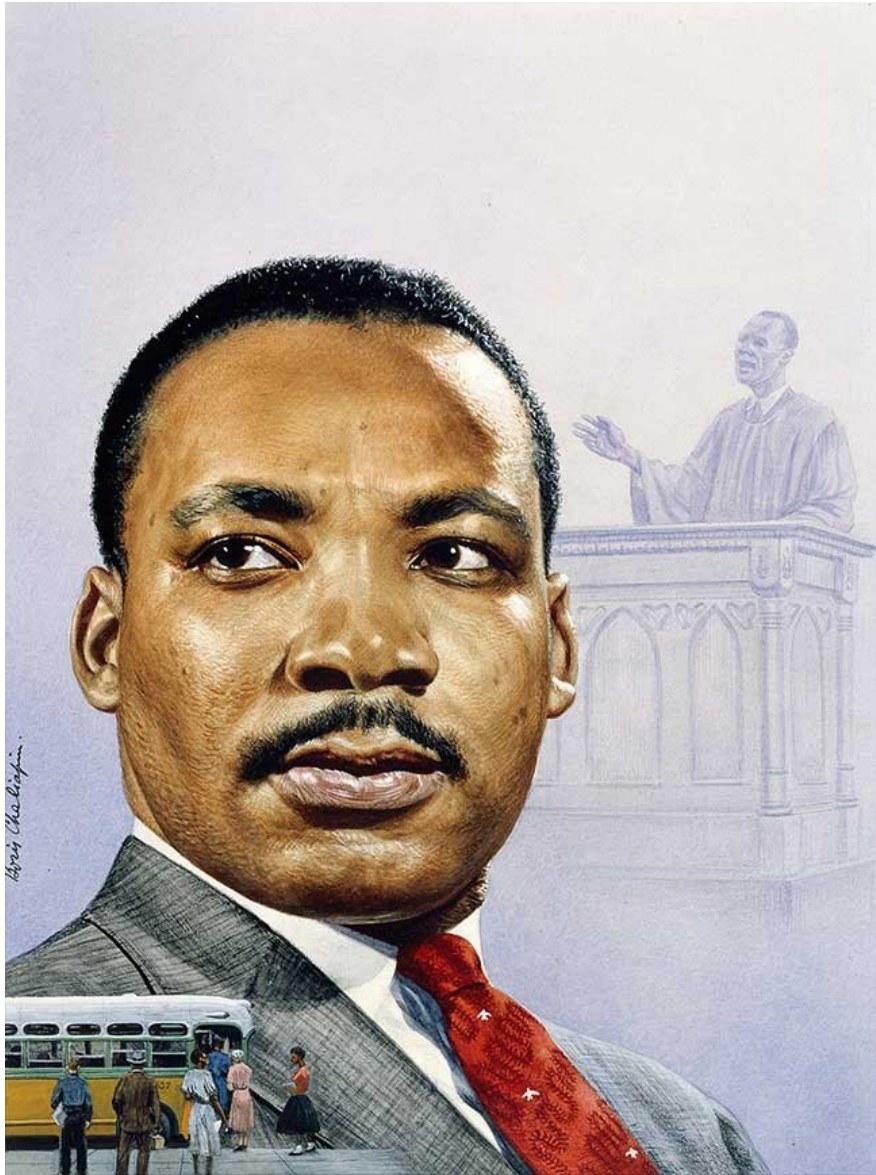


WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)



Martin Luther King, Jr.

Boris Chaliapin (American) National Portrait Gallery

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

A SERVICE OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

JANUARY 15, 2023 10:30AM

Grace Notes

Welcome to WHPC! If you are visiting us today, we are so glad you joined us for worship. If you have not already, please take a moment to record your contact information on the visitor card you will find in the pew and drop it in the offering box or hand it to a greeter at the door. We are always glad to share the great things happening at WHPC!

If you are looking for a new church home and would like to join in fellowship with Westover Hills, please join us in the Parlor (outside the sanctuary doors) and we will gladly share more about life at WHPC or, if you are ready, receive you into membership.

Childcare is available in the nursery. Please check with a greeter.

This confession of sin is adapted from one written for the first day of Lent. Typically the Matthew text we will hear today is read at Ash Wednesday. In the narrative cycle, the text is read in its context with the larger gospel narrative rather than according to the liturgical or church calendar.

WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

**Indicates the congregation is invited to stand.*

Bold text indicates unison readings.

WE GATHER AT GOD'S INVITATION

WELCOME & OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISCIPLESHIP Dr. Robert Wm Lowry, Pastor

PRELUDE David Austin, Music Director

CALL TO WORSHIP Marianne Estes, Liturgist

After he was baptized by John,
Jesus went by himself to the wilderness
where he was tempted.

