

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Sunday, March 5, 2023

9:30 am

PRELUDE

“Prelude in G minor” by Clara Schumann

+ **Gathering** +

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE BELL

CONFESSION

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God, Have mercy on us.

We confess that we have turned from you and from neighbors claimed and loved by you.

We have given ourselves to the powers of sin at work in division, bickering, bullying, isolation, hatred, fear, and oppression.

We have sinned against you and your people in judgmental thoughts, careless words, and fearful deeds; by what we have said and done, and by what we have left unsaid and undone.

We have left members of our human family isolated and alone.

We have not confronted hatred and violence.

We have left our own privilege, sexism, and heteronormativity unexamined.

We have failed to notice and challenge gender oppression, racism, ageism, classism, ableism, sizeism, binary thinking, and all the other ways we oppress.

We have turned away from hunger and poverty, turned our backs on the suffering of most of our world.

We have loved our own comfort more than we have loved others.

We have put the norms of our own sexual orientation, gender, race, and class before our love for you and our neighbors.

Turn us again toward you, bringing us into full relationship through your Spirit with all our siblings. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us to walk in the ways of the table-turner, the oppression-healer, and the community-builder. Let your Holy Spirit move in us and guide us into beloved community.

Text by The Rev. Jay Wilson, adapted by The Rev. Allison Bengfort.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

As a minister of Christ, I proclaim that God loves you and forgives all your sins. God created you, knows you intimately, and calls you “good.”

This absolution is for you, and it is also for the sake of the world. We live as forgiven children of God within cycles of oppression. Our forgiveness creates the opportunity to renounce, resist, and undermine the unjust systems we live within.

Go forth as created, known, and loved people, forgiven and freed to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and to let the oppressed go free.

Amen.

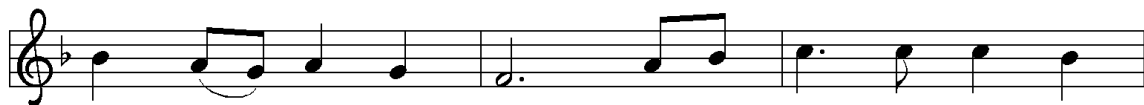
Text from Reconciling Works, adapted by The Rev. Allison Bengfort.



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly
 2 Let us build a house where proph-ets speak, and words are strong and
 3 Let us build a house where love is found in wa - ter, wine and
 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the wood and
 5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and vi - sions



live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how
 true, where all God's chil - dren dare to seek to
 wheat: a ban - quet hall on ho - ly ground where
 stone to heal and strength - en, serve and teach, and
 heard and loved and trea - sured, taught and claimed as



hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
 dream God's reign a - new. Here the cross shall stand as
 peace and jus - tice meet. Here the love of God, through
 live the Word they've known. Here the out - cast and the
 words with - in the Word. Built of tears and cries and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of
 wit - ness and as sym - bol of God's grace; here as one we
 Je - sus, is re - vealed in time and space; as we share in
 strang - er bear the im - age of God's face; let us bring an
 laugh - ter, prayers of faith and songs of grace, let this house pro -



Refrain

Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
 claim the faith of Je - sus:
 Christ the feast that frees us: All are wel - come,
 end to fear and dan - ger:
 claim from floor to raf - ter:



all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
 Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen
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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

KYRIE

ELW p. 193-194

Cantor sings: ...let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation: 
Lord, have mer - cy.

Last time: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Congregation: 
A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Generous God, you have promised to open your kin-dom to all people, despite their circumstances. Bring us close to you, and help us to proclaim the sweetness of your abundant love. We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

+ Word +

REFLECTIVE SONG

When Our Song Says Peace, verse 1



1 When our song says peace and the world says war, we will
2 When our song says free and the world says bound, we will
3 When our song says home and the world says lost, we will



sing de-spite the world. We will trust the song, for we sing of God,
sing de-spite the world. We will trust the song, for we sing of God,
sing de-spite the world. We will trust the song, for we sing of God,



who breaks the spear and sword and stills the storm of war.
who o - pens pris - on doors and sets the cap - tives free.
who brings us home at last, and gives a song to all.

