

Second Presbyterian Church
OF RICHMOND VIRGINIA



Day of Pentecost



Church Music Sunday
May 19, 2024

Order of Worship

May 19, 2024 at Eleven o'clock a.m.

THE CHURCH GATHERS

Prayer for Meditation

from *The Book of Common Prayer*

O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: be ever present with your servants who seek through art and music to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth; and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty, and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prelude

*Veni Creator Spiritus
When In Our Music God Is Glorified*

Robin Dinda
Lloyd Larson

Welcome and Announcements

Fred Holbrook

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Please sign the Friendship Register found in the pews and provide us with your contact information if you are a visitor.

Introit

Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS

*Call to Worship

Mary Jane Winter

Come! Let us speak plainly and boldly of our faith.

The Spirit of God descends upon us, and Christ's promise to us is fulfilled.

The expression of the Spirit's power in our community is a wonder to behold.

We each have a different voice, yet we witness God's joy together! Amen.

*Hymn 280

Come, O Spirit, Dwell Among Us

EBENEZER

THE CHURCH CONFESSES AND SEEKS ASSURANCE

Call to Confession

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

But when we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins

and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

Prayer of Confession

**Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength.

We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

In your mercy, forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are,

**and direct what we shall be, that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name.**

Response *(sing twice)*

Bless the Lord

Hymn 544

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

Assurance of Pardon

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

The old life is gone; a new life has begun.

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

Amen.

*Grateful Response

Be Not Afraid

Hymn 243

Be not a-fraid; sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al - le - lu - ia!
Be not a-fraid; sing out for joy! Christ is ris-en, al - le - lu - ia!

*Passing of the Peace

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Children may join Ms. Hannab and Rev. Paul at the door near the font.

THE CHURCH LISTENS FOR GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Fred Holbrook

Scripture Lesson

Acts 2:1-21

Pew Bible, p. 884

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Word in Music

Rejoice in the Lamb
(see pages 6-7)

Benjamin Britten

Prayer of Commitment

THE CHURCH RESPONDS IN FAITH

*Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was
conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of
God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge
the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection
of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Kate Fiedler

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Offering of Our Lives

As expressions of faith and commitment, the congregation is invited to bring their pledges and offerings to the baskets found at the front of the sanctuary.

Offertory

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

arr. Valerie Stephenson

*Doxology

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

Prayer of Dedication

*Hymn 641

When in Our Music God Is Glorified

ENGLEBERG

Benediction and Response



Postlude

We All Believe in One True God

J. S. Bach

* Please stand as you are able.

A Reflection on *Rejoice in the Lamb*

The Choir is pleased to present *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Op. 30 by the British composer Benjamin Britten (1913-1976). For this eighteen-minute work, Britten chose excerpts from the long poem *Jubilate Agno* by the eighteenth-century English poet, Christopher Smart, who was a brilliant and enigmatic writer. One tidbit about Smart that needs to be mentioned is that he was in a mental asylum when he wrote the words you will hear today. That fact makes it easy to dismiss the coherence of the texts the moment they get a little idiosyncratic, but this text definitely is not incoherent.

Christopher Smart spent years in an asylum because he was prone to fits of religious fervor. In fact, it was Smart's own father-in-law, with whom the writer had badly fallen out, who undertook the legal proceedings to secure the "commission of lunacy" against Smart for his religious "mania." Christopher Smart clearly was eccentric, but he also was brilliant, extremely well educated, and a passionate Christian with an arguably evangelical bent. Not all of Christopher Smart's poetry is comprehensible, but his work clearly reveals what critics have described as "flashes of genius," and it is these "flashes" that are skillfully purposed in Britten's setting.

The very heart of *Rejoice in the Lamb* – and Christian belief – is that creation is good, whether by its simplicity, its mind-boggling complexity and diversity, or its awesome beauty. Whether living or inanimate, all of creation, by its very existence, praises and magnifies its Creator God.

Britten begins *Rejoice in the Lamb* by using Christopher Smart's invocation of man and beast: "all nations and languages, and every creature" rejoice in God to "give the glory to the Lord, and the Lamb." Britten does not present this text bombastically, but as a quiet, awe-filled, expectant incantation.

This segues into a characteristically religious – if musically rambunctious – invocation of "those who have gone before" to join us in praising God, but the people Smart names are definitely not the familiar saints we might expect. Instead, he rattles off a list of obscure Old Testament figures, who you can Google after the service if you are curious enough. This is probably the skeptic's first opportunity to write off the whole text as loony, yet the poet's genius shines through with a felicitous image of God's self as "the perfection of excellence." This glimpse of such a Creator evokes the first of two sections in which the principal word is "hallelujah," and again, Britten resists the temptation to make this movement loud and rollicking. Instead, these "hallelujahs" are an intense and intimate expression of joy "from the heart of God," God the Creator of all, who is "the artist inimitable." Then we return, for three unusual and charming solo movements, to the idea that all of creation glorifies God simply by being that for which it was created.

