

Use the following worship guide as we gather on Sunday morning via Zoom. Simply click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2398495210>

** Announcements are at the end of this order of worship. **



The Service of Worship
First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ
Baltimore, Maryland
Second Sunday in Lent – Year B

February 25, 2024

10:30 a.m.

Prelude

Nancy Flandermeyer Chronister, Director of Music

Sonata in G

Joseph Bologne, Chevalier des Saint Georges (12/25/1745-6/9/1799) was a French violinist, conductor, and composer. Bologne was the first classical composer of African descent to achieve widespread acclaim in classical European music.

Welcome

The Rev. Kelly M. Sisson, Pastor

Hymn for Worship (see insert) MV #148 *Hope of Abraham and Sarah*

CAELAN

~ as you are able, please stand ~

Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Liturgist

Call to Worship ~ ~ congregation reads **bold print** ~ ~

Lent calls us to journey, this and every day, following Jesus wherever he leads us.

Lent calls us to journey: to the place where God covenants with us, to receive the new names we are given.

Lent calls us to worship together, to tell future generations the good news.

Lent calls us to practice justice, to bring God's hope to all people.

Lent calls us to faithful living, to trust the One who gives us life.

Lent calls each of us to take up our cross, to trust the One who bears it with us.

Lent calls us to journey with God.

Let us worship God, who walks with us, this and every day.

Our Joys and Concerns

Remember these known joys and concerns:

- Peace in our world
- Nex Benedict
- Beth Wheat's sister, Pat; awaiting surgery
- The Flandermeyers – Nancy Chronister's parents
- Doug and Anthony

- Laura Weaver Haas's mother and father
- Nikki Balding's father-in-law in hospice care
- Bryce – Jen Langdon's nephew
- Betty – Carol Berman's cousin living with cancer

Choral Response MV #69 (see insert) *Kyrie Eleison* KERVIN
 ~ remain seated as we sing ~

Call to Reconciliation

Given a test on our faith, would we have a passing grade? Looking at our lives of discipleship, would we be considered good models for others? When we fail to trust God, we discover that we do indeed lead barren lives. Let us be honest as we stand before our God, and bring our confessions for forgiveness and hope.

Unison Prayer of Confession

God of Sarah and Abraham, in this holy place, we know how weak is our discipleship. We can spend hours at the computer, but only give you fleeting moments of our time. We can talk endlessly on our cell phones, but fall silent when it comes to sharing our fears, our worries, our hopes with you. We seek quick fixes for our problems, rather than seeking your vision and future for our lives. God of Peter, Paul, and the psalmist, forgive us: for our lack of trust; for our faithless living; for our closing our ears to the call of Jesus. Forgive us, so we may lay aside all the keeps us from you, so we may take up the life you offer to us, through Jesus Christ, our brother.

Silence is kept

Assurance of Pardon

This is the good news: God does not go back on the promises made so long ago. God does not reject us, God redeems us. God does not withhold love, God pours it into our barren lives.

Forgiven of our sins, filled with hope, living in relationship with God and one another - we are a new people. Thanks be to God.

Choral Response MV #69 (see insert) *Kyrie Eleison* KERVIN
 ~ remain seated as we sing ~

Hymn for Hope NCH #461 *Let Us Hope when Hope Seems Hopeless* LET US HOPE
 ~ as you are able, please stand ~

The Gospel Lesson *Mark 8:31-38* Liturgist

The Anthem *The Call* Choir

By Ralph Vaughan Williams, Arranged by Paul Hamill

The Message *Church as a Safe Space* Rev. Sisson

Making an Offering

Please consider making an offering through on-line giving, or mail your check to the church address. You can find information on our church web page: first-ststephens.org You may also place your offering in the offering plate in the sanctuary. Or, you may use the QR Code that is at the end of the announcements.

Prayer of Dedication/offering

May these gifts represent our willingness to deny ourselves, so others might be blessed by your grace, your peace, as well as your hope, in every moment of their lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Hymn for Community NCH #314 *Community of Christ* LEONI
 ~ as you are able, please stand ~

Benediction
 Postlude

Worship Materials are adapted today from:
Thom Shuman, PCUSA

+ + + + +

Welcome! We are glad you are here. If you are visiting with us, please fill out a visitor's card from the back of one of the chairs and either place it in the offering plate or hand it to the pastor after the service. Please stay for coffee and conversation in the Gathering Room after the service.