READING

Psalm 16

A reading from the Psalms.

- ¹Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;
I have said to the LORD, “You are my Lord, my good above all other.”
- ²All my delight is in the godly that are in the land,
upon those who are noble among the people.
- ³But those who run after other gods
shall have their troubles multiplied.
- ⁴I will not pour out drink offerings to such gods,
never take their names upon my lips.
- ⁵O LORD, you are my portion and my cup;
it is you who uphold my lot.
- ⁶My boundaries enclose a pleasant land;
indeed, I have a rich inheritance.
- ⁷I will bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
my heart teaches me night after night.
- ⁸I have set the LORD always before me;
because God is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.
- ⁹My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.
- ¹⁰For you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor let your holy one see the pit.
- ¹¹You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy,
and in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTIVE SONG

When Our Song Says Peace, verse 2 (see page 4)

READING

Ruth 1

A reading from Ruth.

Long ago, when judges governed Israel, a famine swept over the land. So a family from the town of Bethlehem in Judah, a woman and man and their two children, emigrated to the region of Moab. ² The man was named Elimelech, the woman’s name was Naomi, and their two sons were named Mahlon and Chilon. They were Ephrathites, that is, from Bethlehem of Judah. They arrived in the land of Moab and settled there. ³ Soon afterward Elimelech died, leaving Naomi and the two sons to fend for themselves.

⁴ The two sons eventually married two Moabite women, whose names were Orpah and Ruth. They had lived in the land of Moab for about ten years

⁵ when both Mahlon and Chilon died. Now that Naomi had lost both of her children as well as her husband, ⁶ she prepared to take her daughters-in-law and leave the land of Moab and return to her homeland, for she had heard that Yahweh had visited the people by providing an abundance of food. ⁷ So she and her two daughters-in-law left the house where they had been living, and she set out on the road to Judah. ⁸ But Naomi told each of her daughters-in-law, “Return to your mother’s house. May the Most High care for you with the same kindness that you have cared for your dead

and for me. ⁹ May the Most High give you security and true fulfillment, and lead you to new spouses.” Then she kissed them both. But they wept loudly ¹⁰ and said to her, “No, we want to go back with you to the land of your people!” ¹¹ But Naomi said to them. “Go back, my daughters. Why do you want to come with me? I have no more sons inside me that you can take as spouses. ¹² No, you must go back, my daughters. I am too old to marry again. Even if I told you that there was still hope for me, if I were to find a spouse and have children tonight, ¹³ would you be willing to wait until they are grown to marry them? Would you refuse to remarry for this far-off hope? No, if you did that, it would tear me apart, for the hand of the Most High has been raised against me.” ¹⁴ And once more they wept loudly. Then Orpah kissed Naomi and returned to her people. But Ruth stayed by her side. ¹⁵ Naomi said to Ruth, “Look, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and to the god of her ancestors. You too must go. Follow your sister-in-law.” ¹⁶ But Ruth said to her, “Please don’t ask me to leave you and turn away from your company. I swear to you: ¹⁷ Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people will be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I’ll die there too and I will be buried there beside you. I swear—may Yahweh be my witness and judge—that not even death will keep us apart.” ¹⁸ Seeing that Ruth was determined to accompany her, Naomi said no more. ¹⁹ And together they walked, until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived, the town was abuzz with gossip because of them. The townspeople said to each other, “Could this sad person be Naomi, our ‘Joy’?” ²⁰ But she said to them, “Don’t call me Naomi. Call me Mara, ‘Bitterness,’ for Yahweh has afflicted me, and Shaddai has brought bitter destruction on me. ²¹ I was filled to the brim when I departed, but Yahweh has brought me back empty. Why insist on calling me Naomi, since Yahweh has passed sentence upon me and Shaddai has brought me to ruin?” ²² And that is how Naomi left the land of Moab with Ruth the Moabite and returned to Bethlehem, arriving just as the barley harvest was beginning.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTIVE SONG

When Our Song Says Peace, verse 3 (see page 4)

