

ST. CHARLES AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Digital Worship | Sunday, September 27, 2020

GATHERING

VOLUNTARY

Voluntary in A-minor
Steven Blackmon, organ

Samuel Long

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sarah Chancellor-Watson

MINUTE FOR STEWARDSHIP

George Wilson
2021 Stewardship Campaign Chair

CALL TO WORSHIP

(from Psalm 106)

Bria Rault

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious, and his mercy endures forever."

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, our Creator and Lord: We look unto you and place our trust in your strength, seeking your face in all of life. We remember all that you have done, all your mighty acts throughout history, as though you have performed all these acts for us in our own generation. We call to mind the wonders you have wrought, the miracles you have performed, and the judgements you have pronounced. Whatever dangers we face in this world, whatever crooked dealings we experience and crooked words we hear, whatever pain and difficulties and uncertainties we know, we entrust ourselves and those we love to your never-failing love. Amen.

HYMN

"Be Thou My Vision"

SLANE

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true Word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise;
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Our hindsight is unconvincing. Always we think we would have been wiser and more faithful than our ancestors. Whether in the Wilderness of Sin or at the foot of the cross, we are sure we would not waver. Whether in a time of national peril or in the face of temptations great and small, we believe we would stay true. Let us come before the Lord Most High, and bare our hearts, and confess the truth.

CONFESSION OF SIN (unison)

Merciful God, we draw near to you as we might draw close to a great fire on a cold night, your light promises warmth, light, beauty. The sparks rise to the dark heavens in burst and crackles, lifting our hearts to you. As we draw near we feel both the promise and the threat: to see and be seen, to understand and to be understood, to feel comfort and to be consummation. Show us to ourselves, merciful God. Reveal us to ourselves, we pray, but only in light of your mercy. For we know, without your mercy, we could not stand your presence. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

We only ever know ourselves in you, O Lord. But knowing ourselves in you, we know our sin, but we know something much greater. Your mercy is more powerful than human sin; there is nothing that can separate us from your Love. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, we are forgiven. Amen.

A MOMENT OF PRAYERFUL REFLECTION

Today's passage for silent reflection is a classic prayer from the Anglican tradition. It is unusual in the way it assumes that God must not only aid us in obeying his commandments, but that God must also aid us in loving what God commands and wanting what God promises.

"O Almighty God, who alone can order the unruly affections of sinful humanity:
Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which Thou commands and desire
that which Thou does promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world,
our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found;
through Jesus Christ our Lord."

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Molly Talbot

That we may hear you speak through these words, open our ears O Lord. Amen.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

THE PSALM

Psalms 78:1-17

A Maskil of Asaph.

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,
things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.

We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

He established a decree in Jacob,
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach to their children;
that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and rise up and tell them to their children,
so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;
and that they should not be like their ancestors,
a stubborn and rebellious generation,
a generation whose heart was not steadfast,
whose spirit was not faithful to God.

The Ephraimites, armed with the bow,
turned back on the day of battle.
They did not keep God's covenant,
but refused to walk according to his law.
They forgot what he had done,
and the miracles that he had shown them.
In the sight of their ancestors he worked marvels
in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.
He divided the sea and let them pass through it,
and made the waters stand like a heap.
In the daytime he led them with a cloud,
and all night long with a fiery light.
He split rocks open in the wilderness,
and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep.
He made streams come out of the rock,
and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

Yet they sinned still more against him,
rebellng against the Most High in the desert.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Katie Brendler

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

Matthew 21:23-32

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (unison, "The Apostle's Creed")

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

GLORIA PATRI

GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

OFFERING: PLEDGES & PAYMENTS

We hope that you will continue to support (in prayer, virtual presence and financially) our church's many ministries which continue during this time of pandemic. To learn about the ministries supported by your pledge dollars, visit our 2021 Stewardship page, WWW.SCAPC.ORG/PLEDGE.

OFFERTORY

"Be Thou My Vision"

arr., Tom Trenney

Betsy Uschkrat, soprano; Natalia Carcante, violin; Steven Blackmon, piano

DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDRETH

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.

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (responsive)

Let us pray for the needs of the world, saying, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

O God who is ever present, you hear our cries and are ever faithful in your mercy. We come to you with our concerns for ourselves, our community, and the world.

For our church and its leaders – fill them with the spirit and mind of Christ so that they would serve you and others. Continue to guide our Pastor Nominating Committee as they discern your Spirit's movement in calling a Senior Pastor to lead us.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For our country and global community - give your comfort and peace to the families and loved ones of the over 200,000 people who have died in our midst and the many more around the globe from the Corona-virus. Help us to not become numb the reality of this tragic loss of life.

As tensions and division in our country's political institutions once again flair, lead us to your light living out your vision of unity and peace and in every sphere of life.

Enable our leaders to make decisions for the sake of people and not profits or power, to serve other and not themselves.

In the midst of the protests and demonstrations in response to the raw pain of racial injustice, calm the violence in our streets and bring the true and lasting healing of your shalom.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those who suffer with sickness, sadness, bereavement, anxiety or abuse – envelop them in your love and help us to be their community. **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

For the other intentions we hold in our hearts.... **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Loving God, we know that you walk with us, and you answer when we call. With gratitude and trust, we pray in Jesus' name, who taught us to say when we pray to you...

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

SENDING

HYMN

"Make Me a Channel of Your Peace"

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

**Make me a channel of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me bring you love.
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord, and where there's doubt, true faith in
you.**

**Make me a channel of your peace. Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, only light, and where there's sadness, ever joy.**

**O Master, grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled, as to console,
to be understood as to understand, to be loved, as to love, with all my soul.**

**Make me a channel of your peace. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
In giving of ourselves that we receive, and in dying that we're born to eternal life.**

CHARGE AND BLESSING

CHORAL RESPONSE

"An Irish Blessing"
The SCAPC Virtual Chancel Choir

Blackmon

VOLUNTARY

Concerto in A Minor, Mvmt I – Allegro
Benjamin Thacher and Benjamin Hart, solo violinists; The Chancel Choir Orchestra

Antonio Vivaldi

***Videography and photos by Steven B. Blackmon**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARE FOR WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Next Sunday, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday with Christians across the globe during our 'virtual' worship service. To participate in this Celebration of the Lord's Supper, please gather elements of bread and grape juice or wine beforehand. We especially encourage you to incorporate bread from a different country as we celebrate our oneness in Christ with our brothers and sisters around the world.

VIRTUAL TALENT SHOW: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30 AT 7:00 PM

SCAPC is thrilled to announce our first ever intergenerational Virtual Talent Show, set to premier on YouTube on the evening of Friday, October 30, from 7-8:30 PM! On the program will be all sorts of talents (athletic, musical, comedic, quirky, culinary, etc.) performed by children, young adults, families, and seniors alike, so be sure to tune in! A link will be sent via email and posted on our website in advance of the big night.

DONATE MEDICINES FOR CUBA MINISTRY

Presbyterian Women are collecting over-the-counter medications for Living Waters for the World (Cuba) during through Wednesday. Medications can be generic or store brand including cough and cold medicines, pain-killers, anti-diarrhea and multi-vitamins. They can accept liquid medicine but not gummies. The collection basket is placed near the table just inside the State Street entrance, and donations can be dropped off there Monday-Friday between 10AM and 3PM. Masks are required to enter the building.