**Forty days in the desert, Jesus was tempted
to become relevant, spectacular, and powerful.**

Today, we remember that part of the Christian life is walking the pilgrim journey,
which brings us to face some of our own weaknesses and temptations.

**We join together in Christ and walk the journey in community,
seeking the Spirit as our guide and companion along the way.**

Let us worship God together.

OPENING PRAYER

God, you know our hearts. You have knitted our inmost being and you know our deepest desires, fears and worries. Help us to journey this pilgrim way into a new awareness of your presence in our lives. Save us from our own temptations, so that we may more freely follow you. Amen.

*HYMN OF PRAISE #361 *"How Firm a Foundation"* FOUNDATION

CALL TO CONFESSION

If we say we are completely put together, the truth is not in us.
But if we confess our distractions, our errors, and our anxieties, God will meet us
and renew us. Together let us confess our sins against God and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION. (in unison)

Forty days alone, a wilderness of thoughts, tempting and inviting thoughts,
which could so easily have distracted you from your task, your mission, your
vision.

**Yet you emerged, stronger and more attuned
to all that had to be done.**

We too live in stressful times. Demands are made of our time, that leave so little
for the important things of life.

Grace Notes

This chorus from a popular contemporary song is frequently used as a response to all kinds of prayer. Here we use it as a response to confession, but it could as easily be used as part of a pastoral or Eucharistic prayer.

Respectful of individual preferences concerning contact, please extend either a hand or a gesture of peace to your neighbors.

We are easily distracted in the wilderness of our lives, by every call to go this way or that, to turn stone to bread, leap from mountains, and do all that would keep us from the truth.

We listen to the voices of this world, and ignore the one who endured all this and so much more, and emerged triumphant, that we might not have to suffer so.

Forgive us, God, when we get distracted from our task.

Forgive us those times when we try to be all things to all people, and fail to be anything to anyone.

Grant us insight, patience, and, above all, the ability to forgive one another and ourselves so we may return to your way together.

Silence is kept

SUNG RESPONSE *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* CHILDREN PRAYING

Lord, lis - ten to your chil - dren pray - ing.

Lord, send your Spirit in this place. Lord, listen to your children

pray - ing. Send us love; send us power; send us grace.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

...in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

+THE PEACE OF CHRIST

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

And also with you.

WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Matthew 4:1-17

Then the Spirit led Jesus up into the wilderness so that the devil might tempt him. After Jesus had fasted for forty days and forty nights, he was starving. The tempter came to him and said, "Since you are God's Son, command these stones to become bread."

Jesus replied, "It's written, People won't live only by bread, but by every word spoken by God."

After that the devil brought him into the holy city and stood him at the highest point of the temple. He said to him, "Since you are God's Son, throw yourself down; for it is written, I will command my angels concerning you, and they will take you up in their hands so that you won't hit your foot on a stone."

Jesus replied, "Again it's written, Don't test the Lord your God."

Then the devil brought him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. He said, "I'll give you all these if you bow down and worship me."

Jesus responded, "Go away, Satan, because it's written, You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him." The devil left him, and angels came and took care of him.

Now when Jesus heard that John was arrested, he went to Galilee. He left Nazareth and settled in Capernaum, which lies alongside the sea in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali. This fulfilled what Isaiah the prophet said:

*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
alongside the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,
the people who lived in the dark have seen a great light,
and a light has come upon those who lived in the region and in shadow of death.*

From that time Jesus began to announce, "Change your hearts and lives! Here comes the kingdom of heaven!"

SERMON

"Not Every Wilderness Is in the Wild"

Dr. Lowry

QUESTIONS AT STAKE

"Can a spiritual wilderness be experienced in the midst of the busyness of life?"

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

+HYMN OF RESPONSE #85 "What Wondrous Love Is This" WONDROUS LOVE

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Adapted from the Letter from the Birmingham Jail
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Why do we strive for justice?

Because injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one, affects all indirectly.

A new occasional element in the bulletin is the "Question at Stake." This is a snapshot of the question or questions that helped guide Pastor Robert in preparing for the day's sermon. They may also provide some fruit for further thought during the week.

Grace Notes

Currently under review for possible inclusion in the PC (USA) Book of Confessions, Dr. King's "Letter from the Birmingham" Jail is a classic text in both American theology and ethics.

The Prayers of the People are adapted from various prayers included in the volume *Liturgies from Below* by Claudio Carvalhaes. The prayers and liturgies collected in this volume are drawn from marginalized communities around the world and represent an approach to liturgy that is rooted in the lived experience of the people rather than the liturgical expertise of the few.

Why do we demand justice for all?

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.

Why is the work of justice urgent in our world?

