



LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

February 21, 2021 | **Sanctuary Service**

Order of Worship

Prelude

“Psalm 19: The Heavens Declare”
Benedetto Marcello

Welcome and announcements

Chad Middlebrooks, pastor of discipleship

Introit

“Be Joyful in the Lord”
Joan Stanton, Stephanie Wharton

Be joyful in the Lord and bless his holy name;
O bless ye his name, his name forevermore;
O bless ye his name, bless his name forevermore.
Give thanks unto the Lord, give thanks and bless his name.
His steadfast love endures, endures forever, forevermore.

For the Lord is my strength and my song;
he hath come, he hath become my strong salvation.
O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love, his steadfast love endures forever.
His steadfast love, his steadfast love endures!
O be joyful in the Lord and bless his holy name;
for he hath become, for he hath become my song and my salvation!
text from the Psalms; music by François Couperin, arr. Kenneth W. Jewell

* Call to worship

Psalm 100

Leader: Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

All: **Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.**

Leader: Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

All: **For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.**

* Hymn of praise

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
2. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,

Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore thee, op - 'ning to the sun a - bove.
well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!

Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the dark of doubt a - way;
Thou our Fa - ther, Christ our Bro - ther, all who trust in you are thine;

giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day!
teach us how to trust you ful - ly, fill us with your grace di - vine.

*** Prayer of adoration**

Sacrament of baptism

Stephanie and David Wharton bringing Sadie Mae Wharton

Call to confession

based on Matthew 18:2-3 and I John 2:28

Jesus called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

Silent prayers of confession

Choral meditation

"Children of the Heavenly Father"

Ensemble

Children of the heav'nly Father safely in his bosom gather;
nestling bird nor star in heaven such a refuge e'er was given.

God his own doth tend and nourish; in his holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things he spares them; in his mighty arms he bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever from the Lord his children sever;
unto them his grace he showeth, and their sorrows all he knoweth.

Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children ne'er forsaketh;
his the loving purpose solely to preserve them pure and holy. Amen.

text by Caroline V. Sandell-Berg; music is traditional Swedish melody, arr. Richard A. Nichols

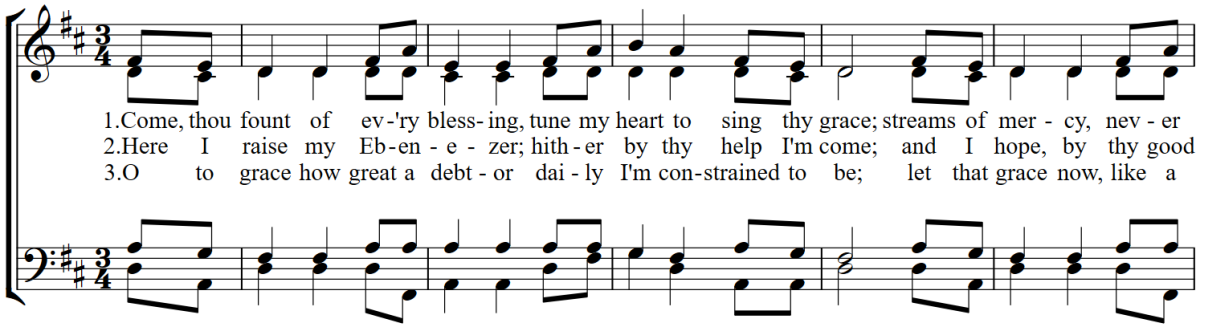
Assurance of God's pardoning grace

taken from 1 Peter 2:9-10

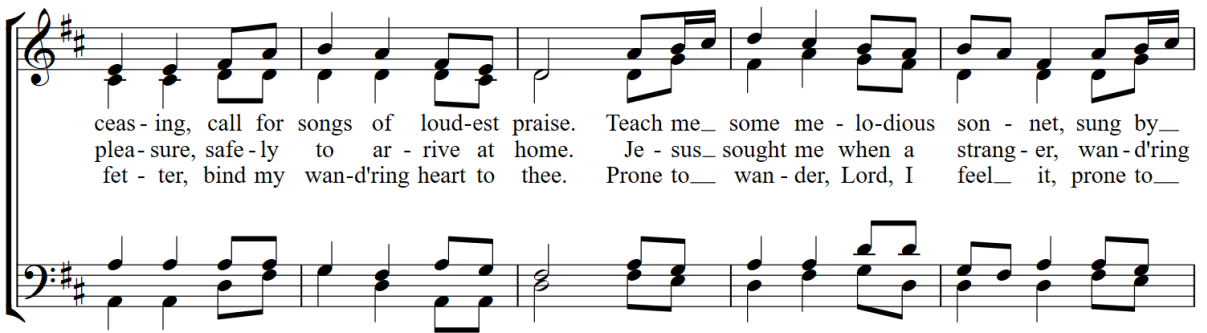
We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that we may declare the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once we were not a people, but now we are the people of God; once we had not received mercy, but now we have received mercy.

