

SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

January 31 and February 3, 2024



*The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.
They are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.*

-Psalm 111:7-8



“God needs us to help fight with him against evil and we need God to guide us.”

-Henry Ossawa Tanner, Artist

Gathering as the Body of Christ

CENTERING SONG (SOLO)

“No Failure”

Melvin Crispell, III

GREETING

PRESIDER

*CALL TO WORSHIP

STUDENT MINISTER

Leader: Thank God! For God deserves your thanks.

All: God’s love never quits.

Leader: Thank the Lord of all.

All: God’s love never quits.

Leader: God remembered us when we were down,

All: God’s love never quits.

Leader: Rescued us from the trampling boot

All: God’s love never quits.

Leader: Takes care of us in time of need.

All: God’s love never quits.

Leader: Thank God, who did it all!

All: God’s love never quits!

*OPENING HYMN

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

AAHH 158 (v. 1 & 2)

*CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

[All are invited to turn toward the Baptismal Font.]

S. Minister: God of all, we confess that we have inherited a faith that was used to justify the theft of native lands and the enslavement of your people. From this sin, we ask for deliverance.

All: Forgive us for where we have failed to understand, Lord, and in your mercy, set us free.

S. Minister: Touch hearts that have been shriveled by generations of suppressed empathy, and eyes that have lost the ability to see brothers and sisters who suffer from systemic injustice.

All: Forgive us for where we have failed to understand, Lord, and in your mercy, set us free.

S. Minister: As we name and unlearn the habits of racism, discrimination, and prejudice, give us grace to draw deeply from the witness of the movements that have always resisted injustice in the power of your Spirit.

All: Forgive us for where we have failed to understand, Lord, and in your mercy, set us free.

(Silent Confession)

Presider: Hear the good news! By the mercy of our steadfast God, we are united with Christ in whom we are forgiven and made whole. Receive this assurance! **Amen!**

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

STUDENT MINISTER

You are invited to pass the peace to each other in a way comfortable to you and your neighbor.

Peace be with you! **And also with you!**

Let us share this peace with one another.

Service of the Word

POEM [SAT ONLY]

“WE WOULD NOT HAVE MADE IT”

ALICIA T. CROSBY

In psalm-like fashion the poet reflects on the steadfastness of God - a backdrop against the hardships of life.

If it had not been the Lord, I would not have made it.

Through accidents that left first responders in awe

as I walked away without a scratch;

Illness and virus that suddenly, inexplicably

arrested my breath and threatened my life;

Interaction with trigger-happy police aggressively approaching me in
stopped vehicles with hands on guns;

Running through MTA cars and up subway steps to avoid predation
from those trying to assault me;

Hot spots where bullets fly from d-boys' Glocks
a block over from my bedroom;

Drives with no cell or GPS signal through landscapes flooded with
confederate flags and white nationalist symbols;

Seasons of poverty marked by potato chip dinners and staying in my
house because I couldn't afford roundtrip travel on the bus;

Threats of bodily harm from men wanting to roll on me because
my unapologetic way of being was an irritant to their souls.

Shoutout to God the deliverer! Blessed be their holy name.

If it had not been the Lord who was on my side, on our side,
we would not have made it.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

STUDENT MINISTER

Holy God, Word made flesh, let us come to this word open to being surprised. Silence our agendas; banish our assumptions; cast out our casual detachment. Confound our expectations; clear the cobwebs from our ears; penetrate the corners of our hearts with this word. We know that you can, we pray that you will, and we wait with great anticipation. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

PSALM 111

NRSV

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them. Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.

He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds; the Lord is gracious and merciful. He provides food for those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant. He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the heritage of the nations. The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.

They are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever.

The Word of God, for the people of God. **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

REV. DR. MELVIN BABER - JAN. 31

REV. CYNTHIA LAYTON - FEB. 3

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

PRESIDER

Service of the Table

OFFERTORY SONG

INSTRUMENTAL

***THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may, not because you are strong, but because you are weak. Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy and help. Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more. Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you. Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body.

God who redeemed Joseph from slavery and prison and the Hebrew people from slavery and oppression – you continue to hear the cries of the suffering and remember your covenant. Your loving kindness remains true from generation to generation. God, in your faithfulness, we give you thanks.