Because "wait" almost always means "never." Because injustice will never be cured so long as it is covered up but must be opened with all its ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must be exposed, with all the tension its exposure creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured.

We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation.

We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.

Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy and transform our pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Draw near, O God, and hear our prayers.

Hear the prayers of our tears, they are songs of worship.

Hear the prayers of our anguish, they are hymns in the sanctuary.

Hear the prayers of our joy, they are notes of hope in a broken world.

When Jesus stood overlooking the city, he wept for Jerusalem.

Hear the songs of our tears today as we weep

for parents mourning children lost to an epidemic of violence;

for families torn apart by forces of division in our world;

for our neighbors on the margins who are pushed ever outward.

Some days it feels that weeping is all we can muster.

And yet we make our song "Alleluia!"

The sanctus is not silenced and the voice of the church will never stop.

We make our song, "Alleluia!" in defiance of the forces that bring weeping.

Hear the prayers of our anguish today as we cry out in lament

for the people of Ukraine subjected to the oppression of a neighbor and the indifference of the world;

for the child deep in an African mine laboring to dig the materials that make a cell phone cheaper;

Grace Notes

This paraphrase of Psalm 17 emphasizes the prayerful qualities of the psalm by keeping the focus on the relationship between the psalmist and God, rather than denouncing the faults of the enemy. This is a helpful reminder that our prayers need to be grounded in honest and unpretentious faith.

Elders will be in the Parlor (outside the sanctuary doors) following worship if you would like to learn more about WHPC or if you are ready to join as part of the congregation.

for the senior in the wealthiest nation the world has ever known who has to choose between food and medicine and for the child who goes to bed hungry when there is more than enough to feed all.

Some days it feels like anguish is all we can manage.

And yet we make our song “Alleluia!”

The sanctus is not silenced and the voice of the church will never stop. We make our song, “Alleluia!” in defiance of the forces that bring the sounds of anguish.

Hear the prayers of our joy as we break through the strains of the world’s weeping and lament with notes and glimmers of hope.

for the serendipity of a stranger’s act of kindness;

for the unexpected offering of a hand of friendship;

for the deep generosity of spirit your children are capable of showing;

for the thin places in this world where we gain a glimpse of your holy realm.

What song can your children sing but, “Alleluia!”

So that is what we make our song today and everyday.

Alleluia! Christ is born.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Alleluia! Christ is with us.

Alleluia! Christ is for us.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Christ is indeed our song and so we raise our voices in the chorus of praise and in the words he taught us to pray boldly saying,

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,

the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

WE DEPART IN GOD’S NAME

†PARTING HYMN *“Hear, O Lord, My Plea For Justice”* CHARLESTON

(SEE NEXT PAGE)

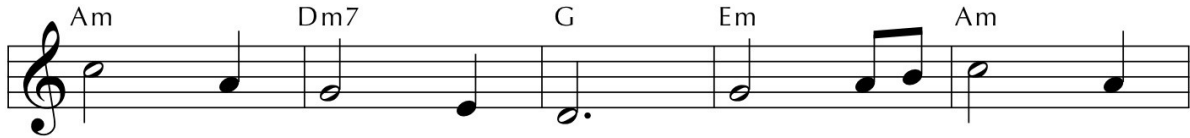
†CHARGE & BENEEDICTION

†POSTLUDE

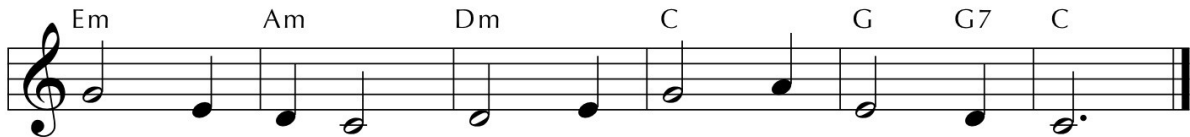
“Hear, O Lord, My Plea for Justice”



1 Hear, O Lord, my plea for jus - tice; lis - ten
2 Test my heart for its af - flic - tion; pu - ri -
3 Keep me, Lord, in sure pro - tec - tion, as the
4 In its wake, send vin - di - ca - tion; to its



to my heart - felt prayer. In your just de -
fy my soul with fire; let my mor - tal
ap - ple of your eye. Shel - ter me be -
dark - ness, show your face. Bring me to my



lib - er - a - tion may I find re - demp - tion there.
tongue speak wis - dom, righ - teous - ness be my de - sire.
neath your shad - ow when my hour of death draws nigh.
res - ur - rec - tion clothed in gar - ments of your grace.

WORSHIP NOTES

WORSHIP LEADERS TODAY Pastor Robert Lowry, Music Director David Austin, Liturgist Marianne Estes, and the Westover Hills Chancel Choir.