* Hymn of assurance

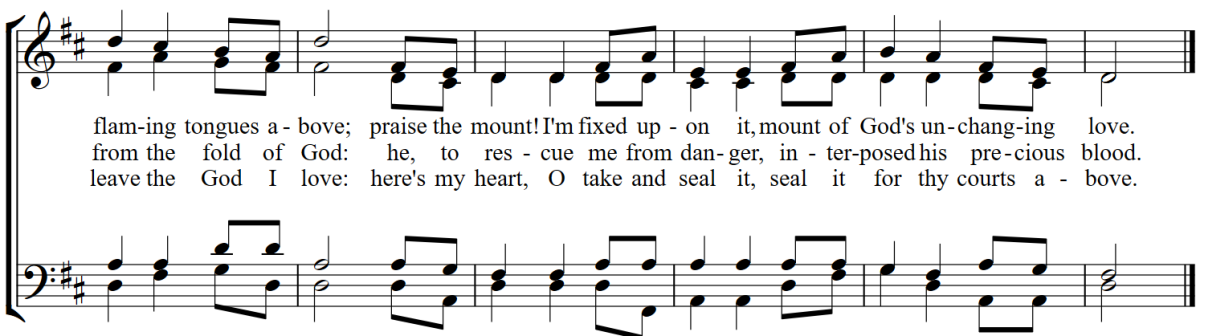
"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"



1. Come, thou fount of ev-ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; streams of mer - cy, nev - er
2. Here I raise my Eb-en - e - zer; hith - er by thy help I'm come; and I hope, by thy good
3. O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con - strained to be; let that grace now, like a



ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise. Teach me_ some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by_
plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home. Je - sus_ sought me when a strang - er, wan - d'ring
fet - ter, bind my wan - d'ring heart to thee. Prone to_ wan - der, Lord, I feel_ it, prone to_



flam - ing tongues a - bove; praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love.
from the fold of God: he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
leave the God I love: here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Prayer of intercession for children and youth

Leader: Lord Jesus, you have said in your Word, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

All: We pray this morning for children and youth in our congregation and in our community, that those who already know you would be filled with your joy, peace, and truth, and that those who do not yet know you would come to a saving relationship with you and be filled with your Spirit.

Leader: Be a guard and shield for the youngest and most vulnerable among us. Give their parents wisdom and strength to love them as you love them, and cause them to know, even at this early age, that your grace and mercy are available to all who trust in you.

All: For middle and high school students, surround them with friends and community who know and love you, who will guide them to you and your Word in every circumstance, and who will share in every joy and sorrow of this season of life. We ask that you would protect them from the enemy and any who would seek to turn them away from you.

Leader: For all children and youth, we ask that you would shape their hearts to be filled with the fruits of the Spirit and alive with curiosity and wonder at all that you are and all you have made.

All: We ask for your peace, which passes all understanding, to guard their hearts and minds during this year of continued uncertainty. May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you. Amen.

Matthew 19:14, Philippians 4:7, Psalm 33:22

* Scripture reading from Acts 26:1-32

Chad Middlebrooks

¹Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense: ²"King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defense against all the accusations of the Jews, ³and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently. ⁴The Jews all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. ⁵They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee.

⁶And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. ⁷This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. ⁸Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?

⁹“I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them. ¹²On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. ¹⁴We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ ¹⁵Then I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ the Lord replied. ¹⁶‘Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’ ¹⁹So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. ²¹That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. ²²But I have had God’s help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen—²³that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles.”

²⁴At this point Festus interrupted Paul’s defense. “You are out of your mind, Paul!” he shouted. “Your great learning is driving you insane.” ²⁵“I am not insane, most excellent Festus,” Paul replied. “What I am saying is true and reasonable. ²⁶The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. ²⁷King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do.” ²⁸Then Agrippa said to Paul, “Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?” ²⁹Paul replied, “Short time or long—I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what

I am, except for these chains.”³⁰The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them.³¹They left the room, and while talking with one another, they said, “This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment.”³²Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*** Doxology**

**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.
Amen.**

Prayer of preparation for the study of God’s Word

Sermon

“Embodying and Expressing the Gospel Message”
Joe Novenson, pastor of senior adults

Like Paul, we live to embody and express the Gospel message that:

1. Jesus has been raised from the dead. (vv. 1-8)
 - He brings life-shaping hope to us.

 - He steadies us to speak with resurrection power.

2. Jesus brings radical transformation to his people. (vv. 9-23)
 - When we become followers of Jesus, heaven intersects earth and God’s Word pierces our hearts.

- Jesus personally transforms us and repurposes our lives so that we join in his mission to transform the earth.
3. Jesus calls us to “bear witness” to himself. (vv. 24-32)
- Seeking to address the questions and accusations of the people
 - Inviting those around us to believe
 - Praying for God to use the time we have to winsomely represent him
 - Pointing faithfully to Jesus

“If I find a key on the road and discover that it fit and opened a particular lock, I’d assume most likely the key was made by the lock-maker. If I find a teaching set out in pre-modern Oriental society that has proven itself of such universal validity that it has fascinated or satisfied millions of people in every century, including the best minds and yet the simplest hearts, that it has made itself at home in virtually every culture, inspired masterpieces in every field of art, and continues to grow and spread rapidly...even today, is it likely to be the work of a deceiver or a fool? Is it not more likely designed by the heart-maker?”