SERMON

The Rev. Elle Dowd



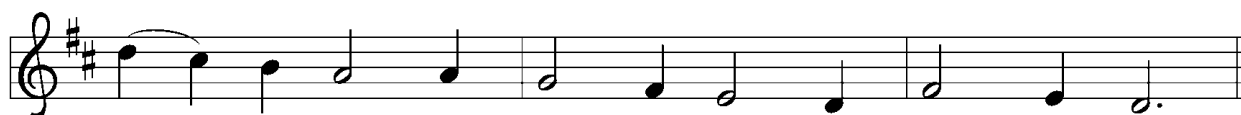
1 Great God, your love has called us here, as we, by love, for
 2 We come with self - in - flict - ed pains of bro - ken trust and
 3 Great God, in Christ you call our name and then re - ceive us
 4 Then take the towel, and break the bread, and hum - ble us, and
 5 Great God, in Christ you set us free your life to live, your



love were made. Your liv - ing like - ness still we bear,
 cho - sen wrong, half - free, half - bound by in - ner chains,
 as your own, not through some mer - it, right, or claim,
 call us friends. Suf - fer and serve till all are fed,
 joy to share. Give us your Spir - it's lib - er - ty



though marred, dis - hon - ored, dis - o - beyed. We come, with all our
 by so - cial forc - es swept a - long, by pow'rs and sys - tems
 but by your gra - cious love a - lone. We strain to glimpse your
 and show how grand - ly love in - tends to work till all cre -
 to turn from guilt and dull de - spair, and of - fer all that



heart and mind your call to hear, your love to find.
 close con - fined, yet seek - ing hope for hu - man - kind.
 mer - cy seat and find you kneel - ing at our feet.
 a - tion sings, to fill all worlds, to crown all things.
 faith can do while love is mak - ing all things new.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: RYBURN, Norman Cocker, 1889–1953

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Music © Oxford University Press. Used by permission.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

I invite you to assume a posture of prayer. You may sit, stand, or kneel; fold your hands or turn your hands up toward the sky; close your eyes or lift your eyes upward.

O God, you so love your church. Raise up leaders who care for your people. Bless lay theologians, seminary and college professors, and all who are called to the ministry of teaching, that they form and inspire us for the work of the gospel. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love your creation. Breathe new life into our planetary home. Guide the work of researchers, scientists, and activists who love your earth and who inspire us to care for the natural world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love the world. Uphold leaders who resist tyranny and oppression. Strengthen organizations that promote peace and harmony. Direct their work to alleviate human suffering and to address its root causes. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love your people. Draw near to all who live with mental illness, depression, or addiction, and accompany them in healing and recovery. Hear the cries of those who look to you in their distress. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love your children. Bless the young in our midst, and delight us with their joy, wonder, and curiosity. Revive our ministries with children and youth and equip us all for faithful discipleship. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

People of God, for what else shall we pray this day? Your prayers are invited now, either silently or aloud. (*Pause for prayers.*)

Merciful God, *or* Lord, we praise you,
receive our prayer. **Thanks be to God.**

O God, you so love your saints. As our ancestors in the faith have been a blessing to us, so inspire us by their example of holy living to be a blessing to those who come after us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

You are invited to share a sign of peace with one another (wave, handshake, hug, etc.), honoring the personal boundaries of all. Those online may unmute and verbally share the peace.

+ Meal +

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Our ancestors in faith gathered together long ago to remember, to be restored, to be renewed. They shared their story, prayed together, and made an offering to God as they prepared to set out on the long journey to freedom in the Promised Land. Today we gather to remember and to pray together, to be restored and renewed, and we bring our own offerings so the ministry of this church will continue to participate in the saving works of God. Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God in gratitude and praise.

OFFERTORY

We give thanks for your ongoing support of the ministry of St. John's! Gifts may be placed in the offering plate, made in the Vanco Mobile app, or given online by scanning the QR code. Thank you for your generosity!



