

**The Presbyterian Church of Okemos**  
**March 27, 2022**  
**Fourth Sunday of Lent**



**COVID-19 Safety Recommendations**

- *Wear a mask while singing in the sanctuary, and when interacting with young children.*
- *Remember that young children are not vaccinated.*

**Preparation:** “Unlike a fairy tale, the parable provides no happy ending. Instead, it leaves us face to face with one of life’s hardest spiritual choices: to trust or not to trust in God’s all-forgiving love.”— Henri Nouwen, *Return of the Prodigal Son*

**Prelude**

*Cantilena*  
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

Josef Rheinberger

**Choral Introit**

*Come and Fill Our Hearts*  
[Confitemini Domino]

**Greetings and Announcements of the Church**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

**Call to Worship**

Michelle Nessa, Liturgist

One: God’s reach is endless.

**All: God’s mercy is unstoppable.**

One: God’s grace is lavish.

**All: God’s love is constant.**

One: God’s wisdom is vast.

**All: God’s hope is stubborn.**

One: God’s presence is here—with us, among us, moving through us.

**All: We are in God’s house. Let us worship the One who welcomes us home.**

\* **Hymn #774**

*There is Now a New Creation*, vs. 1, 2, 3, 5  
[Stuttgart]

**Prayer of Confession**

Michelle Nessa, Liturgist

One: If you ask any parent with a teenager what it’s like to wait up for their child to meet curfew, they will tell you—they’re standing at the door. The porch light is on. No one can sleep until that child is home safe. Friends, I think God is like that for us. The porch light is on. The door is unlocked. We might be late for curfew, but God is just so glad we’re home. So let us pray the prayer of confession together, trusting that no matter what we do or what we leave undone, the porch light is always on. Let us pray. . .

**All:** Merciful God, we confess that we have strayed from your ways. Like the Prodigal Son, we too often waste our inheritance. You gave us the earth for our home, but we squander earth's resources and hoard its bounty. You gave us neighbors to love, but we can pursue selfish ambitions. You gave us the commandments that lead to human flourishing, and yet we break your law and forsake your love.

*Silent Prayer*

**Forgive us our sin and bring us to repentance. Draw our wandering hearts back to you. Through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.**

**Promise of the Gospel**

Michelle Nessa, Liturgist

One: As a parent welcomes home a wayward child, so God embraces all who return in true repentance.

**All: We are loved. We are claimed. We are under God's wing. We are worthy of grace. We belong to God. Amen.**

**\* Act of Praise #581**

*Gloria Patri*

**Children's Sermon**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

**Prayer of Illumination**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

God of open doors, we often long to come home to you, to love, and to ourselves, but we aren't always sure how to get there. We know that we need you, but the road back to you is heavy with distractions. So if we can dare to be so forward, we pray— reach into the cacophony of our hearts and minds and make yourself known. Quiet everything but your Word for us today. Drown out the distractions. Turn on the light. Speak through these words. Find the parts of us that are lost. With hope we pray, amen.

**Scripture Reading**

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Pastor Lisa Schrott

**Sermon**

*Healing Through Forgiveness*

Pastor Lisa Schrott

**\*Affirmation of Faith**

From *Brief Statement of Faith* (in unison)

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

**Anthem**

Silent Devotion and Response  
from *Avodath Hakodesh (Sacred Service)*

Ernest Bloch

Psalm 19:15

Yihyu lerozon imrei fi  
(*May the words of my mouth*)

Vehegyon libi lefonecho  
(*And the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight*)

Adonoy tzuri vegoali  
(*Lord my Rock and my Redeemer*)

Amen

**Minute for Mission**

One Great Hour of Sharing

Keith Camann

**Offering**

Jill Schaberg, Liturgist

**Invitation**

**Offertory**

*Prelude in C Major*

David N. Johnson

\***Doxology #606**

\***Prayer of Dedication**

**Prayers of the People**

Jill Schaberg, Liturgist

One: Lord in your mercy

**All: Hear our prayer**

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

\* **Hymn #435**

*There's a Wideness in God's Mercy, vs. 1, 2*

[In Babilone]

**Benediction**

Pastor Lisa Schrott

As you leave this place,  
may you be awestruck by the beauty of this world.  
May you laugh, and may it be contagious.  
May you overflow with love for those around you.  
May you be effusive with hope and quick to point out joy.  
And in all of your living, and breathing, and being,  
may you find yourself full to the brim with God's Holy Spirit,  
and may it change your life. Go in peace. Amen

**Postlude**

*In Babilone*                      Setting by Michael Burkhardt  
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist      Dutch folk tune, 18<sup>th</sup> century

*\* Please rise in body or spirit*

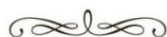
**Ushers:**            *Richard Norton, Tom Schaberg, Gary & Trudy Sturk*

**Adult Ed:**        *PCO Elder Ewen Todd will be presenting on Islam and Christianity.*

**Music Notes:** Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) is one of the leading composers in the canon, most well-known for his musical contributions in Jewish/Hebrew choral music. Born in Switzerland, Bloch held positions in the United States at the Mannes School of Music, San Francisco Conservatory, Cleveland Institute of Music, and UC Berkeley.

Bloch's *Avodath Hakodesh (Sacred Service)* is a 50-minute work for orchestra, SATB choir, and Baritone soloist (cantor) that is divided into five parts, mirroring the Sabbath morning liturgical progression in the Union Prayerbook. Parts are separated by orchestral preludes and interludes that represent periods of congregational silence (silent devotions) such as the removal of the Torah scrolls from the ark and their return. Bloch was - at the time of this work's inception - the only composer to ever set music to the Jewish Liturgy as composers had been doing with the Mass Ordinary for centuries.

“[This work] was conceived as a transcendent, even inclusive humanistic work of universal spiritual experience, at the same time attempting to serve the more particularistic function of specifically Jewish worship...Though intensely Jewish in its roots, this message seems to me above all a gift of Israel to the whole of mankind.” - Ernest Bloch



The Call to Worship, the opening of the Prayer of Confession, and the Prayer of Illumination are adapted from prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed. *A Sanctified Art LLC sanctifiedart.org*. The Prayer of Confession and the Promise of the Gospel are adapted from *Feasting on the Word. Worship Companion Year C*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2012. *The Affirmation of Faith* is from the PC(USA) Book of Confessions. Westminster John Knox Press, 2020.

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*Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, Organist*

*Irene Shutt, Handbell Choir Director*

*Colleen Chester, Choir Director*

*Edward Ennen, Sexton*

*Anna Thiel, Office Manager*

*Yusuf Sultani, Technology Coordinator*