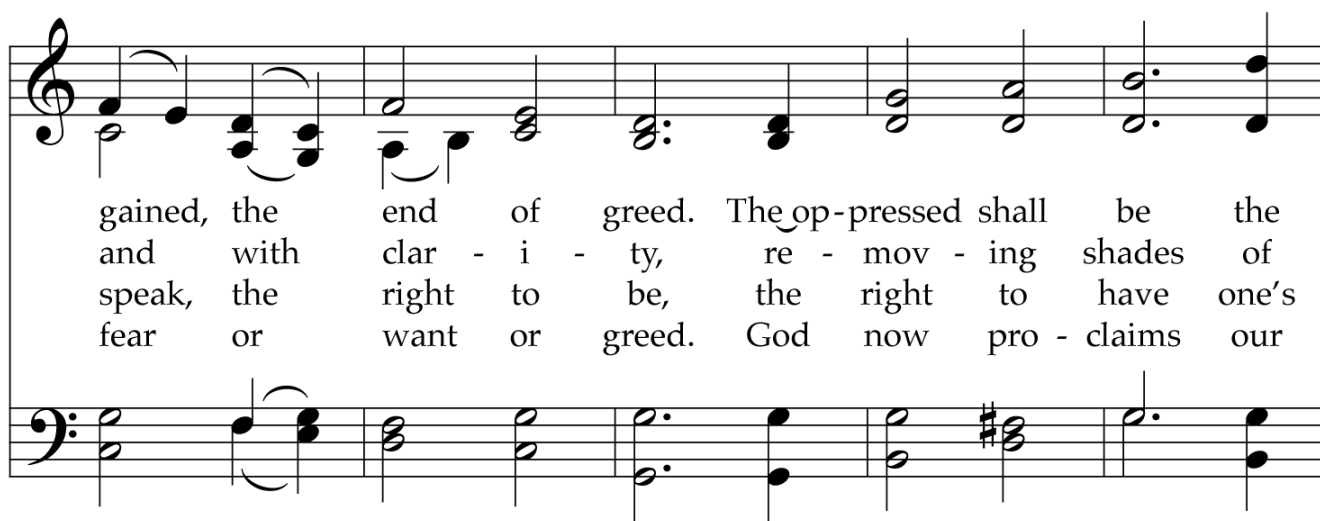


\* **HYMN 772** (vv. 1 and 4)

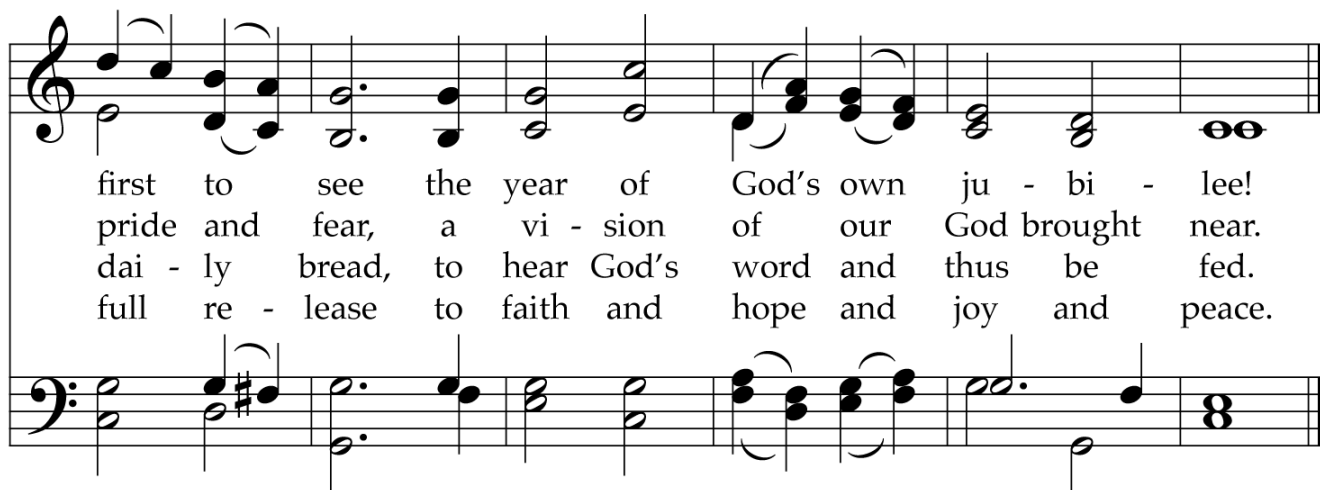
*Live into Hope*



1 Live in - to hope of cap - tives freed, of sight re -  
 2 Live in - to hope! The blind shall see with in - sight  
 3 Live in - to hope of lib - er - ty, the right to  
 4 Live in - to hope of cap - tives freed from chains of



gained, the end of greed. The op-pressed shall be the  
 and with clar - i - ty, re - mov - ing shades of  
 speak, the right to be, the right to have one's  
 fear or want or greed. God now pro - claims our



first to see the year of God's own ju - bi - lee!  
 pride and fear, a vi - sion of our God brought near.  
 dai - ly bread, to hear God's word and thus be fed.  
 full re - lease to faith and hope and joy and peace.

This text on Luke 4:16–20, the author's first, was written for the United Presbyterian Women's National Meeting in July 1976 because the team planning worship could not find a suitable hymn on that passage. She wrote the words with this vigorous 18th-century tune in mind.