G. K. Chesterton

Pastoral prayer

* Hymn of response

"Take My Life, and Let It Be"

1. Take my life, and let it be con-se - crat - ed, Lord, to thee.
2. Take my hands, and let them move at the im - pulse of thy love.
3. Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no long - er mine.
4. Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its trea - sure - store.

Take my mo - ments and my days; let them flow in
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beau - ti -
Take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy
Take my self, and I will be ev - er, on - ly,

cease - less praise, let them flow in cease - less praise.
ful for thee, swift and beau - ti - ful for thee.
roy - al throne, it shall be thy roy - al throne.
all for thee, ev - er, on - ly, all for thee.

* **Benediction**

* **Congregational response**

“Threefold Amen”

Postlude

Fugue in G Minor
J. S. Bach

* *Congregation standing as you are able*

Musicians for this week:

Ensemble
Joy Gibbons – director

Joshua Knight – organ, piano

Celebrating the baptism of Sadie Mae Wharton at the 9:00 service in the sanctuary today are her parents, Stephanie and David Wharton.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOIN US FOR WEDNESDAY NIGHT TAKEOUT this Wednesday, February 24. Registration is now open via Realm. The cost is \$5 per meal and pick-up will be from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. under the porte-cochere. You may pay by cash, check, or Venmo (@LktMtnPC) when you pick up your meal. If you have problems registering, please contact the church office.

WE WILL BE HOLDING AN IN-PERSON WOMEN'S "MINI-RETREAT" this Saturday, February 27. The topic will be “Refresh: A Morning on Grief and Hope” and our speakers will be Caroline Scruggs and Julia Friedman. The cost is \$20 which includes a take-home lunch, and registration is open via Realm through **this Monday, February 22**. You can find more information at lmpc.org/women.

MEMBERS AND REGULAR ATTENDERS OF LMPC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND TWO ONLINE SEMINARS designed to build awareness around sexual abuse and help us become better equipped to create a safe community for all at LMPC. These seminars will take place **today** and on February 28 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom and have been organized by LMPC as part of our response to the recent GRACE report and recommendations. If you did not receive an email with a Zoom link, please email diane@lmpc.org. You can find more information at lmpc.org/investigation.

LENT

Churches in the Reformed tradition like our own do not have a long history of promoting the practice of Lent, the 40-day period before the celebration of Easter. In recent years, however, many evangelical Christians have begun observing Lent in some form or fashion, sometimes adopting the tradition of giving up something like chocolate or coffee. We believe that it is important to remember that the practice of Lent was not established by Christ or the apostles, and scholars have pointed out with growing frequency that a 40-day Lent was not the common practice of the church in its first 300 years. We also think it is extremely important for any of us who choose to observe Lent in some way to understand that we never fast, repent, or abstain from something we love in order to earn anything from God. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, believers are already partakers of Christ and all his benefits. We have already received a kingdom that cannot be shaken. (Heb. 12:28)

Lent is neither an obligation nor a duty, but we recognize that it can be helpful to thoughtfully engage in a period of waiting and watching in the days leading up to Easter. We have chosen to put certain visual reminders of Lent in place in both of our worship locations. The sparse floral décor can help us remember the example of our Savior, who made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. (Phil. 2:9) The pulpit cloth in the sanctuary is changed to kingly purple, reminding us of the reign of Christ our King. As we move towards Easter, we do well to spend more time savoring the goodness of God and the depth of his love for us.

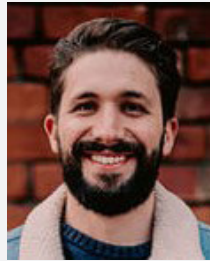
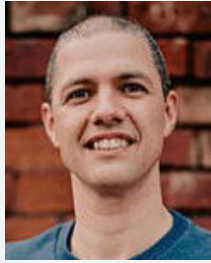
IN MEMORIAM

Martha Kent

September 26, 1927 – February 17, 2021

The rosebud in the fellowship hall is for the birth of Lolly Joiner Brooks, born to Meredith and Jay Brooks on February 16.

WORLD MISSIONS MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: TRINITY CHURCH MANCHESTER



Lead Pastor, Pete Evans and Assistant Pastor, Malc Clark

Trinity Church Manchester was planted into the north of Manchester in June 2020. It was planted by our supported church plant City Church Manchester. The church began with 23 adults and 8 children and has grown already despite the significant restrictions in England during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Manchester as a whole is strongly secular, with less than 3% of people attending any church. The north of the city is particularly under-served by evangelical churches, and Trinity Church was planted to be a hub church for the communities around it. The vision of the church is to be a Gospel community for north Manchester that gives, grows, and partners for God's glory.

Please join us in praying for Trinity Church:

- Give thanks that their membership continues to grow and stabilize during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Pray for the provision of a space to meet. They are meeting online, but this has become more challenging as the months go by.
- Pray for contacts in the community. That they would be able to build connections and meaningful relationships, even as social gatherings and meetings are restricted due to Covid.