There will be an informal church-wide meeting after the service of the **Strategic Planning and Visioning Committee's proposal**. Committee members will introduce materials to help us carry out the areas for which we have volunteered as well as other information. If you have not yet signed up for an area in which to volunteer, please do so today!

The Art Gallery is open today from noon to 2p.m. Thank you, **Bill Ingram**, for being today's docent. Docent schedule:

Mar. 3 – Carol Berman

Mar. 10 – Sharon Barr

Mar. 17 – Lois Joellenbeck

Please bring sanitary products for "Changing the Cycles" as we help end menstrual poverty; and beef stew, canned chili, or soups for ACTC.

Next Sunday – Join us for worship and communion as we are led by The Rev. Karen Lovelace. Then, on March 10 as we hear from Julie Lauver, the instructor who coordinated our gallery theme, "Safe Space."

To Make an Offering Now



Consistory for 2024

Amanda Ajulu – President - amandamajulu@yahoo.com

Jen Langdon – Vice President - jenjele@gmail.com

Bill Ingram – Treasurer - william.ingram@gmail.com

Richard Arrington - richard_arrington2003@yahoo.com

Emily Perl – emilyperl78@gmail.com

Laura Weaver Haas – laurahaas0720@gmail.com

Nancy Ciesla - nciesla62@gmail.com

Nancy Chronister – Member at Large - nancyfc88@comcast.net

Kelly Sisson – Member at Large - fssuccpastor@gmail.com

Strategic Planning Committee

Amanda Adjulu – Chairperson

Lake Prescott

Tim Wheat

Debbie Kavanagh

Brittany Claridge

amandamajulu@yahoo.com

lprescott@towson.edu

wtwheat@gmail.com

debbiekav83@gmail.com

bkap12@gmail.com

Church Staff

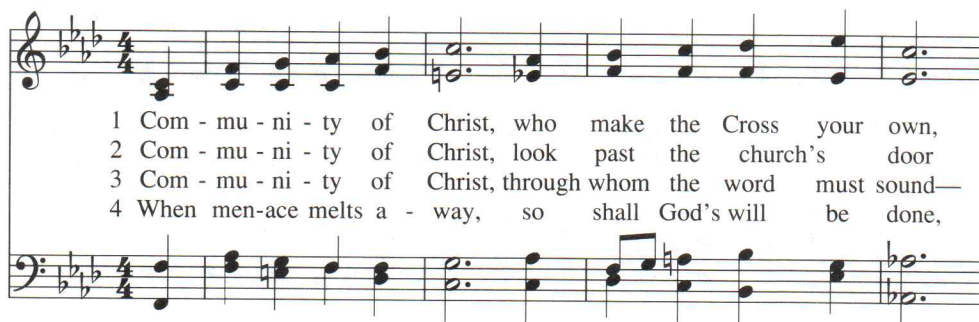
Kelly M. Sisson **Pastor** fssuccpastor@gmail.com (410)832-3974
Nancy Chronister **Director of Music** nancyfc88@comcast.net (610)724-6096
Alex Vishio **Theologian at Large** avishio@mail.smu.edu
Zach Langdon-Kennedy **Artist in Residence** tinnatupaws@gmail.com
Deb Taylor **Administrative Assistant** fss.church.ofc@gmail.com (410)377-5224
Renard Noble **Properties Caregiver** (410) 419-5199