OFFERTORY SOLO

"Cantique"

Nadia Boulanger

OFFERTORY VERSE

When Jesus Set His Table

When Je - sus set His ta - ble, no one was turned a - way. That ta - ble was a
No race, no creed, no na - tion, no love of heart and vow, No gen - der is re -
pro - mise of bles - sing and of grace. So set the ta - ble ful - ly in - vite the whole world in. If
ject - ed. The ta - ble's wait - ing now.

13

we would share love's wel - come then here's where we be - gin!

Music and text: Amanda Udis-Kessler

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray together.

**God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.
Amen.**

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER

**God our Mother, God our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION

COMMUNION

All are welcome to commune at Christ's table without exception! If you are online, serve yourself or those worshipping with you by saying, "The body of Christ, given for you," and, "The blood of Christ, shed for you." If you are communing in person, please proceed down the center aisle at the direction of an usher. You may receive bread or request a gluten-free wafer. A glass of wine (dark colored) will be placed on the table for you, or you may request grape juice (light colored).

After drinking, please place your empty glass in the basket before returning to your seat via the side aisle. If you would prefer to receive only a blessing, you may cross your arms across your chest to indicate this preference. If you would like to receive communion in your seat, please inform an usher, and the sacrament will be brought to you.

COMMUNION VERSE

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

COMMUNION HYMN

Let Us Break Bread Together (ELW 471)



1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees;
 2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees;
 3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees.
 let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees.
 let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer - cy on me.

Text: African American spiritual
 Music: BREAK BREAD TOGETHER, African American spiritual

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together.
**Holy One-in-Three, through your death,
 we are fed with the bread of life.
 Let us follow your way to the cross,
 to be for others a sign of your compassion and life.
 As you have fed us, let us go out to be part of feeding the world.
 Amen.**

+ Sending +

BENEDICTION

Creator, source of love,
 Christ, the resurrection and the life,
 Holy Spirit, midwife of rebirth,
 † bless you in this Lenten journey.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

In Christ There Is No East or West (ELW 650)



1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev-'ry-where their high com-mu-nion find;
 3 Join hands, dis-ci-ples of the faith, what-e'er your race may be.
 4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;



but one com-mu-ni-ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
 his ser-vice is the gold-en cord close bind-ing hu-man-kind.
 All chil-dren of the liv-ing God are sure-ly kin to me.
 all Christ-ly souls are one in him through-out the whole wide earth.

Text: John Oxenham, 1852-1941, alt.

Music: MCKEE, African American spiritual; adapt. Harry T. Burleigh, 1866-1949

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“Postlude in G major”

Fanny Hensel

SERVING TODAY

<i>Presiding Minister:</i>	The Rev. Allison Bengfort
<i>Guest Preacher:</i>	The Rev. Elle Dowd
<i>Assisting Minister:</i>	Chris Maglocchi
<i>Minister of Music:</i>	Luke Duroc-Danner
<i>Cantor:</i>	Audrey Neace
<i>Minister of the Word:</i>	Emma Radde
<i>Usher:</i>	Alan Swanson
<i>Children’s Church:</i>	Luke & Erin Rasmussen, Susan Flachsbart, Alissa Gemeny
<i>Altar Guild:</i>	Cindi Rachowicz
<i>Livestream Camera Operator:</i>	Michel Hauser
<i>Coffee Hour Host:</i>	Molly Bolash
<i>Cover Art:</i>	The Rev. Katy Miles-Wallace

ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Welcoming to Inclusive: What it Means to be Fully Affirming

What does it really mean to be an LGBTQIA-affirming church? As part of our RIC process, we are working on moving from an attitude of “queer people are allowed to be here” to an attitude of “we built this with our queer siblings in mind.” This morning from 10:45-11:45 am, we welcome The Rev. Elle Dowd to lead us in a presentation on the markers of a church that is truly queer-affirming. Pastor Elle is a bi-furious ELCA pastor, PhD student at Chicago Theological Seminary, campus minister of South Loop Campus Ministry, and author of *Baptized in Teargas*. She will share about her own experiences as a queer person in the church and help us reflect on how the culture of St. John’s can continue to evolve to embody our love for all God’s children.

