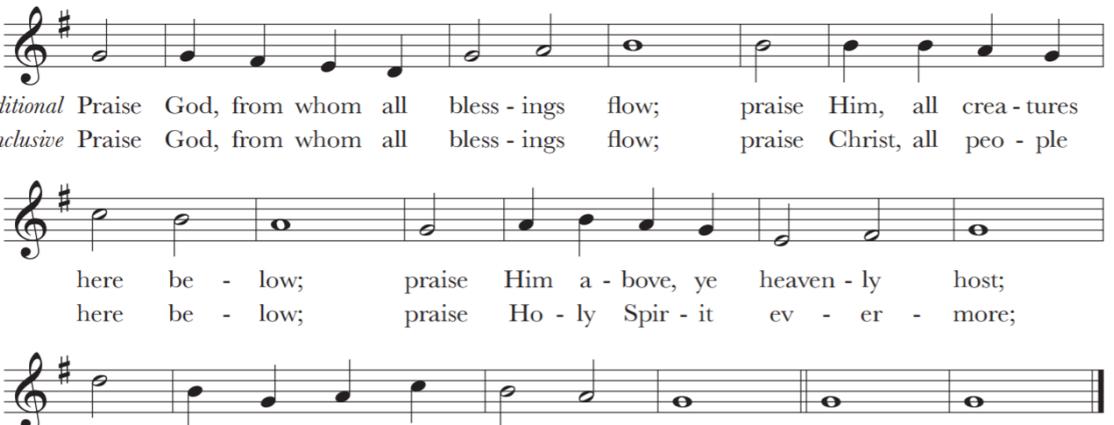


We are quick to judge and slow to offer grace.
 We are swift to anger and resistant to make amends.
 We are prone to suspicion and resistant to build trust.
 We hear the greatest commandment, and if we are honest,
 we are filled with hesitation because it means we must change.
 Unwavering God, in these moments of stillness, hear our struggles
 with the love you call us to practice and give us courage to follow
 your invitation to love as you have loved us.
 - adapted from UCC Worship Ways

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH



Traditional Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Him, all crea - tures
Inclusive Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Christ, all peo - ple
 here be - low; praise Him a - bove, ye heaven - ly host;
 here be - low; praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more;
 praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.
 praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore.

SHARING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

CHILDREN'S PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

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,
the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM

Thomas Tallis

If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give
 you another comforter, that he may 'bide with you forever; e'en the spirit of truth.
 -John 14:15-17 (King James Version)

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 15:9-17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

SERMON

"Stories about Love"

Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

HYMN 693

"Though I May Speak"

GIFT OF LOVE

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from A Brief Statement of Faith

**The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,
engages us through the Word proclaimed,
claims us in the waters of baptism,
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
and calls women and men to all ministries of the church.
In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
Amen.**

OFFERTORY

David Hurd

Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back guilty of dust and sin. But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack from my first entrance in, drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning, if I lacked any thing.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here: Love said, you shall be he. I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear, I cannot look on thee. Love took my hand, and smiling did reply, who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame go where it doth deserve. And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?

My dear, then I will serve. You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat: so I did sit and eat.
-George Herbert

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SENDING

HYMN 546

“Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing”

SICILIAN MARINERS

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Happiness! Happiness!”

Margaret Vardell Sandresky

The lights in the sky, happiness, happiness, and long live Mary and her Creator. –Gavin Maxwell

*The congregation is invited to continue worshiping through the postlude,
which is offered as a thanksgiving to God.*

Receiving the Sacrament of Baptism this morning is Elle London Reinhardt,
daughter of Taylor Fitchman Reinhardt and Kyle Francis Reinhardt.

LEADING THIS MORNING

Hannah Faye Allred, M.Div., *Staff Associate for Congregational Care*

Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*

Audrey Webber, M.Div., *Associate for Hospitality and Visual Arts*

Rachel Farrar, April Martin, Hannah Nacheman, Elizabeth Picker,
Ryan Bauer-Walsh, Sean Fallen, Andrew Martens, and Richard Storm, *Choral Octet*

Michael Shake, *Director of Music*

MUSIC NOTES On April 28, 2021, composer Margaret Vardell Sandresky celebrated a milestone, her 100th birthday. Born in Macon, Georgia, she earned degrees from Salem College, and the Eastman School of Music, and was a Fulbright Scholar. She taught on the faculties of Oberlin Conservatory, the University of Texas, and Salem College, and was a founding faculty member of the North Carolina School of the Arts. Encouraged to compose by a friend, she has ten volumes of organ music to date, with performances and recordings by artists from around the world. She has received numerous professional and personal honors, including the Long Leaf Pine, the highest civilian award from the State of North Carolina. She continues to write music – every day.

Thomas Tallis (c. 1505-1585) was a favored composer of queens and kings, and composed music for the Catholic Church, and later the Church of England. His anthem, “If Ye Love Me,” published in 1565, sets William Tyndale’s English translation of familiar verses from today’s scripture lesson.

Published shortly after the author’s death, *The Temple* by George Herbert (1599-1633), is a collection of 162 poems concerning Herbert’s relationship with God. The poems are divided in three sections: *The Church Porch*, *The Church*, and *The Church Militant*. *The Church* is the largest of the sections, and concludes with three poems entitled “Love.” In “Love (III)” or “Love Bade Me Welcome,” Herbert, in the guise of a worshipper, expresses doubt that he can sit at God’s, *Love’s*, table. For all of the worshipper’s faults – “guilty of.....sin,” “unkind, ungrateful” – Love gently nudges them to know the welcome they have at table. David Hurd (b. 1950), Organist and Director of Music of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin in New York City, and former Professor of Church Music at General Theological Seminary, has crafted a tender choral setting of the text. –Michael Shake

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