



**St. Paul United Church of Christ**

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Rev. Becky Erb Strang-Senior Pastor

Myra Hanenkratt-Council President

**Welcome to St. Paul UCC, we are glad you are here!!**

Whether you are worshipping online or in person, Welcome!

Your presence increases our joy as we praise our loving Savior.

May every blessing be yours.

**February 22, 2023**

**Ash Wednesday**

**Sacrament of Holy Communion**

**Imposition of Ashes**

**Worship Leaders**

Ministers

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

Katie Brautigam

June Oaks

Bryan Trego

The Congregation

Senior Pastor

Pianist

Sr. Deacon

Sr. Elder

WORDS OF GREETING

PRELUDE

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Tonight, we begin our journey to the cross.

**People: We think we want to follow Jesus.**

Leader: But we do not understand where he is going.

**People: We want to be the greatest in his glorious reign.**

Leader: But we are told that we must be the least.

**People: Like children: humble and wholly dependent,**

Leader: Those who had the lowest value in society.

**People: In Lent, can we give up all we think we deserve?**

Leader: Can we put our entire trust in Jesus?

**People: Can we follow where Jesus leads us?**

Leader: We will try, and hope we do not stumble.

**People: God, watch over and protect us on our way.**

Leader: Amen.

**\*OPENING HYMN**

*Just As I Am*

No. 354

## Just As I Am

354

Db Ab Ab7 Db

1 Just as I am, with - out one plea  
 2 Just as I am, and wait - ing not  
 3 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout  
 4 Just as I am, thou wilt re - ceive,

Ab Ab7 Gb Db

but that thy blood was shed for me,  
 to rid my soul of one dark blot,  
 with man - y a con - flict, man - y a doubt,  
 wilt wel - come, par - don, cleanse, re - lieve;

Db F Gb

and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,  
 to fight - ings whose blood can cleanse each spot,  
 be - cause thy prom - ise I be - lieve,

Db Ab Db

O Lamb of God, I come! I come!  
 O Lamb of God, I come! I come!  
 O Lamb of God, I come! I come!  
 O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

## \*SERVICE OF CONFESSION

Leader: We confess our sins before God and one another.

### SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN

Leader: God of grace and mercy,

**People: We admit to you, to ourselves, and to this community that we have caused harm to others through our actions and through our failure to act. Give us the humility to accept our failings and make things right where we can. Forgive us and help us to forgive others and ourselves. Amen.**

Leader: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. In that love, God forgives you all your sin, for the sake of our savior, Jesus Christ.

## \*GLORIA PATRI

### *Glory Be to the Father*

No. 734

734

### Glory Be to the Father

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men, A - men." Above the vocal line, various chords are indicated: Eb, Bb7sus F, Bb7 F, Eb, Bb D, Bb, Eb, Bb D, Eb6, Bb F, F7, Bb, Bb7 Eb, Ab Eb, Eb, Bb, Bb7, Bb7, Eb, Eb, Bb Ab, Eb G, Fm7 Ab, Eb Bb, Gm Bb, Bb7 Eb.

WORDS: *Gloria Patri*, 2nd c.  
MUSIC: Henry W. Greatorex (1813-1858)

GREATOREX  
Irregular

## PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray. Trusting in the promise of Jesus Christ's unending love, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

## SILENT PRAYER

Leader: Mothering God, make our hearts like those of children—humble, trusting, and willing to believe. Help us to receive you as children do. Merciful God,

**People: You hear our prayer.**

Leader: All creation suffers when sin has its way in the world. Cleanse us of sin so that this earth might be restored to wholeness. Merciful God,

**People: You hear our prayer.**

Leader: Help us to acknowledge our brokenness so that, through acceptance, we might seek transformation. On this holy night, remind us that though we are dust, we have also been created in your image. Merciful God,

**People: You hear our prayer.**

Leader: The evils of this world cause so many to suffer. Restore to wholeness all who are in need of your healing. Merciful God,

**People: You hear our prayer.**

Leader: As you redeem our world of its sin, bring us together—people of different nations, perspectives, and faith traditions—woven into a tapestry of unity. Merciful God,

**People: You hear our prayer.**

Leader: With all the saints we strive to be more than the brokenness that cripples us. We seek healing and wholeness for all people. Merciful God,

**People: You hear our prayer.**

Leader: We lift up these prayers to you, Gracious God, in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray together... **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.**

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 58:1-12.

