



“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” - Luke 6:36



*Ayesha Feisal
The Things You Don't Say*

Gathering as the Body of Christ

CENTERING SONG "WE ARE MARCHING IN THE LIGHT OF GOD (SIYAHAMBA)"

AAHH 164

GREETING

PRESIDER

*CALL TO WORSHIP

STUDENT MINISTER

Beautiful are the works of God!

Beautiful are the skins of God's people!

Beautiful is the mind of God!

Beautiful also are the hopes of God's people!

Beautiful is the heart of God!

Beautiful also are the souls of God's people!

God made the heavens and the earth!

To God be the glory for the things God has done!

*OPENING HYMN

"10,000 REASONS"

Chorus

Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul

Worship His holy name

Sing like never before O my soul

I'll worship Your holy name

Verse 1

The sun comes up it's a new day dawning

It's time to sing Your song again

Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me

Let me be singing when the evening comes

Verse 2

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger

Your name is great and Your heart is kind

For all Your goodness I will keep on singing

Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

Verse 3

And on that day when my strength is failing

The end draws near and my time has come

Still my soul will sing Your praise unending

Ten thousand years and then forevermore

Tag

Worship Your holy name
Lord I'll worship Your holy name

Ending

Sing like never before O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name
Worship Your holy name
Worship Your holy name

*CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

[All are invited to turn toward the Baptismal Font.]

Presider: The baptismal font reminds us of God's promise of cleansing and forgiveness. In that confidence, let us lift our voices in a prayer of confession.

S. Minister: God, we run from Truth and from the people we know who have not told it in the past. We handle mercy with a credit card and not with our hands. We become cynical, believing Justice is always trumped by self-interest. We despair when Peace is trampled by people of faith. Up from the ground of Africa, down from the bright sky, come, O God, now, and help us to believe in your Kiss—the Kiss of God that will restore and revive all of your people. **Amen.**

All: **God's unending love cleanses and renews us. We are forgiven. Amen.**

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

STUDENT MINISTER

Let us find inspiration from the words of Maya Angelou: "On this platform of peace, we can create a language to translate ourselves to ourselves and to each other. We Angels and Mortals, Believers and Non-Believers, look heavenward and speak the word aloud. Peace. We look at our world and speak the word aloud. Peace. We look at each other, then into ourselves and we say without shyness or apology or hesitation. Peace, My [Sibling], Peace, My Soul."

And also with you.

You are invited to pass the peace to each other in a non-contact way that's comfortable to you and your neighbor.

Service of the Word

POEM

“SOME DAYS (TO AKAWU)”

NIYI OSUNDARE

This prose connects to the scripture through the concept that broken is whole and the unity of all of the broken creates something beautiful and blessed.

Reader

Some days know
the secret leaning of the heart
their auricles are acres of clay
watered by the kindest dew
their music the beat of every pulse
smiles grow in the garden of their lips

there is grace in their greeting
bliss in their blessing
a merciful moon sits
in the center of their night
their hours ripen
in the shadows of a generous sun

when they pass
houses throw open their doors
flowers drape them
in their rarest fragrance
for them tenderness is no treason
compassion is no constraint

some days
are not allergic to softness
some days
are not afraid of being human

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

STUDENT MINISTER

God of fire and light who dwells in thick darkness, the light and the dark are alike to thee, open the eyes of our hearts that we might see. **Amen.**

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke, chapter 6, verses 27 through 38.

“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you. “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you?

Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

Hear what God is saying to the people. **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

MINISTER TAWANDA STALLWORTH (23-FEB)

NEIL REEVES (26-FEB)

Love, you are strong as a dark blue mountain
Love, you are as fluid as a wide silver river

Love, you are as splendid as a clear night sky
Love, you are as mysterious as a dark forest.

Love, you are as wise as enduring friendship.
***Love, you are true power, not mere distraction
truth, not deceit,
purpose, not impulse,
poetry, not prose,
sing no sang,
now more than tomorrow,
but tomorrow more than yesterday***

Love, condense yourself into this moment,
permeate the silence that joins us in community,
so that in the fire of the words to come,
the promises of this hour
might be sealed in peace.
Amen

Service of the Table

OFFERTORY SONG

INSTRUMENTAL

***THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Brothers, Sisters, and Siblings, this is the mighty feast, the joyful feast, the holy feast of and for the people of God. Our Savior invites all who trust him to come.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy. For you have called forth the creation and raising us from dust by your reach. We bless you for the beauty and bounty by which each of us was wonderfully made in your image. Because we are thankful we sing! We sing your highest praises in one voice with the company of our ancestors who paved the way:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest!**

Christ was born fully human and fully divine. He shares in our joys and sorrows. He shared in the joy of our resilience despite the deathly terror of the African enslavement, and shared in the sorrow that his gospel didn't compel transformation and quick abolition.

He shared in the joy of the Emancipation Proclamation but equally shared in the sorrow of a people who have worked so hard to override, overturn, and recreate that which it was designed to eradicate. Yet and still he offered his life in obedience and trust in God.

