



The Celebration of Worship

March 3, 2024 • 3rd Sunday in Lent



Guest Pastor:
Worship Leader:
Pianist:
Choir Conductor:
Japanese Reader:
YES:

Rev. Dr. Kim Nelson
Christine Umeda
Haruko Sakakibara
Ben Pryor
Miyo Uchida
Kishwer Vikaas

Centering Prayer for Lenten Worship

Holy Spirit, Christ, Creator, we want to worship you. Help us encounter you as we worship; in prayers, in songs, in confession and pardon, in the Word read and proclaimed. We want to experience you so that we can give our whole selves to you. As we come to you, create a holy space where we can encounter you, and be embraced by you. In Christ's holy name we pray. Amen.

-Adapted from *In God's Presence* by Graham Standish

Prelude

Haruko Sakakibara

***Introit**

All: Make us one, Lord, make us one. Holy Spirit make us one. Let Your love flow so the world will know, we are one in You.

** Those who can, please stand*

Welcome and Announcements

Jonathan Sakakibara

Call to Worship

Christine Umeda

Leader: We come, for God gathers us here, with that community called faith:

People: where the hungry are served first, where the thirsty drink life's water.

Leader: We come, for God welcomes us here into that home called grace:

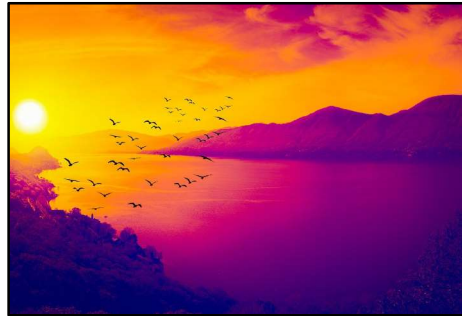
People: where the naked are clothed in robes of hope; where the stranger is embraced as the long-lost prodigal.

Leader: We come, for God reunites us here, sisters and brothers in that family called love:

All: where the imprisoned model justice, where the sick are cradled in God's peace.

*Opening Hymn: Morning Has Broken (#469)

Morning has broken like the first morning; Blackbird has spoken like the first bird. Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning! Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!



Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven, like the first dewfall on the first grass. Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden, sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning, born of the one light Eden saw play! Praise with elation, praise every morning, God's re-creation of the new day!

Postlude

Haruko Sakakibara

“Air Encien - Gavotte,” composed by Jean Henri d’Anglebert (1629-1691 France)

We invite you to remain seated during the Postlude as we enjoy the music and God's presence together. If you need to go, please feel free to do so.

Go with God's blessings.

In Appreciation:

Greeters:

Bill Grissom, Herning Grissom

Ushers:

Carla Hart, Diane Younglove

Parking:

Gary Younglove

Parking Barriers (Sat):

Titus Toyama

Sound System:

Tom Tambara

Zoom Moderator/Greeter:

Lois Van Beers

Altar Flowers:

Stan & Christine Umeda

Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth, let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth. Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old, blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.

Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense, Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence. Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care, bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.

So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life that surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife. Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase, messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Kim Nelson

*Response: "Shalom"

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,
Kami no mi megumi.**

(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace, peace, may we be blessed with grace from God.)

**Sha rom, sha rom, mata a u hi ma de. Sha rom, sha rom,
yuta kani, yuta kani, yuta kani.**

(Peace, peace, until we meet again. Peace, peace, abundantly, abundantly, abundantly.)

Invitation to Confession

Christine Umeda

Leader: They are the promises stretching back into the dim recesses of time, yet as new as this very moment. When we lose our way, God searches for us until we are found. When we hurt others, God brings healing to all. When we sin, God forgives us. Let us hold these promises close to our hearts, as we confess those things we try to hide.

Prayer of Confession

Christine Umeda

Leader: We stock the food pantries, but brush aside those who hunger for friendship. We give our hand-me-downs away, but overlook those whose hopes have been stripped away.

People: We glad-hand those just like us, but turn a deaf ear to our neighbors who 'talk funny.'

All: Forgive us, Hope of the ages. You persistently search for us in the side streets of the world, gathering us up and bringing us home, so we may be drenched in the waters of your bottomless pool of forgiveness, watched over by your Child, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Time for silent reflection and confession to God

Assurance of God's Grace

Christine Umeda

Leader: God searches for the lost,

People: and finds us;

Leader: God invites the hungry to the table,

People: and feeds us;

Leader: God sends Jesus,

People: and frees us from death's prison;

Leader: God forgives all who sin,

**All: and heals us with mercy and grace. Thanks be to God.
Amen.**

***Response to God's Forgiveness: Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me (#582 GtG)**

All Sing: Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

***Passing of the Peace** Christine Umeda

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

Children's Message Rev. Dr. Kim Nelson

Choir Song:

In Christ Alone by Stuart Townend & Keith Getty

Hymn of Reflection: In Christ There Is No East or West (#439)

In Christ there is no east or west, in Him no south or north; but one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide earth.

In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find; His service is the golden cord close binding humankind.

Join hands, disciples of the faith, whate'er your race may be. All children of the living God are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east and west, in Him meet south and north; all Christly souls are one in Him throughout the whole wide earth.

Opportunity To Present Offerings

All: Give thanks with a grateful heart; give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because God's given Jesus Christ, God's Son. (Repeat) And now let the weak say, "I am strong," let the poor say, "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us. (Repeat) Give thanks. Give thanks.

***Doxology**

All: Praise God from Whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication** Christine Umeda

Joys & Concerns Haruko Sakakibara

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer Rev. Dr. Kim Nelson

All: Our Parent Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your 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 Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

***Sending Hymn: Called as Partners in Christ's Service (#343)**

Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace, We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace. May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend, Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often and you who have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, because it is the Lord who invites you. It is his will that those who want him should meet him here.

- from the Iona Community

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Institution

Receiving the Elements



Unison Prayer of Guidance

All: Now may the words of our mouths, the meditations of our hearts, the interpretation of our minds, and the response of our hands be acceptable to You, our Lord and our Redeemer. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Japanese Reading: Acts 16:25-31

Miyo Uchida

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." The jailer[a] called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."

1st Scripture Reading: Joshua 24:14-28

Christine Umeda

"Now, therefore, revere the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight."

He protected us along all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed, and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.

If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.” And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the Lord!” Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.” The people said to Joshua, “The Lord our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem. Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak in the sanctuary of the Lord. Joshua said to all the people, “See, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord that he spoke to us; therefore it shall be a witness against you if you deal falsely with your God.” So Joshua sent the people away to their inheritances.

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Kim Nelson

Lenten Series: Ladder to the Light #3

“The Rung of a True Spiritual Community”

Matthew 25:31-46

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand,

‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life.”

Musical Interlude

Haruko Sakakibara

“Waiting for Aurora” by composed by Toshiaki Matsumoto in 2017 (Japan)