Christopher Smart wrote a lot about his cat, Jeffery, who really was his only completely devoted companion through thick and thin. Felines are not my fancy, but I love my Portuguese Water Dog, who convinces me every day that dogs, at least, were placed on earth by God to teach us about unconditional love. Any of you who have cats or dogs know that they are capable of, for any or for no reason at all, doing utterly random and absolutely charming things; there is incredible joy in simply watching them be what they are. In Britten's organ accompaniment for this soprano aria, we hear the unpredictable twisting and playful turning of Jeffery, at least "seven times round." And why not? "For God has blessed him in the variety of his movements."

In the next aria, written for an alto soloist, the virtues of valor and loyalty are extolled when Smart observes a mouse, whose natural instinct is to defend its mate against impossible odds. It would be hard for me to select a favorite moment in this work, but Smart's imagery around flowers and Britten's setting for tenor soloist, is truly inspired. "For the flowers have their angels" and speak to us in their own language, "for flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ."

The next section contains the most impassioned statement of faith in the entire cantata, due in large part to Britten's music. Here, in his own hardships, Smart identifies with Jesus. At the end of their lives, both Smart and Jesus were thought to be crazy and dangerous by the authorities of their day, and both suffered beatings and severe mistreatment, ironically, at the hands of the "officers of the peace." Faith drives out despair, nonetheless, and the movement ends by stating Smart's confident belief that "He that is born of a Virgin shall deliver me out of all."

There follows a very brief excerpt from what is a complete acrostic in the original poem, suggesting alternate words for God inspired by the selected letters of the alphabet; Britten's excerpt ends with, unsurprisingly, "For M is musick." This chorus sprints headlong into the glorious world of sound by means of a jubilant succession of rhyming words. Although the words themselves have to do with music, I think Smart's rejoicing in God derives less from the meaning of the words than it does simply from the pure joy of the sound of the rhymes. A type of glossolalia, perhaps.

There is a touching phrase used in some baptismal liturgies where God is asked to give the newly-baptized "the gift of joy and wonder in all God's works." Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could view all of creation around us, however amazing or unremarkable, with the joy and wonder perceived here by Christopher Smart and Benjamin Britten? Perhaps this is one of the ways we can "come unto him, all who labor and are heavy laden" and then, perhaps, "from the echo of the heavenly harp, magnificent and mighty," we might indeed "find rest," "for this time is perceptible to [all], by a remarkable stillness, and serenity of soul."

1. Choir

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;
Give the glory to the Lord,
And the Lamb.
Nations, and languages,
And every Creature
In which is the breath of Life.
Let man and beast appear before him,
And magnify his name together.

2. Choir

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,
Bind a leopard to the altar
And consecrate his spear to the Lord.
Let Ishmail dedicate a tyger,
And give praise for the liberty
In which the Lord has let him at large.
Let Balaam appear with an ass,
And bless the Lord his people
And his creatures for a reward eternal.
Let Daniel come forth with a lion,
And praise God with all his might
Through faith in Christ Jesus.
Let Ithamar minister with a chamois,
And bless the name of Him
That cloatheth the naked.
Let Jakim with the satyr
Bless God in the dance,
Dance, dance, dance.
Let David bless with the bear
The beginning of victory to the Lord,
To the Lord the perfection of excellence.

3. Choir

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnificent and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

4. Soprano -- Kat Oros

For I will consider my cat Jeoffry.
For he is the servant of the living God.
Duly and daily serving him.

For at the first glance
Of the glory of God in the East
He worships in his way.
For this is done by wreathing his body
Seven times round with elegant quickness.
For he knows that God is his saviour.
For God has bless'd him
In the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter
Than his peace when at rest.

For I am possessed of a cat,
Surpassing in beauty,
From whom I take occasion
To bless Almighty God.

5. Alto -- Amanda Simon

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For this is a true case--
Cat takes female mouse,
Male mouse will not depart,
but stands threat'ning and daring.
If you will let her go,
I will engage you,
As prodigious a creature as you are.

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of
An hospitable disposition.

6. Tenor -- Aaron Todd Jones

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's creation.
For the flower glorifies God
And the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

7. Choir

For I am under the same accusation
With my Savior,
For they said,
He is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace
Are at variance with me,
And the watchman smites me
With his staff.
For silly fellow, silly fellow,
Is against me,
And belongeth neither to me
Nor to my family.
For I am in twelve hardships,
But he that was born of a virgin
Shall deliver me out of all,
Shall deliver me out of all.