THE ART ON THE BULLETIN COVER is a portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from the National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C. The portrait depicts Dr. King with images of him preaching and a scene of children boarding a yellow school bus, a nod toward the struggle for integration.

THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH is adapted from Martin Luther King Jr.'s “Letter from the Birmingham Jail.” This adaptation is by Robert and is part of a resource for today used in the PC(USA).

† THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

MIDWEEK MANNA BIBLE STUDY has begun Wednesdays at 12:05. The weekly group will meet from 12:05-12:55 to give those who work and want to participate time to join during lunch. The study meets in the New Chapel and attendees are invited to bring lunch and join in the conversation. To learn more, contact Pastor Robert.

NEW YEAR NEW YOU YOGA has begun meeting Thursdays in the New Chapel at 10am. This low-impact exercise is for all comers and is a great way to keep in shape and stay flexible during the chilly winter months.

PASTOR ROBERT WILL BE LEADING the Second Presbyterian 1st and 3rd Monday book group in January and February. The first meeting is January 16 and the book study is Eugene Peterson’s “A Long Obedience in the Same Direction.” For more information contact Pastor Robert.

IN HONOR OF REV DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR DAY on Monday, the 16th, we will light luminaries

(weather permitting) around the church walkways from 5 to 7pm. We welcome volunteers to assemble and place them on Monday afternoon from 1 to 4pm and/or to take them up and dis-assemble them from 7 to 8pm. Please contact Liz Branch if you can help either or both times.

FAIR TRADE COFFEE is available year round. Presbyterian Women make fair trade products available to the congregation not as a moneymaker but as one of our missions. The price we pay for coffee is the price we charge. Purchasing fair trade coffee helps more money reach the hard-working farmers. Contact Carolyn Nash with questions or to purchase coffee.

UPDATE OUR PRAYER LIST FOR CARELINE AND BULLETIN. As we again update our list, we ask that if you wish for yourself, your loved one or friends to remain on the prayer list, please contact the church office with this information. Please respond by January 17, 2023. Those not heard from by that date will be removed from the new list to be posted. The list can be modified at any time. Any member or WHPC friend who wants a name included on the general WHPC prayer list should contact the church office. The prayer list will be printed in the Sunday bulletin and also in Monday's CareLine. The name will remain on the list until the office is notified to remove it or until the name is removed during the quarterly list update. Those who desire confidentiality for prayer requests and only want the Prayer Circle to be notified should contact Marianne Estes or Ray Stephens. Updates to the prayer list should be sent to the office and copied to Liz Branch and Robert.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE BULLETIN may be emailed to the office at office.westoverhills@gmail.com To ensure their inclusion in the Sunday bulletin, please send any announcements **by 5pm on Wednesday.**

CALENDAR UPDATES AND SESSION DOCUMENTS should be sent to the office and copied to Candice Misenheimer.

PASTORAL CARE

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PRAYERS these members and friends of Westover Hills Presbyterian: Pam Mattes (former frequent WHPC visitor– broken leg); Betty Glenn (recovering from pneumonia); Sally Johnson and family (death on January 4 of Sally's brother, Grif Stockley, who lived in the Washington, DC area); Ollie Naylor (broken wrist and nose); Barry Wood (Sydney McEwen's grandfather– blood infection now affecting heart); Rev. David Schaller (brother of Marcey Berry - ankle surgery); Susan Mauney (health issues); Ralph Cotham (recovering at home); Suzanne Carroll (mother of Tammy Miller – recovery from a fall); Kade (awaiting test results - Pastor Robert Lowry and Brian Smith's four-year-old great-nephew); Laura Whitmore (broken leg and ankle); Vivianna McAtee; Ulysses Neyland (back injury); Jane Estes (Long haul Covid); Chrztina and the people of Ukraine (Ukraine collaborator with WHPC PW on 2013 water project; has moved to Hungary for safety) - for assurance of God's presence; Ljubica and Stanislav Radovic (volleyball coach Tanja Eckart's parents, who live in Croatia - anxiety over nearby war); Christiana Esemek-Kuwong's family in war torn Cameroon; Andrea Campbell; TLC (at home) members; Church staff: Pastor Robert, Ulysses, David, Tammy and Shawn; Preschool kids, families & staff; The people of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central America, Puerto Rico and Haiti; Victims of hurricanes in Florida and the Carolinas, Central America, Cuba and Puerto Rico; victims of flooding in Southeast Arkansas.

DEACONS FOR JANUARY are Charlotte Frith and Kay McCollum.

CALENDAR

The church calendar is available on the website

(scan QR code to be directed to our website)



WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

6400 RICHARD B HARDIE DRIVE

LITTLE ROCK, AR 72207

501-663-6383