

Refrain

3. Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,
When song gives place to sighing, when hope within me dies,
I draw the closer to him, from care he sets me free:

Refrain

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Children of the Most High God, in obedience to Jesus' words to love others as we love ourselves, do good, bless and pray for friends and enemies alike, let us now do to others as we would have them do to us, offering our tithes and gifts for the sake of our sisters and brothers in need.

Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 1 © 2012 Westminster John Knox Press

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God, who calls us to love beyond measure, we offer these gifts as a sign of our commitment to your teachings. Help us love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, and bless those who curse us. May our offerings bring healing and hope, reflecting your boundless grace in our community. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (responsively)

We believe in one God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

He is the true and living God,

worthy to receive glory and honor and power.

He created all things;

by his will they existed and were created.

We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;

all things came into being through him.

He is the image of the invisible God,

the firstborn of all creation.

In him all things in heaven and on earth were created.

He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Being in the form of God, he emptied himself,

he took the form of a slave and was born in human likeness.

Being found in human form, he humbled himself;

he became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;

he was buried; he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

God also highly exalted Jesus;

he gave him the name that is above every name.



Oaklette United Methodist Church

"God's Body in this Community"

"Oaklette United Methodist Church through worship, education, and outreach, seeks to make the gospel of Jesus Christ real, as we minister to all people."

February 23, 2025

Seventh Sunday After Epiphany



Welcome in the name of our Lord. A nurturing and well-supervised nursery is available for infants and young children. A Cry Room is also available. Please ask the greeter for further assistance and directions to these rooms. [†] = Invites persons to stand as they are able.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER

Loving, sustaining God, like the mighty oak, may our branches at Oaklette church embrace those around us in this community. Use us as an instrument to welcome and shelter your people. Deepen our roots so that our branches are strong. Let the Holy Spirit flow like a river through our church, so that we may do your will. In Jesus' holy name, Amen.

OPENING SCRIPTURE

Genesis 45:3-11 [CEB]

Joseph said to his brothers, "I'm Joseph! Is my father really still alive?" His brothers couldn't respond because they were terrified before him. Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me," and they moved closer. He said, "I'm your brother Joseph! The one you sold to Egypt. Now, don't be upset and don't be angry with yourselves that you sold me here. Actually, God sent me before you to save lives. We've already had two years of famine in the land, and there are five years left without planting or harvesting. God sent me before you to make sure you'd survive and to rescue your lives in this amazing way. You didn't send me here; it was God who made me a father to Pharaoh, master of his entire household, and ruler of the whole land of Egypt.

"Hurry! Go back to your father. Tell him this is what your son Joseph says: 'God has made me master of all of Egypt. Come down to me. Don't delay. You may live in the land of Goshen, so you will be near me, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and everyone with you. I will support you there, so you, your household, and everyone with you won't starve, since the famine will still last five years.'"

He kissed all of his brothers and wept, embracing them. After that, his brothers were finally able to talk to him.

PRELUDE

"Air"

DANA MOODY

MESSAGE FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)

Lay Reader: Jesus teaches us, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” But who are the others?

People: Our enemies and friends, family and strangers.

Lay Reader: Jesus teaches us, “Be merciful as your Father is merciful.” But what is mercy?

People: To act with compassion, to help without expecting anything in return.

Lay Reader: Jesus teaches us, “Forgive, and you will be forgiven.” But how do we forgive?

People: By recognizing enemies, friends, family, strangers, and ourselves as people in need of compassion.

Lay Reader: Let us worship God, who loves us and empowers us to love one another with mercy and compassion.

People: Come, let us worship! Thanks be to God! Amen.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, August, 2024.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy Jesus, you call us into a life that others have told us is easy, but it is not. You challenge us to forgive, to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us. We want the easy way, but You have given us the hard path. Grant us the patience and endurance to journey with You, to allow ourselves at times to stumble, to live into the hard way so that we might fully experience Your love, grace, and peace in this world, by becoming a people full of love and grace and forgiving others. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Written by Rev. Mindi and posted on Rev-o-lution, <http://rev-o-lution.org/>.

