

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
March 21, 2021
The Fifth Sunday of Lent

While in-person Worship services are suspended, Montgomery Presbyterian Church will be recording services. The following is an order of service that you can use to follow along with the recorded service, or use to read and reflect on your own. The service is posted on the church's Facebook page, [on YouTube](#), and will be linked to the MPC website, www.mpchurch.net. Thank you for your cooperation and patience during this challenging time.

PRELUDE *Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Elder of the Month: Bruce Henry, 520-6413
- Deacon of the Month: Doug Rose, 532-3789

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Even in these uncertain times, especially in these endless days,

P: **God is fulfilling the promise of the new covenant.**

L: Wherever we are, wherever we worship, at home, outside, in every sacred space,

P: **may our hearts be filled with love.**

L: Through quarantine and lockdowns, through lonely days and hopes that fizzled,

P: **God has held tight to our hands to lead us through. God's Word continues to shape us, to encourage us, to challenge us to faithful lives in these times.**

L: In new ways, sometimes uncomfortable, we have learned to reach out to neighbors, friends, family, even strangers.

P: **Beyond these moments and days, we remain ready to serve all of God's people, to share in this covenant of grace.**

Let us worship God.

PRAYER

In these uncertain times of empty moments and foggy brains, we are reminded that you forget more than we will ever remember, you forgive so much more than we are capable of messing up, you crack open our hardened hearts to write your name on them. Redeemer of all, we praise you. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

We say we want to see Jesus, but too often, we are looking in the wrong places, not listening to the right people, not noticing all the grace around us. As we reflect on our lives, join me, as we come to the One who will forgive us.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

You are the Heart which seeks ours, God of the new covenant, yet we turn away from you time and again. We have had so many chances to care for others in these days, yet know we have focused on ourselves too much. We have filled our endless days with the empty calories of fear and worry. We have paid more attention to the ramblings of politicians and celebrities, not your Word of hope.

Now, in these moments, and especially in the silence, come and make us new people. Write the new covenant of grace on our hearts, so we become more forgiving; write mercy, so we might become more compassionate; write hospitality, so we might include all people, just as Jesus welcomes us into the company of people who try to follow him. Amen.

Amen.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: A new heart with grace, mercy, hospitality, justice written upon it. That is God's gift to us.

P: **A new heart, a new spirit, restored and forgiven, we can go to share this good news with all people.**

Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN

What Wondrous Love is This

GtG 215

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

L: A new heart with grace, mercy, hospitality, justice written upon it. That is God's gift to us.

P: **A new heart, a new spirit, restored and forgiven, we can go to share this good news with all people.**

Thanks be to God. Amen.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:31-34

31 The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt--a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The Word of God for the people of God!

Thanks be to God!

SPECIAL MUSIC

The Holy Heart

Barbour and Skidmore, arr. McDonald

The Holy Heart was broken, sent from the Father's side;
the Son of God forsaken, the holy sacrifice.
For me He was forsaken, for me he died alone;
my sin forever taken that I might be His own, that I might be His own.

The Holy Lamb was stricken, abandoned and alone;
He bore the world's affliction, He bore it as His own.
For me He was forsaken, for me he died alone;
my sin forever taken that I might be His own, that I might be His own.

And when my heart is broken, torn by my sin and pride,
the Son of God now risen will draw me to His side!
For me He was forsaken, for me he died alone;
my sin forever taken that I might be His own.

For me He was forsaken, for me he died alone;
my sin forever taken that I might be His own, that I might be His own.

I might be His own.

SECOND READING

John 12:20-33

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." 22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23 Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor. 27 "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say--'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." 29 The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." 30 Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

Rev. Jacquelyn Pinkowski

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Portions of The Brief Statement of Faith

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. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain.

80 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

... And now hear as we pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

BLESSING AND CHARGE

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you, those you love and those who believe they have no one to love them. day, and unto your life eternal. Amen.

POSTLUDE

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

What Wondrous Love Is This 215

Dm C Dm C Dm Am

1 What won - drous love is this, O my soul, O my
 2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing
 3 To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will
 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing

Dm C Dm C

soul, what won - drous love is this, O my soul! What
 down, when I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when
 sing, to God and to the Lamb, I will sing; to
 on; and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and

Dm Am B^b Gm Am Em

won - drous love is this that caused the Lord of
 I was sink - ing down be - neath God's righ - teous
 God and to the Lamb who is the great I
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joy - ful

G Dm C Am C Dm Am

bliss to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul, for my
 frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul, for my
 AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing, I will
 be, and through e - ter - ni - ty, I'll sing on, I'll sing

Em Am C Dm Am C Dm

soul, to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul!
 soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul!
 sing; while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing!
 on; and through e - ter - ni - ty, I'll sing on.

With its ballad-like repetitions before and after each stanza's central narrative lines, this meditative text needs performance in order to be effective. Its haunting melody proves the means of convincing us that the only adequate response to "wondrous love" is to "sing on."