(NRSV)

*Shout out, do not hold back!*

*Lift up your voice like a trumpet!*

*Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins.*

*<sup>2</sup> Yet day after day they seek me  
and delight to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness  
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;  
they ask of me righteous judgments,  
they delight to draw near to God.*

*<sup>3</sup> “Why do we fast, but you do not see?  
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”  
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,  
and oppress all your workers.*

*<sup>4</sup> Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist.  
Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.*

*<sup>5</sup> Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?  
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?*

*Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?*

*<sup>6</sup> Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to lose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?*

*<sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?*

*<sup>8</sup> Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.*

<sup>9</sup> Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

<sup>10</sup> if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.

<sup>12</sup> Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Matthew 18:1-9 (NRSV)

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" <sup>2</sup> He called a child, whom he put among them, <sup>3</sup> and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>5</sup> Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

<sup>6</sup> "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. <sup>7</sup> Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

<sup>8</sup> "If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. <sup>9</sup> And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better



for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire.

## RESPONSE

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God!

**People: God is still speaking! Thanks be to God!**

## SERMON

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

## OFFERING OUR GIFTS AND TITHES TO GOD

### OFFERTORY SENTENCES

Let us give as we are able tonight and throughout the Lenten Season.

### \*DOXOLOGY

## Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow 34

Musical score for "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The lyrics are: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost." The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics, and the second system covers the last two lines. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: G, D, Em, Bm, Em, D, G, D, Em, C, G, D, Em, D, Am, G, B, C, F#dim, A, G, Em, D, Am, G, B, D7, G.

WORDS: *Doxology*, Thomas Ken (1637-1711)  
MUSIC: Louis Bourgeois (ca. 1510-1561), *Genevan Psalter*, 1551

OLD 100th  
L.M.

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

**All that we have is yours, O God. Keep us ever mindful that, like children, we are fully reliant on you for all we need. These gifts we offer are but a small portion of what you have first given us. Accept them and bless them for your work of caring for all people. Amen.**

## SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

*In the United Church of Christ, we practice an Open Table. You need not be a church member to commune; you need only a sincere desire to draw near to Christ and seek peace with your neighbor. Communion elements are available on the offering tables. We hold the elements and commune together.*

### WORDS OF INVITATION

Leader: God feeds us like little children, that we might be nourished by the Holy Spirit and grow in faithfulness and humility. Jesus now calls us to the table of his body and blood, feeding us and strengthening us for the journey to the cross.

### COMMUNION PRAYER (unison)

**We thank you, God, for Jesus, who lived among us, uncovering your presence. We thank you that you stamped his death with victory, and that life, not death, is the final word. We ask now that you bless us as we share this bread that we may be nourished by that same unbounded love and so be encouraged to be your servants in the world. Amen.**

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Leader: On the night Jesus was betrayed, he sat with his disciples at the Passover Meal. At that meal, he took bread, blessed and broke it, giving it to his disciples saying, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in memory of me." In the same way, after supper, he took the cup saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it for the forgiveness of sins."

### SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

Leader (with the bread): The Body of Christ broken for you! Take and eat.

Leader (with the cup): The Cup of Blessing poured out for you! Take and drink.

## MEANING OF ASHES

*IMPOSITION OF ASHES: Imposition of ashes will take place in the rear of the church. If you prefer ashes imposed on the back of hand instead of forehead, hold your hand up for the Pastor or Elder.*

Leader: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.  
You are a beloved child of God. Amen.

\*CLOSING HYMN *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days* No.252

# Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days 252

N.C. F  $\frac{C}{F}$  F  $\frac{Bb}{F}$  F  $\frac{C}{E}$  Dm C  $\frac{C}{Bb}$   $\frac{F}{A}$  Am

1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us did fast and pray,  
2 As you with Sa - tan did con - tend, and did the vic - tory win,  
3 As you did hun - ger and did thirst, so teach us, gra - cious Lord,  
4 And thro' these days of pen - i - tence, and thro' your Pas - sion - tide,  
5 A - bide with us, that through this life of doubts and hope and pain,

Am Dm  $\frac{C}{E}$   $\frac{Dm}{F}$  Am Bb  $\frac{Bb}{D}$  F F $\sharp$  F  $\frac{Bb}{C}$   $\frac{F}{C}$  C7 Fsus F

teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.  
O give us strength in you to fight, in you to con - quer sin.  
to die to self, and so to live by your most ho - ly Word.  
for - ev - er - more, in life and death, O Lord, with us a - bide.  
an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at last at - tain!

WORDS: Claudia F. Hernaman (1838-1898), alt.

MUSIC: American melody, adapt.; harm. Annabel Morris Buchanan (1889-1983)

LAND OF REST  
C.M.

**\*BENEDICTION:**

Leader: Holy God, through the discipline of these forty days, make your Spirit's cleansing fire burn within us.

**People: Life us from the dying embers of our inattention.**

Leader: Mark us with the sign of your holy passion.

**People: Make us ready to respond to the call of Jesus Christ.**

**Amen.**

**\*POSTLUDE**