Wednesday Dinner Church during Lent

On each of the five Wednesdays in March, we will gather at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall for Dinner Church. The service will begin with portions of Holden Evening Prayer accompanied by piano and violin and including song, prayer, and scripture. We will continue the service with a soup supper and conversation about topics from the book, *Queer Virtue: What LGBTQ People Know about Life and Love and How it Can Revitalize Christianity*, by The Rev. Elizabeth Edman. We will watch a 2-minute video of the author sharing about the day’s theme and look at a brief excerpt from the book to spark conversation. Reading the book is not required or expected, but certainly welcome! Books are now available to be picked up at worship or in the church office during the week. A \$10 donation to offset the cost of the book is suggested, but not required. If you’d like to read along with the theme for each week, follow the schedule below:

- March 8: Risk & Coming Out – Chapters 3 & 8
- March 15: Touch – Chapter 4
- March 22: Adoption & Authenticity – Chapters 6 & 9
- March 29: Scandal & Hospitality – Chapters 5 & 10

Our RIC Journey: Resources Available, Questions & Comments Invited

This winter and spring, our congregation is doing the internal reflection and learning necessary to become not just welcoming, but fully affirming of the LGBTQIA+ community. This is called the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) process, which our RIC Team (Chris Maglocchi, Chad Johnson, Molly Bolash, and Luke Rasmussen) hopes will culminate in an affirmative vote at our June congregational meeting to become an RIC church. Free resources on Biblical interpretation, supporting LGBTQIA+ youth, and queer terminology can be found on the table in the gathering area. The team would love to talk with you about your questions, comments, or concerns, so please reach out to have a conversation. You may also place anonymous questions in the rainbow box in the gathering area.

CCA Presents J.S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion

Chicago Choral Artists' once again joins the Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and the Orchestra of Grace Lutheran Church to perform J.S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion. Bach's largest vocal work, the St. Matthew Passion is monumental in scale and packed with drama as soloists, two choirs, and two orchestras bring the words of Matthew's gospel to life. Bach is a master storyteller, building tension in the narrative, and knowing when to step back and change the pace with new melodies, new meters, deeper emotions, and infinite invention. Intimate arias and familiar, reflective chorales speak to the heart of the Christian faith, that Christ died for us and for our salvation. This concert is free and unticketed. Performances are on March 25th at 6pm and March 26th at 4pm at Grace Lutheran Church (7300 Division St., River Forest).

NOTES ON TODAY'S COMPOSERS

Clara Schumann, née Wieck, (1819-1896) was a German concert pianist and composer. Clara began studying piano at age 5 and by 1835 she had established a reputation throughout Europe as a child prodigy. Following her marriage to the fellow composer and pianist, Robert Schumann, she taught at the Leipzig Conservatory while continuing to compose and tour. The Schumanns were close friends with Johannes Brahms, and Clara would go on to edit the first collected edition of her husband's work after his death in 1856. Clara's musical output includes works for orchestra (including a piano concerto), chamber music, songs, and many pieces for piano solo.

Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979) was a conductor and organist as well as the most influential music teacher of composition in the 20th century. She had studied at the Paris Conservatory in composition with Gabriel Fauré and in organ with Charles-Marie Widor. Though Nadia had a limited compositional output - ceasing to compose entirely following the death of her beloved and talented sister, Lili Boulanger - Nadia Boulanger taught for many years at the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau where she would teach Aaron Copland, Daniel Barenboim, John Eliot Gardiner, Philip Glass, Astor Piazzolla, George Walker, and Roy Harris among many others.

Fanny Hensel, née Mendelssohn, (1805-1847) was a German pianist and composer, and the elder sister and confidante of the composer, Felix Mendelssohn. Felix himself described Fanny as the superior pianist, and she is reported to have memorized J.S. Bach's complete *Well-Tempered Clavier* by age 13. She remained a close musical advisor to Felix throughout his life, but she was not permitted to publish her own music until late in her life. Most of her approximated 500 musical compositions exist only in manuscript form or were published under her brother's name.

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