



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Online Order of Worship

Fourth Week of Advent

December 21st, 2020

“Faith would be, in short, that God has any willful connection with time whatsoever, and with us. For I know it as a given that God is all good. And I take it also as given that whatever he touches has meaning, if only in his mysterious terms, which I readily grant.” —Annie Dillard

— GATHERING —

Prelude

From “Lágrima (Tears)”
Matthias Young, Guitar

Francisco Tárrega

Welcome & Service Information

Rev. Isaac & Christina Toney-Schmitt

Setting Up Your Worship Space

Call to Worship (Ecclesiastes 3:1-11)

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens,
a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,
a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

What do workers gain from their toil? I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

PICARDY

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish
as the shadows clear away.

At his feet the six-winged seraph,
cherubim, with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry,
“Alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia, Lord most high!”

— THE WORD —

The First Reading of Scripture

Psalm 22:1-11

Rev. Barret Abernethy

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?
My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
by night, but I find no rest.
Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the one Israel praises.
In you our ancestors put their trust;
they trusted and you delivered them.
To you they cried out and were saved;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.
All who see me mock me;
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.
“He trusts in the Lord,” they say,
“let the Lord rescue him.
Let him deliver him,
since he delights in him.”
Yet you brought me out of the womb;
you made me trust in you, even at my mother’s breast.
From birth I was cast on you;
from my mother’s womb you have been my God.
Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near
and there is no one to help.

“Savior of the Nations, Come”
NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

Savior of the nations, come; virgin’s son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.

From God’s heart the Savior speeds; back to God his pathway leads;
out to vanquish death’s command, back to reign at God’s right hand.

Now your manger, shining bright, hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue; let our faith shine ever new.

Praise we sing to Christ the Lord, virgin’s son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity praise we sing eternally.

The Second Reading of Scripture

Isaiah 40:1-2, 6-8

Rev. Isaac & Christina Toney-Schmitt

Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her

that her hard service has been completed,

that her sin has been paid for,

that she has received from the Lord’s hand

double for all her sins.

A voice says, “Cry out.”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

“All people are like grass,

and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,

because the breath of the Lord blows on them.

Surely the people are grass.

The grass withers and the flowers fall,

but the word of our God endures forever.”

Litany of Remembrance

— RESPONSE —

Prayers of the People (from “For Grief,” by John O’Donohue)

After each petition, the reader will say, “...Lord, In Your Mercy,”

Respond with “Hear Our Prayer.”

— SENDING —

“Silent Night”
STILLE NACHT

Scott Plato & Matthias Young, Guitar

Benediction (from a poem by Mary Oliver)

Rev. Isaac & Christina Toney-Schmitt

Leading Tonight’s Worship Service

Rev. Barrett Abernethy: Pastor & Head of Staff

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt: Associate Pastor of Faith Formation

Christina Schmitt: Poet

Matthias Young: Director of Music