

DOWNTOWN

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



“What if?”

Celebration of Worship

Sunday, February 28, 2021,

[Click Here to Listen](#)

Prelude

Après un Rêve

Gabriel Fauré

Lee Wright, violin, Jason Cloen, piano

Words of Welcome

The Rev. Deborah Fae Swift

Chime

Introit

Day by Day

Martin How

“Day by day, dear God, of thee three things I pray.

To see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly,

Follow thee more nearly, day by day.”

Text: Prayer of St. Richard of Chichester (c.1197-1253)

Call to Worship

Kim McConnell

Adapted from: www.highlandspreschurh.org/uploads/3/4/3/6/34369588/200920_bulletin.pdf

Come, let us give thanks to God together,

for our God is faithful and true!

Let us sing songs and make music together,

for God sang us into being and sings to us still!

Let us watch for signs of God’s presence among us,

for our God never leaves us nor forsakes us!

Let us remember all the wonderful things God has done,

for God is always faithful to God’s promises!

1. The God of Abraham praise,
Who reigns enthroned above;
The ancient of eternal days,
The God of Love!
The Lord, the great I Am,
By earth and heaven confessed,
We bow before Your holy name,
Forever blest.

2. You have eternal life
Implanted in the soul;
Your love shall be our strength and stay,
While ages roll.
We praise You, living God!
We praise Your holy name;
The first, the last, beyond all thought,
And still the same!

Centering Prayer (unison)

Kim McConnell

We hear your call to trust you, sweet Spirit. You have been calling out to us for millennia, but some days our stresses and doubts are even more real to us than your call, and trust is elusive. Remind us of Abram and how he dared to believe in your promises. Re-Mind us into you, Perfect Mind. With your help, we confront our fears and struggles, and we call upon you to bring us back to you, the Ground of our Being. God of the covenant, as you promised Abram descendants as numerous as the stars, you have also promised us that we might live under those stars as your people, faithful and loved. Show us how to live as One, and how to nurture all your children with whom we share the same canopy of sky night after night. Amen.

Old Testament Reading (unison) Genesis 17:1-7

Kim McConnell

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ² And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³ Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴ "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵ No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶ I will make

you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Music for Reflection O, Pray for the peace of Jerusalem Herbert Howells
*“O pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls and plenteousness within thy palaces.
O pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee.”*
Psalm 122:6-7

New Testament Reading Romans 4:13-16, 19-25a
from *The Message* translation

Meditation What if? Rev. Swift
Portions quoted are from: Brown Taylor, Barbara. *Always A Guest* (pp. 27-34). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.
“The Sacramental Sky” preached at Duke University Chapel, Durham, North Carolina Second Sunday of Lent February 28, 2010.

Hymn Open My Eyes That I May See OPEN MY EYES
(Music may be found at the end of the bulletin)

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem The Eyes of All Wait Upon Thee William H. Harris
*“The eyes of all wait upon thee, O God: and thou givest them their meat in due season.
Thou openest thine hand: and fillest all things living with plenteousness.
For thou art righteous in all thy ways: and holy in all thy works.
For thou art nigh unto all them that call upon thee faithfully.
Thou wilt fulfill the desire of them that seek thee.
Thou also wilt hear their cry and wilt help them.
For thou preservest all them that love thee.”*
Text: Psalm 145 vv.15-20

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Let songs rise up from earth below;
Let stars and galaxies enthrone;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One! Amen.

Prayers for Healing and Transformation

Rev. Swift

Prayer of Jesus

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Spirit 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 Spirit, and the
power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Closing Hymn

For the Beauty of the Earth
(Music may be found at the end of the bulletin)

DIX

Benediction

Rev. Swift

Postlude

Improvisation on "For the Beauty of the Earth"

Thank you to . . .

Participants: Rev. Deb Swift, Kim McConnell,
Jason Cloen, Alan Jones, Anna Martin, and Lee Wright

Choir: Caitlin Glastonbury, Anna Martin, Kathryn Borden, Emmalouise St. Amand,
Mark Darling, Ben Magruder, Rob Brown, Alan Jones
Jason Cloen, organ, Lee Wright, conductor

Sound Engineers: Donald Fairman, David McDowell, Ben Magruder (Choral Music)

Website integration: Mark Anderson

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Open My Eyes, That I May See 451

1 O - pen my eyes, that I may see glimps - es of truth thou hast for me.
 2 O - pen my ears, that I may hear voic - es of truth thou send - est clear.
 3 O - pen my mouth, and let me bear glad - ly the warm truth ev - ery - where.

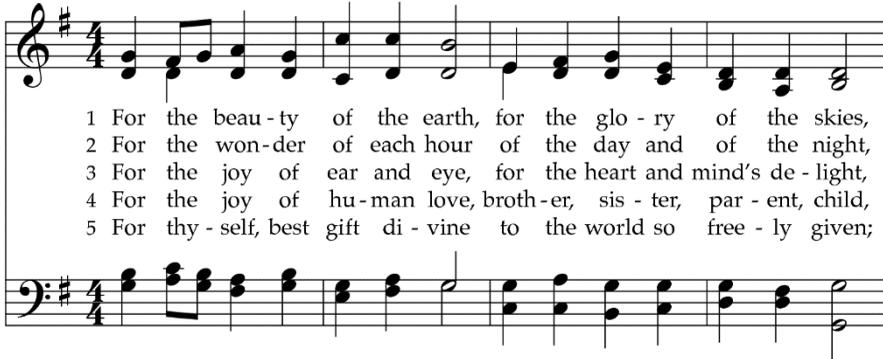
Place in my hands the won - der - ful key that shall un - clasp and
 And while the wave notes fall on my ear, ev - ery - thing false will
 O - pen my heart, and let me pre - pare love with thy chil - dren

set me free. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy
 dis - ap - pear. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy
 thus to share. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy

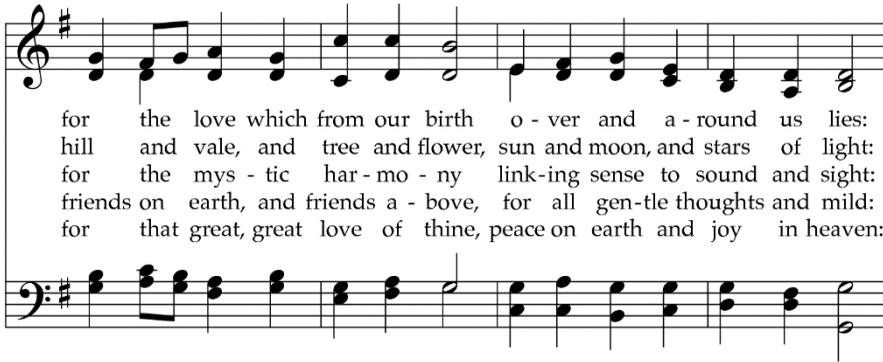
will to see. O - pen my eyes; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
 will to see. O - pen my ears; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
 will to see. O - pen my heart; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!

The first woman to publish a collection of her own anthems, this author/composer has created in this hymn a sung prayer for illumination. It not only asks God to help us understand Scripture but also prays for the strength and courage to make God's love known to others.

For the Beauty of the Earth 14



1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the glo - ry of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 5 For thy - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly given;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
 hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
 for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:

Refrain



Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

In the course of many revisions, the original eucharistic emphasis of this text has shifted to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wide range of human experience, with a Christological summation. It is set here to the tune that is customary in North America, though not elsewhere.

The Downtown Church Staff

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Theresa Reddick, Receptionist

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