

3-21-2021 ~ Worship ~ Drive-In  
Tune to 98.7 FM



### THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

## AGAIN & AGAIN, WE ARE REFORMED

John 12:20-33 | Jeremiah 31:31-34

We desire for God to write on our hearts so that God's law can re-shape and re-form us from the inside out. Reformation is a journey of letting the old fall away for something new to emerge, of returning to God's words over and over, of being drawn into the heart of God. This is the process of justification and sanctification; transformation must be internal and communal.

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Every week is a new week,

Another chance to say:

**"Here I am. Use me."**

Every day is a new day,

Another chance to say:

**"Thank you for yesterday. Thank you for tomorrow."**

Every hour is a new hour,

Another chance to say,

**"Again and again, make me new."**

We do not come to this place to stay the same.

**We come to this place to be changed.**

So let us worship holy God,

Who created yesterday, will create tomorrow,

and even now is creating something new.

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Song ~ “ **AGAIN & AGAIN** ” - Lent 5 (TUNE: EBENEZER; TEXT: Jesús Gomez)

- 1 In this time of endless waiting, help us find our rest in thee.  
Teach us now to trust your promise of a reign where all are free.  
Meet us now in baptismal waters; meet us now in wine and bread.  
Bring us closer, call us deeper; all our idols help us shed.
- 2 In this time of deep discomfort, help us ever grow in you.  
Lovingly, you show our error; fill us with your biding truth.  
Though you made us without defect, we so often lose our way.  
Like the potter, you reform us, fashion, shape us, like new clay.
- 3 In this time of doubt and sorrow, let us seek your voice anew.  
Help remind us of your goodness; how the lost you do pursue.  
How, no matter when we falter; you, in love, have called us blessed!  
You restore, renew, replenish; meeting us again & again.

### CALL TO CONFESSION

In the gospel of John, a group of Greek people approach the disciples and say,

“We would like to see Jesus.”

It's a brief, beautiful moment

that the text doesn't spend a lot of time on,

And yet, it always catches my eye.

It catches my eye, because the phrase, “I want to see Jesus,”

Feels like it should be my constant prayer.

Help me see Jesus.

I'd like to see Jesus.

Bring me closer to Jesus.

In the prayer of confession,

We take a moment to recognize

how much space exists between us and those words,

Trusting that even when we forget to seek out God,

God is seeking us out.

So join me in the prayer of confession today

as we take one step closer to the Divine . . .

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God,  
We want to see you.  
We want to be known as the people who looked for Jesus;  
But not only that, we want to be people  
    who have your covenant written on our hearts.  
Why do we feel so far away from that at times?  
What went wrong?  
Where did we lose our way?  
Could you, would you, once again, write on our fragile hearts?  
We would be so grateful.  
Amen.

## WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: Friends, despite our wonderings,  
Despite our distractions,  
Despite wrong turns time and time again,  
We are known and loved by God.  
Like a lighthouse keeper by the sea,  
God will never stop waving us home.  
So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:  
**All: Our fragile bones are held by the Great Creator.  
Our fragile hearts are loved by the Great Creator.  
Our tender spirits are forgiven by the Great Creator.**  
One: Today is a new day.  
**All: Again and again, we are forgiven;  
Again and again, we are reformed.  
Thanks be to God.  
Amen.**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

If we could buy our way closer to you, we'd sell everything we have.  
If we could work our way to you, we'd never take a day off.  
If we could walk our way to you, we'd keep our tennis shoes on tight.  
But I know—we know—we cannot buy, or work,  
    or walk our way closer to you.  
We must listen our way closer to you.  
So holy God, as you have so often done again and again,

Open our ears.  
Clear out the self-talk that keeps us from you.  
Dust out the negativity and distractions.  
Remove any doubt hindering our way. Amen.

## **Again & Again Chat**

### **God's Word in Scripture**

#### **Jeremiah 31:31-34**

1 “Behold, the days are coming, says YHWH, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them up out of the land of Egypt—a covenant they broke, though I was their spouse, says YHWH. 33 But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says YHWH: I will put my Law in their minds and on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

34 “No longer will they need to teach one another or remind one another to listen to YHWH. All of them, high and low alike, will listen to me, says YHWH, for I will forgive their misdeeds and will remember their sins no more.