Jesus who redeems our lives from the grip of death – you continue to save your people. Having set aside your privilege to walk with us in the messiness of the human condition, we seek to follow your example. You showed that power is not about oppression but liberation. Jesus in your love, we give you thanks.

Holy Spirit who redeems the secular within us to make it sacred – you continue to work within believers and the Church to bring light to the world. You encourage and convict us in truth. Spirit in your advocacy, we give you thanks.

As you have in the past and will do until time ends, we pray, Holy Spirit, that you would make this cup and loaf more than what we set on the table. May they become the reality of our hope in you, our communion with Christ and one another. As we prepare to break bread together, we first join our voices in the prayer, using the words each of us finds most familiar, saying:

**Our Father who art in Heaven,
Hallowed be the 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 and ever. Amen.**

The apostle Paul tells us of the institution of the Lord's Supper: "For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' We do this again and again – as has been done in homes and secret rooms, castles and high cathedrals, in pews and at kneeling rails – knowing that each time we do, we proclaim the Lord's death and resurrection until one day he comes again.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRESIDER

Come, for all is now ready. If you wish to partake there are COVID related options printed in your bulletin. Please note that we use grape juice and gluten free bread at this table as a practice of inclusive hospitality. If you are unable to come forward, please signal the ministers and we will come to you at your seat.

Those who prefer not to partake in Communion and wish to receive an interfaith prayer of blessing, we invite you to meet the preacher at the baptismal font. Those joining us online you are welcome to partake now of whatever food and drink you have with you. We are now united at Christ's table.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at this table where Christ is the host.

COMMUNION SONG

"Total Praise"

AAHH 113

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

PRESIDER

Loving and holy God, when the taste of cup and bread fade from our lips, remind our hearts to continue facing the rising sun. For it is in you that we find mercy. It is in you we have our hope.

For this meal we have shared and the truth it represents, we give you thanks.

Amen.

***CLOSING SONG**

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

AAHH 158 (v. 3)

*BENEDICTION

SENDING & POSTLUDE

*Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.*

–from “Lift Every Voice and Sing”
James Weldon Johnson 1871-1938

Altar Coverings: As we commemorate Black History month, our altar panels have been covered by the art work of Schirlyn Kamara. Schirlyn is a local self-taught African-American artist who works in a number of mediums. Her Santee Chapel installation “Sisters and Saints” consists of 6 wooden panels (acrylic) depicting black and brown women in various postures of prayer and praise. Painting is a spiritual discipline for Schirlyn and she hopes that her art inspires, causes people to pay closer attention to the world around them, and positively impacts their lives. We are grateful for her sharing her gifts with our community!

Cover Art: Tanner, Henry Ossawa, 1859-1937. “Good Shepherd (Atlas Mountains, Morocco),” from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57850>. Original source and quote: <https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/good-shepherd-atlas-mountains-morocco-23656>.

Call to Worship: Adapted from Psalm 136:1-3;23-26 The Message translation

Poem: Crosby, Alicia T. “We Would Not Have Made It,” in *The Words of Her Mouth: Psalms for the Struggle*, ed. Martha Spong. The Pilgrim Press, 2020, 124.

Words of Confession and Assurance: “Prayer of Lament,” ChurchofEngland.org, accessed July 11, 2023, <https://bit.ly/43o9hWa>

Prayer of Illumination: “Prayers for Illumination,” worshipleaderguide.blogspot.com, accessed July 11, 2023, <http://worshipleaderguide.blogspot.com/2009/06/prayers-for-illumination.html>

Centering Song: CCLI Song # 7216967

Ashley Hale | Chandler Moore | Devon Goodwin | Edwin Golson | Melvin Crispell III

For Humans Publishing; Maverick City Publishing; Remaining portion is unaffiliated

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Communion Liturgy: <https://lifeinthelabyrinth.com/2019/01/29/let-us-break-bread-together-communion-liturgy/>

**The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.*

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WORSHIP TEAM

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Rev. Dr. Catherine E. Williams, Advisor

THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:

To serve the universal church of our Creator.

To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.

To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.