8. Bass -- Tim Larson

For H is a Spirit
And therefore he is God.
For K is King
And therefore he is God.
For L is Love
And therefore he is God.
For M is Musick
And therefore he is God.

9. Choir

For the instruments are by their rhimes,
For the shawm rhimes are lawn fawn and the like.
For the shawm rhimes are moon boon and the like.
For the harp rhimes are sing ring and the like.
For the harp rhimes are ring string and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are toll soul and the like.
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth and the like.
For the flute rhimes are suit mute and the like.
For the bassoon rhimes are pass class and the like.
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place and the like.
For the clarinet rhimes are clean seen and the like.
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound and the like.

For the trumpet of God is a blessed intelligence
And so are all the instruments in Heav'n.
For God the Father Almighty plays upon the harp
Of stupendous magnitude and melody.
For at that time malignity ceases
And the devils themselves are at peace.
For this time is perceptible to man
By a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.

10. Choir

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnifical and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

On this Church Music Sunday, we give thanks for the musicians of Second Church who faithfully enrich our worship and nurture our faith journey by giving musical wings to the Gospel.

Jeffrey Riehl, Director of Music
Kathy Toole, Organist

The Choir

*section leaders

**guest artist

Sopranos

Laura Carr
Hannah Haynes
Willa Jacob
Laura Knouse
Elva Mapp
Kat Oros*
Joan Spyhalski
Ellie Swanson*

Altos

Barbara Alexander
Barbara Batson
Lisa Emblidge
Mechelle Martin
Anne McDonnell
Cherry Peters
Kathy Pryor
Amanda Simon*
Yun-Ling Bunny Tai
Erin Wind*

Tenors

Terry Crickenberger
Rob Emblidge
Will Ferguson*
Michael Hawn
Jarl Jackson
Aaron Todd Jones**
Foster Lyman*
Jim Stewart

Basses

Gordon Campbell
David Duncan
Dick Fay
Aaron Haynes
Clint Miller*
Tim Larson*
Zach Perry

The Handbell Choir
Charles “Chuck” Todd, Director

Barbara Batson
Beth Blair
Donna Carey
Laura Carr

Paula Peters Chambers
Lisa Emblidge
Rob Emblidge
Cara Griggs

Sheri Highfill
Kate Nash
Yun-Ling Bunny Tai

The Children’s Choir
Laura Carr, Director

Craig Barkley
Aria Carr
Tristan Carr
Jack Dutton

Molly Dutton
Alli Ewees
Andy Ewees
Ava Grace Holder

Grayson Hudson-Sovinsky
Alex Richter
Addie White
Brewer White

*The flowers are given by Katharine Anderson to the glory of God
and in loving memory of Anna & Bill Anderson, Alvin Anderson, and Hilary Smith.*

Announcements & Opportunities

Your children are always welcome! Children ages infant to three years old, are welcome in the nursery from 9:15 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. Children four years old through second grade, may be in the nursery from 10:45 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. during worship. Children in the third grade and older are encouraged to sit with their families during worship.

The Pentecost Offering will be received this morning. A portion of the gifts are designated for the Sacred Heart Summer Day Camp. In addition to helping locally, this offering also supports efforts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in ministries to children and youth, as well as Young Adult Volunteers. Please be sure to indicate “Pentecost” on your check or in the comments if paying online.

Fellowship Time in the Dining Room following worship today. Guests are encouraged to join members for a time of conversation and fellowship.

Fair Trade Coffee and Tea Sales Today in the Dining Room following worship. Each bag sold supports farmers working through co-ops around the world. \$9.00 per bag for coffee; \$5.00 per box for tea. Buy it for yourself, as gifts, or for the shower ministry.

Summer Worship begins next Sunday, May 26, at 10:00 a.m. through Labor Day weekend.

Memorial Service for Emma Price on Sunday, May 26: All are invited to attend the 2:00 p.m. service followed by a reception. Emma worked in the Second Presbyterian office for over a decade.

Church Office Closed on Monday, May 27, in observance of Memorial Day.



How to give: In addition to checks, you may use the church’s website (www.2presrichmond.org) at the GIVE tab; the church’s app: 2ndpresrva; or by scanning the QR code to the left.



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OF RICHMOND VIRGINIA

ESTABLISHED 1845
P.C.(U.S.A.)

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We welcome all whom God calls into life, worship, work, and leadership of this church without regard to gender, cultural heritage, skin color, socio-economic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other life circumstances.