#### **John 12:20-33**

20 Among those who had come up to worship at the Passover festival were some Greeks. 21 They approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put forth this request: “Please, we would like to see Jesus.” 22 Philip went to tell Andrew, and together the two went to tell Jesus.

23 Jesus replied,

“Now the hour has come for the Chosen One to be glorified.

24 The truth of the matter is, unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest.

25 If you love your life you'll lose it; if you hate your life in this world you'll keep it for eternal life.

26 Anyone who wants to work for me must follow in my footsteps,  
and wherever I am, my worker will be there too.

Anyone who works for me will be honored by Abba God.

27 Now my soul is troubled. What will I say:

‘Abba, save me from this hour?’

But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour.

28 Abba, glorify your name!”

A voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it  
again.”

29 The crowds that stood nearby heard this and said it was a clap of  
thunder; others said, “It was an angel speaking.”

30 Jesus answered, “It was not for my sake that this voice came,  
but for yours.

31 “Sentence is now being passed on this world;  
now the ruler of this world will be overthrown.

32 And when I am lifted up from this earth,  
I will draw all people to myself.”

33 By these words Jesus indicated the kind of death he would die.

## Message

**Song: #330 As the Sun with Longer Journey (TUNE: PICARDY - #490)**

- 1 As the sun with longer journey  
melts the winter's snow and ice,  
with its slowly growing radiance  
warms the seed beneath the earth,  
may the sun of Christ's uprising  
gently bring our hearts to life.**
- 2 Through the days of waiting, watching,  
in the desert of our sin,  
searching on the far horizon  
for a sign of cloud or wind,  
we await the healing waters  
of our Savior's victory.**

- 3 Praise be given to the maker  
of the seasons' yearly round:  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit  
Source, Sustainer, Lord of life,  
as the ever turning ages  
roll to their eternal rest.

#### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I refuse to believe that I am powerless.  
I refuse to believe that injustice and hatred  
are simply the way it has to be.  
I refuse to believe that I am better  
or more deserving than my neighbor.  
I refuse to believe that my self-worth is rooted  
in my accomplishments or appearance.  
I refuse to believe that the Church is dying,  
because I see God all around me.  
I refuse to believe that the traditions of old  
are the only path for moving forward.  
I refuse to believe that I cannot make a difference.  
So with hope in my heart,  
I will strive to live a life of courage, conviction, and compassion,  
Just as Jesus taught us. Amen.

#### Offering

#### Prayers of Intercession

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

You wash us through and through and remember our sin no more. Make your church a community of forgiveness throughout the world. Give your people courage to forgive; through them show the world new possibilities. Bless ministries of repentance and reconciliation. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

You fill the earth—from tiny grains of wheat to the mighty thunder—with your presence, and you call us to attend to your will for all creation. Grant weather that prepares the soil for seeds; protect all from violent storms, flooding, and wildfires. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

You promise to write your law on our hearts. Guide citizens throughout the world to shape communities that reflect your mercy, justice, and peace, and give them creativity to work for the welfare of all. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

You sustain us with your bountiful Spirit. Restore the joy of all who need to know your presence: those who are lonely or feel unforgivable, those who need healing of mind or body, those who are dying, and all who grieve. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

Jesus calls us to follow him in life and death. Empower this congregation in discipleship. Equip children and teachers in Sunday school, confirmation, and learning ministries. Give us your truth and wisdom and teach us to follow Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

**Mercy becomes You.**

*For whom or what else do you pray?*

In the cross of Christ, your name is glorified. We praise you for those who have given us words to worship you. With all those who have died in Christ, bring us into life everlasting. Hear us, O God.

**Mercy becomes You.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

### **The Words of Holy Communion**

God is with us!

Lift up your hearts!

Give thanks to God!

For the power of love in human life and history,  
we give thanks and praise.

Long ago our ancestors knew love's power  
and they became the tellers of love's tale.

Love bound them in covenant,  
teaching them to live in community  
with compassion and concern  
for the poorest among them.

Yet centuries of domination and violence  
shaped a different kind of community  
based on selfishness and inequality.

In the struggle against oppression,  
Jesus became the face of love,  
showing us the way to abundant life.  
In word and deed, he announced  
love's new reign of justice, reconciliation, and peace.  
Filled with the courage and passion of love's spirit,  
he gave his life to challenge the unjust systems of this world.

