



Second Sunday After Epiphany

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Weekend

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January 15, 2023

“My house is a house of prayer for all people.” (Isaiah 56:7)
Plymouth is A Just Peace Church and An Open and Affirming Congregation

Our Approach to God

Preparation Music Lotus Blossom.....Billy Strayhorn/arr. Alec Wyton
James Riggs, organ

Born in Dayton, OH, Billy Strayhorn (1915-1967) was an American jazz composer, pianist, and arranger who collaborated with composer, Duke Ellington. This arrangement was played at Strayhorn’s funeral in the Cathedral of St. John, NYC. Ellington’s sister writes, “During his Rainbow Grill engagements, Duke, would play “Lotus” as a little private prelude to each show. It was like a little whispered tribute to Billy—perhaps even a little prayer for his soul—knowing that God was listening. Duke titled one of his sacred songs, “Every Man Prays in His Own Language” and there is no language that God does not understand.”

Welcome

***Call to Worship**

ONE: Siblings of God’s family, rejoice!
Our lives are sustained by God’s presence and love.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

ONE: As we mourn the wounds of God’s children, God weeps with us.

ALL: As we give thanks for people who have lived in faith, God gives thanks with us.

ONE: As we struggle for justice, God struggles with us.

ALL: As we strive for peace, God strives with us.

ONE: As we work to build the beloved community, God works with us.

ALL: Siblings in God, rejoice! You are sustained by God’s presence and love.

Hymn (Black) 593 Lift Every Voice and Sing..... *Lift Every Voice*

Confession

ALL: O merciful God, we confess that we have trusted our narrow understandings rather than seek your will. We have taken our direction from the world instead of questioning the order of things. We have closed our ears to your call, fearful of being stretched beyond our comfort. Forgive us, and save your people from division. Amen.

Silent Reflection

Words of Assurance

Hymn of Praise*Hymn to Joy*

You are giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed,
Well- spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Loving Spirit, Father, Mother, all who love belong to you;
Teach us how to love each other, by that love our joy renew.

***Passing of the Peace**

ONE: The peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Children’s Message

Children in pre-school through 5th grade are invited to come forward for the Children’s Message before they depart for Sunday School.

The Proclamation of God’s Word

Reading from Scripture

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Music The Imprint of God’s Face.....Margaret R. Tucker

The Plymouth Choir; Scott Soeder, flute, Alli and Kyle Szalay, percussion

O God, we bear the imprint of your face: the colors of our skin are your design, and what we have of beauty in our race as man or woman, you alone define, who stretched a living fabric on our frame and gave to each a language and a name. Where we are torn and pulled apart by hate because our race, our skin is not the same, while we are judged unequal by the state and victims made because we own our name, humanity reduced to little worth, dishonored is your living face on earth. O God, we share the image of the One whose flesh and blood are ours, whatever skin; in Christ’s humanity we find our own, and in his family our proper kin: Christ is the brother we still crucify, his love the language we must learn, or die.

Sermon

Grace and Peace and Thanksgiving Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster

***Hymn (Black) 472** Precious Lord, Take My Hand.....*Precious Lord*

Prayers of the People and The 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 and the power and the glory forever, Amen.

Response Ecce quam bonum.....Richard Proulx

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, when friends live together in unity. (Psalm 133)

Living Out the Word of God

Announcements of Church Life

Call to Offering

Offertory Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child.....Negro Spiritual/arr Mark Hayes

Diane Julin Menges, soloist

Sometimes I feel like a motherless child, a long ways from home. Sometimes I feel like I’m almost gone, a long ways from home.

***Doxology**.....*Old 100th*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

O God, in light of your mercies, we offer to you our gifts for the work of your Spirit, and we offer the service of our lives to be your hands at work in the world. Amen.

***Hymn (Black) 473** Blessed Assurance..... *Assurance*

***Commission and Benediction**

***Congregational Response** We'll Follow the Light..... *Elderkin*
(Sung once by the choir and once by the congregation.)