We bless you, O God, for the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. That Holy Spirit leads us into truth, fights for justice and equality, continues to gather us as believers even in the face of adversity, and moves us to be empowered by your love.

It is the movement of the Holy Spirit that allows us to trust in the life, death, and resurrection which reconciles us to you. Great is the mystery of faith:

**Dying you destroyed our death,
Rising you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

On the night that he was wrongfully incarcerated, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it into pieces without the suggestion of privilege or supremacy. He gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, Jesus lifted the cup to those in need of liberation and empowerment, saying, "This cup is the new covenant, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

Every time you eat this bread of equity and drink this cup that pours freedom, you proclaim with your life the saving death of the risen Lord until he comes again.

We pray O Lord, that as we take this bread and this wine as a gift from you that we may celebrate with joy and hope of the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ. Please pour out your blessings on this bread and this cup as we remember you, your gifts, and your mystery.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRESIDER

We have a few COVID related options for those who wish to partake. If you wish to receive from the ministers, take an empty eco-friendly cup from the stack on the aisle table and approach the minister, who will place a piece of bread in your open hand. (Or take a cup that already has a piece of gluten-free bread in it, or take one of the sealed celebration cups with the wafer on top and juice beneath; hold them out to the minister for a blessing.) A minister will pour grape juice into your cup. Eat, drink, and dispose of the cup in the waste baskets at the side aisles as you return to your seat.

If you are unable to come forward, please signal the ministers and we will come to you at your seat. Those who prefer not to partake in Communion are invited to a different kind of divine encounter through an interfaith prayer of blessing. If this is your preference, we invite you to meet the preacher at the baptismal font.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at this table where Christ is the host.

COMMUNION SONG

"TASTE AND SEE"

AAHH #680

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

PRESIDER

O God, with gratitude and praise
you have blessed and fed us in this sacrament,
united us with Christ, and given us hope in the face of turmoil,
to remind us that in you, everything is already alright.

Make us children of remembrance
so that herstory and history lives on in us.
Send us from this place with purpose and in your power,
blessed, transformed and bent toward the arc of justice
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

***CLOSING SONG**

“WOKE UP THIS MORNIN” (FREEDOM)

AAHH #566

***BENEDICTION**

[All are invited to turn toward the Preacher at the Baptismal Font.]

SENDING & POSTLUDE

Walk tall, walk well, walk safe, walk free And may harm never come to thee.

Walk wise, walk good, walk proud, walk true And may the sun smile on you.

Hamba Gahle! Hamba Gahle! Hamba Gahle! Go well, my friend, and walk in the light of faith!

Cover Art: <https://www.harpersbazaararabia.com/art/news/the-house-of-african-art-first-exhibition-in-london>

Opening Song: Jones Myrin & Matt Redman, "10,000 Reasons" CCLI Song # 6016351

Call to Worship: (from The New Century Hymnal, c. Pilgrim Press 1995, #822)

<http://www.macucc.org/prayersandliturgies>

Prayers of Confession and Assurance: Adapted from Tirabassi, Maren. "From Psalm 85." In *A Child Laughs: Personal Prayers of Justice and Hope*. Edited by Maria Mankin and Maren C. Tirabassi. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2017.

Peace of Christ Action: Adapted from Angelou, Maya. "On This Platform of Peace, We Can Create A Language." Dominican Sisters of Peace. December 21, 2015. <https://oppeace.org/blog/2015/12/21/on-this-platform-of-peace-we-can-create-a-language/>

Poem: Osundare, Niyi. "SOME DAYS (to Akawu) by Niyi Osundare." *African Poems Archive* (blog). March 17, 2018.

<https://africanpoemarchives.blogspot.com/2018/03/some-days-to-akawu-by-niyi-osundare.html>

Prayer for Illumination: Rev. Wil Gafney, Ph.D. <http://www.wilgafney.com/2019/12/01/holy-blackness-the-matrix-of-creation/>

Prayers of the Community: Belletini, Mark. "Reading No. 202." Essay. In *Lifting Our Voices: Readings in the Living Tradition*, 67. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2015.

Communion Liturgy: <https://mlp.org/document/black-history-month-communion-liturgy/> (Edited by Liz Fulmer, 2021)

Sending: An African Blessing." Slideplayer. Accessed July 15, 2021. <https://slideplayer.com/slide/3749203/>

**The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.*

Altar Coverings: As we commemorate Black History month, our altar panels have been covered by the art work of Schirlyn Kamara - www.handzonrealisticfineart.com. Schirlyn is a local self-taught African-American artist who works in a number of mediums. Her Santee Chapel installation "Sisters and Saints" consists of 6 wooden panels (acrylic) depicting black and brown women in various postures of prayer and praise. Painting is a spiritual discipline for Schirlyn and she hopes that her art inspires, causes people to pay closer attention to the world around them, and positively impacts their lives. We are grateful for her sharing her gifts with our community!

LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WORSHIP TEAM

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Rev. Dr. Catherine E. Williams, Advisor

THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:

To serve the universal church of our Creator.
To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.
To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.