



New Covenant Presbyterian Church
March 20, 2022 10:00am Service

1125 Jamison Corner Road Middletown, DE
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The Worship of God

March 20, 2022 Third Sunday of Lent

Welcome and Announcements

Lay Leader: Georgia Mackay

Sharing Our Vision

Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Musical Prelude ...



In Stephen Spielberg's 1979 film, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Indiana Jones finds the treasure for which he had been seeking – the Holy Grail. Having located the ancient Temple of the Sun, and having successfully navigated a string of deadly booby traps, he arrives at the treasure room. Jones is amazed to discover an aged knight clad in rusted chain mail, who has been faithfully guarding the grail for centuries. This crusader has stayed alive by drinking regularly from the grail.

Just at that moment, the Nazis, who have been chasing Jones, burst in. Eager to drink from the grail because they have heard it bestows the gift of youth, they demand that the knight turn this precious treasure over to them. The knight indicates a glittering array of dozens of ancient cups and chalices, of all shapes and sizes. They must choose, he tells them. The Nazi officer reaches for a bejeweled golden chalice, scoops up some water and drinks. Instantly he begins to age, crumbling eventually into dust. "He has chosen poorly," says the knight.

Now it's Jones' turn. The American archaeologist is far more deliberate, taking his time to make his decision. Finally, he picks up an insignificant clay cup, explaining that this is the sort of cup a Galilean peasant, like Jesus, would have likely used. Anxiously, he fills it with water and drinks and he survives. "You have chosen well," says the knight. Jones was wise enough to know he had to wait long enough for the grail itself to call out to him – an insight the knight well understood, after all those centuries of waiting.

Preparing to Meet God

Call to Worship

- L: The heavens rise high above the earth, higher than any bird can soar;
P: *The east lies distant from the west, more distant that any wind can blow;*
 L: But above the greatest height does God raise up our hearts,
P: *And beyond the farthest distance does God remove our sins!*
 L: Let us bless the Lord with all our souls -
P: *Let all that is within us bless God's holy name!*

Hymn # 341

Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!

*1-Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
 O what a foretaste of glory divine!
 Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
 Born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.*

Refrain

*2-Perfect submission, perfect delight,
 Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
 Angels, descending, bring from above
 Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.*

Refrain

3-Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with his goodness, lost in his love.

Refrain

**Refrain: This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.**

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, we bow before you. We confess our busyness and rushing about. We fight against stillness, quiet, and waiting. In this day and age, we see waiting as an inconvenience, and it stirs anger and frustration within us. And yet, what we need is to WAIT on YOU. You have asked us to wait – to be still, to listen, to quiet ourselves and to wait some more. It is in those moments when we sit waiting that we are able to hear you – to feel you near us – and to experience your sweet presence. Slow us down, O God. Help us to relish stillness, to love quiet, and to embrace waiting on you. Thank you for your grace as we put this way of living into practice. And now, holy God, we turn to you in silent prayer to share our concerns and to seek your forgiveness.....Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

L: Hear and believe the Good News: God loves us deeply and comes to free us from slavery to passions that are not spiritually healthy for us.

P: **Our God is faithful and will not let us be tested beyond our strength.**

L: Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel -

P: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

Meeting God in the Word

Children's Message/Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson *I Corinthians 10: 1-13* *Warning from Israel's History* *Lay Leader: Georgia M.*



I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.' We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **P:** **Thanks be to God.**

Special Music

The Bell Choir

Second Reading

Luke 13: 1-9

A Choice – Repent or Perish

Carol



At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them - do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.'

Then he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, "See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?" He replied, "Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down."'

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **P: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

A Lost Art

Responding to the Word

Hymn # 286

Give to the Winds Thy Fears

1-Give to the winds thy fears; hope and be undismayed;
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears, God shall lift up thy head.

2-Through waves and clouds and storms, God gently clears thy way;
Wait patiently; so shall this night soon end in joyous day.

3-Leave to God's sovereign sway, to choose and to command;
So shalt thou, wondering, own God's way, how wise, how strong God's hand!

4-On God the Lord rely, and safe shalt thou go on;
Fix on God's work thy steadfast eye, so shall thy work be done.

*Litany of Faith

L: Isaiah 40:31 says, "Those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength."

P: We will wait on you, O Lord.

L: Psalm 37:7 says, "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him."

P: We will wait on you, O Lord.

L: Psalm 40: 1 says, "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry."

P: We will wait on you, O Lord.

L: Lamentations 3:24 says, "The Lord is my portion, therefore I will wait for him."

P: We will wait on you, O Lord, for you have promised hear our prayers and meet our needs.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

The Cares Chorus

I cast all my cares upon you. I lay all of my burdens down at your feet. And anytime, I don't know what to do, I cast all my cares upon you.

The Call to Celebrate Our Gifts

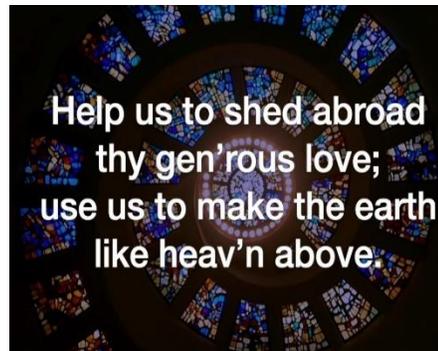
+Prayer of Dedication: Receive the offerings we bring, O Lord, and sanctify them to the holy purpose for which you intend them. Touch our hearts that we would be ever-ready to share our blessings to help bring in your kingdom here on earth. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

Going Out to Serve

Hymn #392

Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord

<p>1-Take thou our minds, dear Lord, we humbly pray; Give us the mind of Christ each passing day; Teach us to know the truth that sets us free; Grant us in all our thoughts to honor thee.</p>	<p>3-Take thou our wills, Most High! Hold thou full sway; Have in our inmost souls, thy perfect way; Guard thou each sacred hour from selfish ease; Guide thou our ordered lives as thou dost please.</p>
<p>2-Take thou our hearts, O Christ, they are thine own; Come thou within our souls and claim thy throne; Help us to shed abroad thy deathless love; Use us to make the earth like heaven above.</p>	<p>4-Take thou ourselves, O Lord, heart, mind, and will; Through our surrendered souls thy plans fulfill. We yield ourselves to thee – time, talents, all; We hear, and henceforth heed, thy sovereign call.</p>



Blessing

L: As you go from this place,
P: Know that God goes with you.
 L: Learn the art of waiting on God and following where God leads.
P: For then, we will be faithful in our following,
A: Letting God guide all our steps.
 L: And may the blessings...

Response

*He is Lord – He is Lord. He has risen from the dead, and he is Lord.
 Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.*