Church Office (410) 377-5224
WiFi Password: ONAcomma

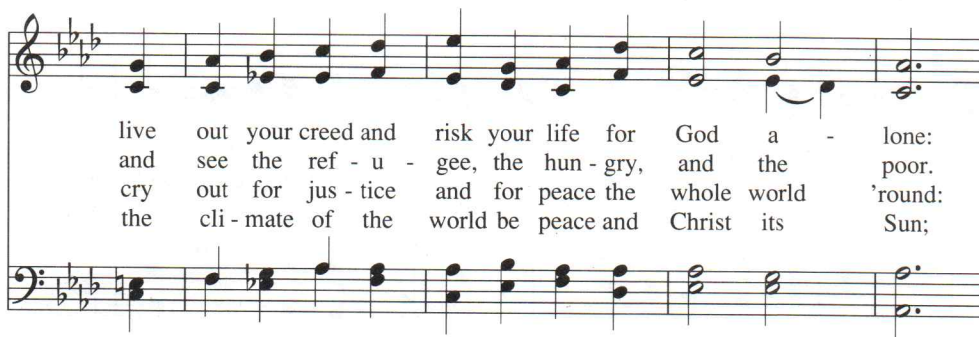
Community of Christ

314

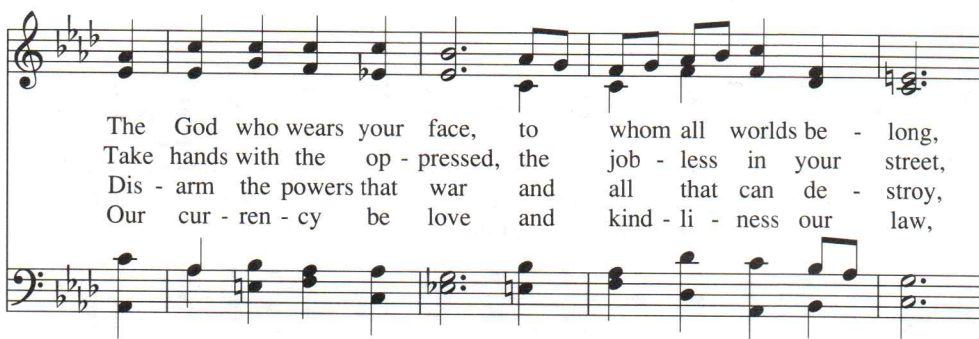
Shirley Erena Murray, 1985



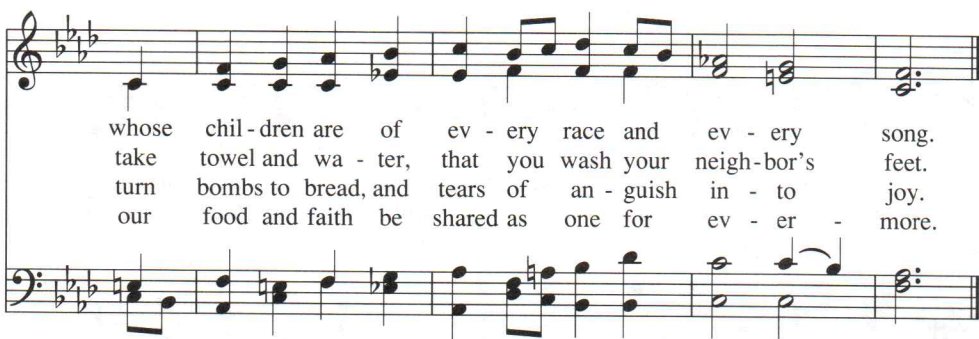
1 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, who make the Cross your own,
 2 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, look past the church's door,
 3 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, through whom the word must sound—
 4 When men-ace melts a - way, so shall God's will be done,



live out your creed and risk your life for God a - lone:
 and see the ref - u - gee, the hun - gry, and the poor.
 cry out for jus - tice and for peace the whole world 'round:
 the cli - mate of the world be peace and Christ its Sun;



The God who wears your face, to whom all worlds be - long,
 Take hands with the op - pressed, the job - less in your street,
 Dis - arm the powers that war and all that can de - stroy,
 Our cur - ren - cy be love and kind - li - ness our law,



whose chil - dren are of ev - ery race and ev - ery song.
 take towel and wa - ter, that you wash your neigh - bor's feet.
 turn bombs to bread, and tears of an - guish in - to joy.
 our food and faith be shared as one for ev - er - more.

Shirley Erena Murray has grown up within the Ecumenical Movement and addresses related themes such as Christian unity and social justice in her hymnody. This text was first sung at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

Tune: LEONI 6.6.8.4.D.
 Traditional Hebrew melody
 Adapt. Meyer Lyon, 1770

Kyrie Eleison (Kervin)

69

♩ = 80 F

Greek: Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, ky - ri - e e - le - i -
 French: Ô Sei - gneur, prends pi - tié, ô Sei - gneur, prends pi -

Gm⁷ C F C⁷/G Am Dm Gm/B^b Gm⁷/C F

son, ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
 tié, ô Sei - gneur, prends pi - tié, Sei - gneur, prends pi - tié de nous.

This Kyrie will sing well in unison or with the full SATB harmony.