On the night of his betrayal and arrest,  
as he shared a meal with his friends,  
Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it,  
and gave it to his followers, saying:  
"Share this bread among you;  
this is my body which will be broken for justice.  
Do this to remember me."

When supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
"Share this wine among you;  
this is my blood which will be shed for liberation.  
Do this to remember me."

God of love, spirit of compassion,  
bless us and this bread and wine.  
May this meal be food and drink for our journey—  
renewing, sustaining, and making us whole.

### **Christ's Prayer** (*Inclusive*)

*We pray together in the Spirit that Jesus taught:*  
**Our Creator in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## Invitation

When we eat this bread and drink from this cup  
we experience again the presence of Jesus in our midst.

The table is ready. All are welcome. Come, for the feast is spread.

*As the bread and wine are shared, these words are said:*

The bread of life for all who hunger.  
The cup of compassion for a broken world.

## Lamb of God ~ ELW Setting 10 (p. 208)

O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
You suffered death, our lives to save: have mercy now, we pray.  
O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
You set us free from guilt and grave: have mercy now, we pray.  
O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
Eternal peace with God you made: have mercy now, we pray.

## Blessing Prayer after the Meal

May this meal nourish us and refresh us,  
may it strengthen us and renew us, may it unite us and keep us in God's  
gracious love, now and forever. Amen

*Let us pray.*

God of love, we give you thanks for satisfying our hungry hearts with  
this meal. Send us from here to reveal your love in the world. Inspire in  
us the resolve and the courage, the compassion and the passion, to do  
justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you. Amen

## Announcements

## A CHARGE & BENEDICTION

### AGAIN & AGAIN, A LENTEN REFRAIN

As you leave this space,  
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.  
May your arms hold those in need.  
May your feet walk toward justice.  
May your heart trust its worth.  
May your soul dance in God's grace.  
And may this be your rhythm --  
Again and again and again,  
Until God's promised day.  
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,  
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace.  
Amen.

#### **Sending Song: #379 Now the green blade rises (v. 1, 2 and 4).**

- 1 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
love lives again, that with the dead has been;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.
  
- 2 In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,  
thinking that he would never wake again;  
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.
  
- 4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,  
your touch can call us back to life again,  
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.

#### **Sending**

Again & again & again - God's love holds us, shows us, remains with us.  
Go in God's abiding love for you, the world, and all of creation. Amen.

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## Acknowledgements:

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<https://www.ebooks.com/en-us/book/662290/the-inclusive-bible/priests-for-equality/>); *Priests for Equality is a movement of women and men throughout the world—laity, religious and clergy—who work for the full participation of women and men in church and society. A project of the Quixote Center in Brentwood, Maryland, Priests for Equality is a grass-roots organization committed to creating a culture where sexism and exclusion are left behind and equality and full participation are the order of the day.*

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**The Words of Holy Communion**, by Kurt Struckmeyer

<https://progressivechristianity.org/resources/the-words-of-the-eucharist>

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## ABOUT THE LOGO & BRANDING

“When discussing photography for the theme, we explored visual patterns found in nature and human design; however, we noticed that the expansiveness of the theme was minimized with any recognizable imagery. Therefore, we decided it best to capture movement and high contrast, while avoiding any particular subject matter. As I worked with typography for the words ‘Again and Again,’ I changed the ‘and’ to an ampersand, and became fixated on the visual flow of the shape. After many attempts of including imagery, as well as the word ‘again’ in the logo, it became clear that simplifying was the way to go. The ampersand became the main symbol and focal point of the branding. Visually, it has similarities to the infinity symbol or a music staff. It could represent our winding Lenten journey; the curves mimic the cycles of our faith, and the repetitive patterns that can both trap or ground us. Mostly, the ampersand emphasizes God’s holy ‘and.’ When we become weary from the motion blur chaos of our lives, God promises that there is always more to the story—death does not have the last word. We decided to place the motion blur photography inside the ampersand to represent how our brokenness, lament, and destructive cycles are part of our reality, but they don’t take up the entirety of the view. In the ampersand, in God’s sacred ‘and,’ the chaos is contained, held, and transformed into beauty with the light of sunrise on resurrection morning.”

— The Revs. Lauren Wright Pittman & Lisle Gwynn Garrity