We'll follow the light, beautiful light, come where the dew-drops of mercy are bright, shine all around us by day and by night, Jesus, the light of the world.

Voluntary Oh, Freedom Negro Spiritual/arr. Adolphus Hailstork
James Riggs, organ

Adolphus Hailstork (B.1941) is of [African American](#), native American and European Jewish ancestry and his works blend musical ideas from the African, American and European traditions. He has served as a professor at several universities including Youngstown State University. "Oh, Freedom" likely came into being soon after the end of slavery and in the 1950s and 1960s, the song was commonly sung as part of the Civil Rights Movement.

Many in the congregation wish to remain seated for the Voluntary. If you choose to leave, please be aware of those still participating in this part of the service. The Voluntary is music for worship and we ask that all be respectful of one another's worship practices, including those participating via livestream. Following the Voluntary, you may greet the ministers.

Scroll Down for Hymns

Lift Every Voice and Sing

James Weldon Johnson, 1921, alt.

1 Lift ev-ery voice and sing, till earth and heav - en ring, ring with the
 2 Ston-y the road we trod, bit-ter the chas-tening rod, felt in the
 3 God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears, God who has

har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty; Let our re - joic - ing
 days when hope un - born had died; Yet with a stead - y
 brought us thus far on the way; God, who by your

rise, high as the lis - tening skies, let it re - sound loud as the
 beat, have not our wea - ry feet, come to the place for which our
 might, led us in - to the light, keep us for - ev - er in the

roll - ing sea, Sing a song full of the
 peo - ple sighed? We have come o - ver a
 path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the

Poet James Weldon Johnson was the first African-American to pass the bar examination in the state of Florida, and served as U.S. consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua. He collaborated with his composer brother, John Rosamond Johnson, to write Broadway operettas and edit song collections. John appeared in vaudeville, directed London musicals, and headed the Music School Settlement in New York.

Tune: LIFT EVERY VOICE Int.
 J. Rosamond Johnson, 1921

faith that the harsh past has taught us, Sing a song full of the
 way that with tears has been wa - tered, We have come, tread - ing our
 plac - es, our God, where we met you, Lest our hearts, drunk with the

hope that the pres - ent has brought us; Fac - ing the
 path through the blood of the slaugh - tered, Out from the
 wine of the world, for - get you; Shad - owed be -

ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun, let us march
 gloom - y past, till now we stand at last where the white
 neath your hand, may we for - ev - er stand, true to our

on till vic - to - ry is won.
 gleam of our bright star is cast.
 God, true to our na - tive land,

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

472

Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932, alt.

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,
 2 When my way grows drear, pre-cious Lord, lin - ger near,
 3 When the shad - ows ap - pear and the night draws near,

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
 when my life is al - most gone,
 and the day is past and gone,

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light:
 Hear me cry, hear my call, hold my hand, lest I fall:
 At the riv - er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand:

Refrain

Take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

Thomas A. Dorsey was known as "Georgia Tom" when he played piano for blues singer Ma Rainey. He started writing gospel songs after what he called "a definite spiritual change." This inspirational song, composed following the deaths of his wife, Nettie, and a newborn child, derives from the tune Maitland.

Tune: PRECIOUS LORD Irr. with refrain
 Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932

COMFORT AND ASSURANCE

473

Blessed Assurance

Acts 17:30-31, Rev. 7:9-14

Fanny Crosby, 1873, alt



1 Bless-ed as - sur - ance, Je - sus is mine! O what a
2 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, per - fect de - light! Vi - sions of
3 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, all is at rest, I in my



fore - taste of glo - ry di - vine! Heir of sal - va - tion, pur - chase of
rap - ture now burst on my sight; An - gels de - scend - ing, bring from a -
Sav - ior am hap - py and blessed; Watch - ing and wait - ing, look - ing a -



God, born of the Spir - it, washed in Christ's blood.
bove ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
bove, filled with God's good - ness, lost in Christ's love.



Refrain



This is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long;