Words: traditional liturgical text; French trans. David Fines, 2006 Music: William S. Kervin, 2005; arr. Bryn Nixon, 2006
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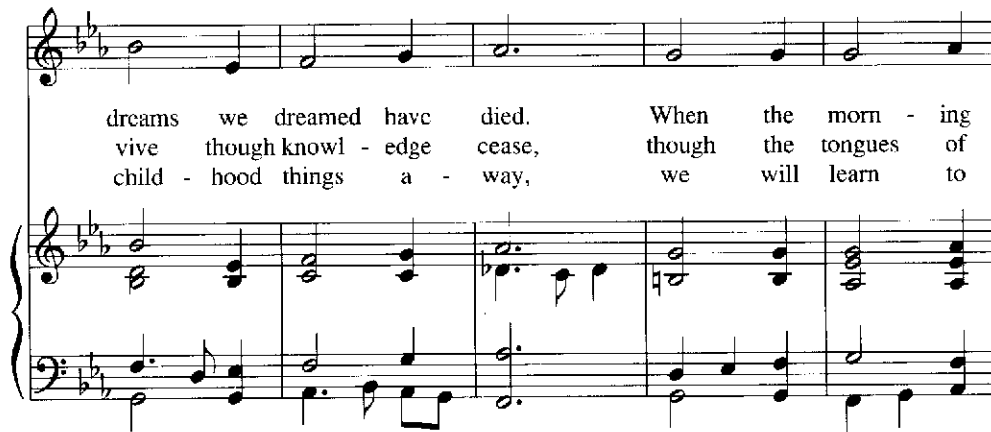
Let Us Hope when Hope Seems Hopeless

Ps. 126:5-6; Rom. 4:18; 1 Cor. 13

David Beebe, 1989



1 Let us hope when hope seems hope - less, when the
 2 Faith and hope in love's com - pas - sion will sur -
 3 Like a child out - grow - ing child - hood, set - ting



dreams we dreamed have died. When the morn - ing
 vive though knowl - edge cease, though the tongues of
 child - hood things a - way, we will learn to



breaks in bright - ness, hun - ger shall be sat - is - fied.
 joy fall si - lent, dull the words of proph - e - cies.
 live in free - dom, in the life of God's new day.

Emma Lou Diemer, organist since the age of thirteen, studied composition at Yale University and Eastman School of Music, and has published orchestra, chamber, choral, and organ works. David Beebe wrote this text while teaching a course on creative writing. A minister of the United Church of Christ, Beebe has served on the staff of the denomination's Stewardship Council.

Tune: LET US HOPE 8.7.8.7.D.
 Emma Lou Diemer, 1994
 Alternate tune: HYFRYDOL

One who sows the fields with weep - ing shall re - trace the
 Faith shall see and trust its ob - ject; hope shall set its
 Now we see as in a mir - ror. Then we shall see

sor - row - ing way and re - jice in har - vest
 an - chor sure; love shall bloom in Love e -
 face to face, un - der - stand how love's com -

boun - ty at the break - ing of the day.
 ter - nal. Faith and hope and love en - dure.
 pas - sion blos - soms through a - maz - ing Grace.

Hope of Abraham and Sarah

148

♩ = 92 D G D G A⁷ F^{#m}7 Bm Em⁷ Asus⁴ A

1 Hope of A-bra-ham and Sar - ah, friend of Ha - gar, God of Ruth,
 2 Root us in our own tra - di - tion, faith our fore-bears han-ded down.
 3 Hope of A-bra-ham and Sar - ah, sov²reign God whom we a - dore,

 D G D G A⁷ F^{#m}7 Bm Em⁷ A⁷ D

you de-sire that ev -'ry peo - ple wor-ship you in spir - it, truth.
 Grow us in your grace and know - ledge; plant our feet on so - lid ground.
 form in us your new cre - a - tion free of vio - lence, hate, and war.

Bm F^{#m} Em⁷ A⁷ D G D E⁷ Asus⁴ A

Meet us in our sac - red plac - es, mosque and syn - a - gogue and church.
 Cul - ti - vate the seeds of shar - ing in this world of ma - ny creeds.
 So may To - rah, cross and cres - cent, each a sign of life made new,

 D G D G A⁷ F^{#m}7 Bm Em⁷ A⁷ D

Show us paths of un - der - stand - ing; bless us in our com - mon search.
 Keep us o - pen, wise in learn - ing, bear - ing fruit in lov - ing deeds.
 point us t'ward your love and jus - tice, earth at peace and one in you.

A hymn of unity for the Abrahamic traditions; Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.

Words: Peter Duck, 2004
 Music: Judith Snowdon, 2006
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CAELIAN
 8 7 8 7 D
 Alternate tunes: OMNI DIE
 or ARFON (major)