HYMN

“Guide My Feet”

(TFWS) #2208, vv. 1-3

1. Guide my feet while I run this race. Guide my feet while I run this race.
Guide my feet while I run this race,
for I don’t want to run this race in vain! (race in vain)
2. Hold my hand while I run this race. Hold my hand while I run this race.
Hold my hand while I run this race,
For I don’t want to run this race in vain! (race in vain)
3. Stand by me while I run this race. Stand by me while I run this race.
Stand by me while I run this race,
For I don’t want to run this race in vain! (race in vain)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION [in unison]

God, we are so conditioned to respond in kind. We are so worried that when the reckoning comes, we will find ourselves left with the short end of the stick. And not without reason. The powerful take and take and lie and lie and oppress and oppress, seemingly without consequence.

Teach us to love with skill. Teach us to love with precision. Teach us to love with abandon, trusting that when we step into the ocean of your abundant love, we will receive the blessings of your abundant life. Amen.

Written by Todd Yonkman and posted on his website, Todd Grant Yonkman, <https://todd-grant-yonkman.net/2019/02/11/worship-resources-for-epiphany-7c-february-24-2019/>.

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM

“Jesus is my Lord”

CHANCEL CHOIR
Shellene Castellow, Flute

SCRIPTURE

Luke 6:27-38 [NRSV]

“But I say to you who are willing to hear: Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on the cheek, offer the other one as well. If someone takes your coat, don’t withhold your shirt either. Give to everyone who asks and don’t demand your things back from those who take them. Treat people in the same way that you want them to treat you.

“If you love those who love you, why should you be commended? Even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, why should you be commended? Even sinners do that. If you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, why should you be commended? Even sinners lend to sinners expecting to be paid back in full. Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend expecting nothing in return. If you do, you will have a great reward. You will be acting the way children of the Most High act, for he is kind to ungrateful and wicked people. Be compassionate just as your Father is compassionate.

“Don’t judge, and you won’t be judged. Don’t condemn, and you won’t be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good portion – packed down, firmly shaken, and overflowing – will fall into your lap. The portion you give will determine the portion you receive in return.”

SERMON

“Imagine God”

Rev. Ned Alderman

HYMN

“His Eye is on the Sparrow”

TFWS #2146

1. Why should I feel discouraged? Why should the shadows come?
Why should my heart be lonely and long for heaven and home,
When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is he:
Refrain
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.
I sing because I’m happy (I’m happy)
I sing because I’m free (I’m free,
for his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.
2. “Let not your heart be troubled,” his tender word I hear,
And resting on his goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;
Though by the path he leadeth but one step I may see:

Refrain

God has put all things under his feet:
he made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body.
We believe that Jesus died and rose again;
through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died,
As all die in Adam,
so all will be made alive in Christ.
Thanks be to God,
who gives us the victory.

Worship & Song, Worship Resources edition copyright 2011 by Abingdon Press

GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

HYMN

“Guide My Feet TFWS #2208, vv.1, 4, 5, 6

1. Guide by feet while I run this race.
Guide my feet while I run this race.
Guide my feet while I run this race,
For I don't want to run this race, in vain! (race in vain)
4. I'm your child while I run this race.
I'm your child while I run this race.
I'm your child while I run this race,
For I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain)
5. Search my heart while I run this race.
Search my heart while I run this race.
Search my heart while I run this race,
For I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain)
6. Guide my feet while I run this race,
Guide my feet while I run this race.
Guide my feet while I run this race,
For I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain)

SENDING FORTH

Beloved, go from this place ready to listen. Listen for the opportunities to extend mercy. Notice the moments to forgive instead of condemn. Watch for the person who needs help without any strings attached. For the blessing of the Triune God goes with you, pouring out mercy and compassion on you so that you may share mercy and compassion with everyone you meet. Amen.

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, August 2024.

GOING FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE

POSTLUDE

Flourish on Salzburg”

DANA MOODY

Today's service is being broadcast on Facebook Live at 11:00 am. You can access the service through the Oaklette Church Group on Facebook. You can also access the sermon through the Oaklette UMC Facebook page. If you are unable to use Facebook Live a link can be sent to you by email after the Facebook Live Worship has been recorded, but we will need your email address to do this. The Facebook Live service will also be downloaded to our website on Monday morning.

The Food Basket on the altar is presented to the glory of God.



PARTNERS IN MINISTRY TODAY

Members of the Church

Nursery Care Providers: Lisa & Brooks Ryno

Prayer Partner: Sandra Carraway

Lay Reader – Debbie Rippard

Audio–Visual Operator – Danny Castellow

Facebook Live Recorder: Bright Tsevi

Greeter: Joanne Rooks

Pastor: Rev. Ned Alderman

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