**\* OUR LIFE TOGETHER AS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

**\* CHARGE AND BLESSING**

**POSTLUDE**

*Matrosenlied*

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

*Songs reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-721003*

### ***Supporting us in Worship***

Worship Leader	Tim Stufft
Audio/Video	Diane Maloney
Music	Andrew Jonas, tenor and saxophone; David Schoonover, baritone
Virtual Fellowship Hour Host	Kathy Chavez

*Falls Church Presbyterian belongs to the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, “working for the unity of the church, furthering the inclusion of LGBTQ persons, seeking understanding and reconciliation, and joining with others seeking a still more just and inclusive church.”*

The Rev. James Sledge, Pastor  
Diane Maloney, Director of Spiritual Growth and Community Engagement  
Noah Clark, Assistant Director of Youth Ministry  
The Rev. Megan Klose, Parish Associate  
The Rev. Rusty Lynn, Hon. Ret., Parish Associate  
David Schoonover, Music Coordinator  
Dr. Lisa Bloy, Organist



This Week at FCPC  
September 13-20, 2020

### Online Worship and Meetings

**Worship Service** – Sunday at 9:30 a.m. Join us for online worship at [www.fallschurchpresby.org/livestream](http://www.fallschurchpresby.org/livestream) or on our [FCPC Facebook page](#).

**Virtual Fellowship Hour** – Sunday at 10:45 a.m. Hosted by Kathy Chavez.  
[Zoom Meeting ID: 919 9132 3252](#)

**Tuesday Morning Prayer** – Tuesday at 8:45 a.m. Led by Becca Leland.  
[Zoom Meeting ID: 104 294 101](#)

**Blessing of the School Year, today, Sept. 13.** In this time of social and physical distancing, it is hard to carry out some of our traditions. At this time of year, we would typically gather for our Fall Kickoff Breakfast with a Blessing of the Backpacks. While we cannot gather for the meal, we know this school year comes with plenty of challenges, so we plan to do a virtual blessing for the school year in worship today.

**Virtual Fellowship Hour, 10:45 a.m.** Join us for online worship, then Zoom in for virtual fellowship hour! [Zoom Meeting ID: 919 9132 3252](#)

**Welcome Table, Sept. 16.** Our next Welcome Table is fast approaching. [Check out the volunteer opportunities and sign up here](#). If you would like to support Welcome Table with a financial contribution, you can mail a check to the church office or give through FCPC's secure [Online Giving](#) link.

**Chancel Choir resumes virtual practice Sept. 17.** Just like the Holy Spirit who is working within all of us, we strive to continue to work and change lives unseen. The Chancel Choir will begin the fall season virtually on Thursday, Sept. 17 at 7:30 p.m. We will continue to spread God's message of love, peace, and justice through the music we provide for Falls Church Presbyterian. Join us if you are a seventh grader or older as we work together during this time of uncertainty and help us create new ways to praise and glorify His name. Contact [David Schoonover](#) for the Zoom link.

**Called Congregational Meeting, Sept. 20.** The Session has called a congregational meeting following worship on Sept. 20 to elect a Congregational Nominating Committee (CNC) and to vote on the sale of an easement to the City of Falls Church for a pedestrian traffic signal to be installed on Broad Street. A communication describing the project in detail was sent out on Sept. 9. The CNC nominees are Jay Campbell (Chair) and Sue Armstrong representing Session; Kathy Chavez representing Deacons; and Eric Munson, Bonnie Seklecki, Alan Shankle, and Anne Mugler from the congregation at large. Congregational representatives may be nominated from the floor at the meeting, but please secure the permission of anyone you might intend to nominate. [Zoom Meeting ID: 919 9132 3252](#).

**In-person gathering for youth, Sept. 20.** We're getting the band back together! We will gather in the church parking lot to kick off our new program year and our "Make It Count" series. This gathering will be one hour in length, 100% outside, and 100% masked up! We will also meet in two different groups at different times: Middle school (grades 6-8) at 4 p.m. and high school (grades 9-12) at 5 p.m.

**Outdoor evening worship, Sept. 27.** Yes, this will be in person worship. We are planning a short, twice-monthly prayer service with communion in the church parking lot at 6:30 p.m. Worshipers will need to bring lawn chairs from home, wear masks, and also bring their own elements for communion. We also ask that you [let the office know](#) if you plan to attend so we have some idea of numbers.

**Next round of Gathering Groups.** Our third series of Gathering Groups will focus on Henri Nouwen's book, *Life of the Beloved*. Groups will meet weekly for 45 minutes to discuss the book and share conversation. Please fill out [this simple questionnaire](#) to help us in the planning. Groups will begin the week of Sept. 20 and run through the week of Oct. 25.

**Drop & Dash a big success!** FCPC collected hundreds of pounds of food, personal toiletries, baby items, \$435 in gift cards and cash to go toward our hunger ministries, and a mountain of pop tabs! Thanks to everyone who Dropped & Dashed! And thank you to the volunteers who staffed all four days—Sue Armstrong, Abbie Freeman, the Growney family, the Kasten family, Tom Koger, Marsha Schuyler, Shelly Skomra, and Gail Warner. Food and toiletries were delivered to Knox Food Pantry to help replenish their inventory. [Falls Church Community Service Council, Inc.](#) maintains the food pantry at [Knox Presbyterian Church](#). The Pop Tabs will help support operating costs at the [Ronald McDonald House of Northern Virginia](#).

**God sightings?** You are invited to share a photo that captures a time or place where you have experienced God. Photos submitted by noon each Wednesday will be considered for use at the opening of our virtual worship service. Email images to [office@fallschurchpresby.org](mailto:office@fallschurchpresby.org).