

**The Presbyterian Church of Okemos**  
**February 20, 2022**  
**Seventh Sunday after Epiphany**



**COVID-19 Safety Recommendations**

- *Wear a mask at all times while in the sanctuary, fellowship hall, or classrooms.*
- *Seat yourself while being aware to keep 6 feet of distance from the neighbors in your pew.*
- *While seating is now allowed in every row, please stagger your seats so that you are not sitting directly behind or directly in front of anyone in the pews around you.*
- *Remember that young children are not vaccinated.*

**Preparation:** *Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent.* - author Victor Hugo

**Prelude**

*Suite in D Major*  
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

Leonardo Vinci

**Greetings and Announcements of the Church**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

**Call to Worship** (adapted from Genesis 17 & 26)

Jan Krehbiel, Liturgist

One: The Lord promised to bless the descendants of Abraham.

**All: Praise God for this blessing!**

One: The Lord promised to make Abraham's offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven.

**All: Praise God for this blessing!**

One: The Lord promised to give Abraham's offspring all the land of Canaan - a bountiful land and a land of freedom.

**All: Let us worship our God who has so richly blessed us!**

**Prayer of Confession**

Jan Krehbiel, Liturgist

One: God never forgets God's promises; God's covenant endures in each new generation. We are free to speak the truth about our lives because God's faithfulness embraces us as we examine our hearts.

**All: Merciful God, your word and your promises come to us when our hearts are full with rejoicing and when our hearts fall with sorrow for our failings. Forgive us when we fail to share the gifts you have given us with our neighbors. Forgive us when by overt acts and by omission, we diminish your creation.**

*Silent prayer*

**We ask for your mercy. Help us to grow in love and grace and change our lives in accord with your will. Show us the pathway toward healing and give us peace, in the name of Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

**Promise of the Gospel**

Jan Krehbiel, Liturgist

**One:** Friends, hear the promise of our faith: God hears us when we cry for help and shows us steadfast love. Therefore let your hearts take courage, for God is faithful to us and has redeemed us.

**All:** Let us believe the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Alleluia. Amen.

\* **Act of Praise** #581

*Gloria Patri*

\* **Hymn** #49

*The God of Abraham Praise*, vs. 1-4  
[Leoni]

**Children's Sermon**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

**Organ Music**

*Chronicles: Passacaglia*  
*Exodus, Suite for Organ*  
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

Sharon Willis

**Prayer of Illumination**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Awaken our hearts and minds to your Word, O God. Give us understanding so that, by the power of your Holy Spirit, we are able to do all that you command for love's sake. Gathered in Christ's name around the Word, we pray. Amen.

**Scripture Reading**

Deuteronomy 27: 1-3; Joshua 3:5, 14-17

Pastor Lisa Schrott

**Sermon**

*Living Stories: The Promised Land*  
Pastor Lisa Schrott

**Anthem**

*Communion: Rite of Fellowship*

Sharon Willis

**Minute for Mission**

Refugee Update

Judi Harris

**Offering**

Jeff Conroy-Krutz, Liturgist

**Invitation**

\* **Offertory**

*Prelude in C Major*

David Johnson

\* **Doxology** #606

**Prayer of Dedication**

## Prayers of the People

Jeff Conroy-Krutz, Liturgist

One: Lord in your mercy

**All: Hear our prayer**

**The Lord's Prayer** "...forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors..."

## \* Hymn #56

*Sing Out With Joy to God Our Strength*, vs. 1-3

[Shepherd's Pipes]

## Benediction

Pastor Lisa Schrott

## Postlude

*Celebration: Juba*

Sharon Willis

Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

\* *Please rise in body or spirit*

**Ushers:** *Juarez Family, Deb & Joel Major*

The Prayer of Confession and Prayer of Illumination are adapted from *Feasting on the Word. Worship Companion Year A*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2014.

**Adult Education Following Worship:** A Town Hall on the Solar Panel Project is scheduled in the Sanctuary and on Zoom #434 304 558

**Next Week** - Fellowship following Jazz Sunday Worship in the Fellowship Hall. For those unable to attend in person, Jane Bobay is scheduled to host a separate, virtual coffee hour on Zoom #434 304 558.

## Music Notes

Exodus, Suite for Organ was composed in 2006 by Sharon J. Willis. Dr. Willis is a prolific American composer, playwright, music educator, lecturer, and church musician. Known as an expert musical story teller she has composed over fifteen operatic works as well as choral, vocal, and organ compositions, both sacred and secular. The composer is also a lyric soprano and is often invited to present lecture-recitals on the "Spiritual as an Art Song" in which she traces the development of the African American spiritual and its important in classical solo repertoire. Dr. Willis also speaks regularly at colleges, universities, and churches about her compositions and her perspective as a woman composer and as an African American composer.

Dr. Willis describes "Exodus" in the following paragraphs:

This organ suite was written as a memorial tribute to the legendary Harriet Tubman who was born a slave around 1820 in the Brodas Plantation in Tidewater, Maryland. She escaped by way of the Underground Railroad to Philadelphia in 1849. In 1851, after working as a cook and a nurse, she was able to return to Maryland and Virginia to rescue her family and other passengers from slavery. In her words: Ah nevuh lost a passenger an' Ah nevuh run my train off de track".

The title "Exodus" was taken from the second book of the Old Testament. A book recounting the story of

the Hebrews being led from the bondage of slavery out of Egypt to the land of Canaan by their spiritual leader, Moses. Harriet Tubman was dubbed the “ Black Moses” of her people as she led passengers to freedom, never giving any thought to her own safety”.

“Exodus” consists of three distinct movements each focusing on a different element of the journey to freedom and is filled with musical symbolism.

1) Chronicles: “Passacaglia”

The passacaglia is a Baroque musical form in which a theme is written in the bass line and repeated with harmonic variations in the upper parts. Chronicles attempts to record Tubman’s repeated underground trips. The theme is presented nineteen times equal to what historians claim is the number of trips made by Tubman. Because she could never use the same route for fear of discovery, the passacaglia theme is always presented differently. Three spirituals, “Fare Ye Well”, “Wad in the Water”, and “Go Down Moses” are superimposed upon the theme. Near the end of the movement, block chords of “Go Down Moses” are clearly stated pushing to the state line and to freedom.

2) Communion a “Rite of Fellowship”

The Communion is a tender movement that reflects the shared experiences of the passengers as they endured the hardships of the journey and as they broke bread together. The two spirituals “Drinking of the Wine” and “Let Us Break Bread Together” capture the essence of this spiritual communion.

3) Celebration on a “Juba”

The final movement is a celebration of freedom and gratitude for a new life. A juba is a lively duple-metered dance characterized by playing syncopated rhythms against even rhythms and was performed often by African Americans. The juba theme in Celebration is based upon the spiritual “ I Got a Robe”

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