



WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
7 February 2021 + 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer

Ministry Moment

Souper Bowl of Sharing Sunday

Grace Batterman and Avery Pound

Voluntary

Meditation

Gabriel DuPont

*Ringing of the Bell

The congregation rises at the ringing of the Tower Bell.

*Call to Worship

Rev. Trajan I. McGill

How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for God is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.
God builds up Jerusalem; and gathers the outcasts of Israel.
God heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds.
God determines the number of the stars and gives to all of them their names.
Great is God, abundant in power; God's understanding is beyond measure.
Those who wait for God shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint. Let us worship with reverence and joy. Amen.

(Psalm 147, Isaiah 40)

*Hymn 315

In the Midst of New Dimensions

In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,
who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?

Refrain: God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
we your people, ours the journey now and ever,
now and ever, now and evermore.

Through the flood of starving people, warring factions, and despair,
who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care? *Refrain.*

As we stand, a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,
grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams. *Refrain.*

We are man and we are woman, all persuasions old and young,
each a gift in your creation, each a love song to be sung. *Refrain.*

Should the threats of dire predictions cause us to withdraw in pain,
may your blazing phoenix spirit resurrect the church again. *Refrain.*

*Prayer of Confession

Rev. Christian K. Choi

Everlasting God and Creator of all that is; your understanding is beyond measure
and your light illuminates our lives. We confess that we have sinned against you
and our neighbors. In your compassion, forgive us. Give us your perspective as
we sustain those overwhelmed by despair and seek to live with hope. Make us
people who feel deeply and love genuinely. Hear now our silent prayers of
confession.

***Sung Response** Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us

***Declaration of Pardon** Friends, believe the good news: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
The peace of Christ be with you. Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Response of Praise** Gloria Patri

Children's Sermon

Response I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Houston

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus.
In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

First Scripture Reading Isaiah 40:21-31

²¹ Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
²² It is God who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; ²³ who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.²⁴ Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when God blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. ²⁵ To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One.²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? God who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because God is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? ²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. God does not faint or grow weary; God's understanding is unsearchable.²⁹ God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless.³⁰ Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;³¹ but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Solo For the Flowers Are Great Blessings

Benjamin Britten

For the flowers are great blessings. For the flowers have their angels even the words of God's creation. For the flower glorifies God and the root parries the adversary. For there is a language of flowers. For flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ.

Second Scripture Reading I Corinthians 9:16-23

¹⁶ If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! ¹⁷ For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. ¹⁸ What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

¹⁹ For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

Sermon Illumination and Perspective Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer
Text: "To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? Says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? Isaiah 40:25"

Solo Starry, Starry Night Don McClean

Starry, starry night, paint your palette blue and grey.
Look out on a summer's day with eyes that know the darkness in my soul.
Shadows on the hills, sketch the trees and the daffodils,
catch the breeze and the winter chills,
in colors on the snowy linen land.

Now I understand what you tried to say to me,
How you suffered for your sanity, how you tried to set them free.
They would not listen, they did not know how,
Perhaps they'll listen now.

Starry, starry night, flaming flowers that brightly blaze,
swirling clouds in violet haze reflect in Vincent's eyes of China blue.
Colors changing hue, morning fields of amber grain,
Weathered faces lined in pain are soothed beneath the artist's loving hand.

Starry, starry night, portraits hung in empty halls,
Frameless heads on nameless walls, with eyes that watch the world and can't forget.
Like the strangers that you've met, the ragged men in ragged clothes,
the silver thorn of bloody rose, lie crushed and broken on the virgin snow.

For they could not love you. But still your love was true,
and when no hope was left in sight on that starry, starry night,
you took your life, as lovers often do.
But I could have told you, Vincent,
this world was never meant for one as beautiful as you.

The Church at Prayer

Soloist: Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place,
I can feel his mighty power and his grace.
I can hear the brush of angels' wings
I see glory on each face;
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy 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. Amen.

*Introduction to the Offering

***Offertory Response** Doxology

Prayer of Dedication Our God and Refuge, in whose shelter we abide, accept these offerings dedicated in the name of Christ. Use the gifts of our lives, labor, and investments to illuminate the gospel, to gather the outcasts. and to heal the broken hearted. By your grace, widen our perspective, renew our strength, and raise us up on eagle's wings. Amen

***Hymn 43** You Who Dwell in the Shelter On Eagles' Wings

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in his shadow for life, say to the Lord, "My refuge, my rock in whom I trust!"

Refrain: Ad he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you, and famine will bring you no fear: under his wings, your refuge, his faithfulness your shield. *Refrain*

You need not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day; though thousands fall about you, near you it shall not come. *Refrain*

For to his angels he's given a command to guard you in all of your ways; upon their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Refrain

***Charge and Benediction**

***Voluntary** Toccata John Weaver

() The congregation is invited to stand.*

The Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of their mother, Faye Hildebrand, by her children Pat Hildebrand-Culler and Mal Hildebrand.

Worship Participants

Rev. Dr. Blythe D. Kieffer, Pastor and Head of Staff
Rev. Trajan I. McGill, Associate Pastor for Parish Life
Rev. Christian K. Choi, Associate Pastor for Family Ministry
Dale Rogers, Organist and Director of Music and the Arts
Adam Miller, Tenor Lyle VanDeventer, Bass
Grace Batterman and Avery Pound
Elsie and Bob Fox, Videographers
Deb and Dave Coontz, Greeters
Sara Eldridge and Mike Sundquist, Ushers
Mary Ray, Safety Team

**PAINTINGS OF DUTCH ARTIST
VINCENT VAN GOGH (1853 - 1890)**



THE STARRY NIGHT



THE HARVEST



FIELD OF POPPIES



FISHING BOATS ON THE BEACH



SUNFLOWER FIELD



PEASANTS DIGGING UP POTATOES