

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2024

Pacific Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

SECOND SUNDAY in LENT

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: With heart and soul and voices we come to worship.
All: **We seek to love and serve the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and strength and mind.**
One: So come to give thanks and praise.
All: **We come to rejoice in the goodness of the Lord our God.**

***OPENING HYMN** “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” GtG 366 [Tune 761]

1. **Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling;
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion;
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation;
enter every trembling heart.**

2. **Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit
into every troubled breast;
let us all in thee inherit;
let us find the promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning,
set our hearts at liberty.**

3. **Come, Almighty to deliver;
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.**

(continued...)

**Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.**

- 4. Finish then thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee:
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

Words: Charles Wesley, 1747, alt.
Music: BEECHER, John Zundel, 1870
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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from I John 4)*

One: "In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us and sent the Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven."

All: **So rejoice and believe the good news of God's grace: that in Jesus Christ we are forgiven, in Jesus Christ we are loved. Amen. Alleluia!**

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 12:28-37

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON “The ‘Why’s and ‘Wherefore’s of Love” by Pastor Bill Vincent

*HYMN “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart” GtG 688 (*Verses 1, 3, & 5*)

1. **Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;
stoop to my weakness, mighty as thou art,
and make me love thee as I ought to love.**

3. **Hast thou not bid us love thee, God and King;
all, all thine own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind?
I see thy cross; there teach my heart to cling.
O let me seek thee, and O let me find!**

5. **Teach me to love thee as thine angels love,
one holy passion filling all my frame;
the baptism of the heaven-descended Dove,
my heart an altar, and thy love the flame.**

Words: George Croly, 1867

Music: MORECAMBE, Frederick Cook Atkinson, 1870
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*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

One: How do you live for the love of God?

All: **I love because God first loved me. God loves me in Christ with a love that never ends. Amazed by grace, I no longer live for myself. I live for the Lord who died and rose again, triumphant over death, for my sake. Therefore, I take those around me to heart, especially those in particular need, knowing that Christ died for them no less than for me.**

(from *The Study Catechism: Full Version*, Copyright ©1998 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: God, in your mercy...

All: **...hear our prayer.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Contemporary)

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

In thanks and praise we acknowledge the many gifts you have given us in love, O God. Accept now our offerings of resources and self as a sign of our commitment to love you with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN** "Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me" GtG 703

- 1. Jesus, thy boundless love to me
no thought can reach, no tongue declare;
O knit my thankful heart to thee,
and reign without a rival there!
Thine wholly, thine alone, I'd live;
myself to thee entirely give.**
- 2. O grant that nothing in my soul
may dwell, but thy pure love alone;
O may thy love possess me whole,
my joy, my treasure, and my crown!
All coldness from my heart remove;
may every act, word, thought be love.**

(continued...)

3. **O Love, how gracious is thy way!
All fear before thy presence flies;
care, anguish, sorrow melt away
where'er thy healing beams arise.
O Jesus, nothing may I see,
nothing desire, or seek, but thee.**

Words: Paul Gerhardt, 1653; trans. John Wesley, ca. 1739, alt.
Music: ST. CATHERINE, Henri Frederick Hemy, 1864; alt.
James George Walton, 1874
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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...Amen.

POSTLUDE

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