



Bedford Presbyterian Church

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 21, 2021 at 10 AM

Worship-at-a-Distance Format

GATHERING TOGETHER

Chimes

Gathering Music

“There is a Redeemer”
Christina DeMaio, soloist

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor John Sawyer

PREPARING FOR THE WORD

Call to Worship¹

Elder Alicia Wooldridge

Every week is a new week, another chance to say:

“Here I am. Use me.”

Every day is a new day, another chance to say:

“Thank you for yesterday. Thank you for tomorrow.”

Every hour is a new hour, another chance to say,

“Again and again, make me new.”

We do not come to this place to stay the same.

We come to this place to be changed.

So let us worship holy God, who created yesterday, will create tomorrow, and even now is creating something new.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Hymn # 421 (see below) “Have Mercy, God, Upon My Life”

IRISH

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon (Responsive)

Gracious God, we want to see you. We want to be known as the people who looked for Jesus; but not only that, we want to be people who have your covenant written on our hearts. Why do we feel so far away from that at times? What went wrong? Where did we lose our way? Could you, would you, once again, write on our fragile hearts? We would be so grateful. Amen.

Friends, despite our wonderings, despite our distractions, despite wrong turns time and time again, we are known and loved by God. Like a lighthouse keeper by the sea, God will never stop waving us home. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

Our fragile bones are held by the Great Creator. Our fragile hearts are loved by the Great Creator. Our tender spirits are forgiven by the Great Creator.

Today is a new day.

Again and again, we are forgiven; again and again, we are reformed. Thanks be to God. Amen.

¹ Some of the prayers and readings in today’s services are by The Reverend Sarah Are and adapted and used with permission from A Sanctified Art, LLC.

Sung Response (Hymn # 581)

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.*

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

Children's Sermon

Pastor John Sawyer

Prayer for Illumination

Elder Alicia Wooldridge

First Scripture Reading

John 12:20-33

Listen now for the Word of God.

Our ears are open. . .

Second Scripture Reading

Psalm 51:1-12

Pastor John Sawyer

. . . The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"We Would See Jesus"

Pastor John Sawyer

(A New and Right Spirit – Again and Again)

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Hymn # 430 (see below)

"Remember Not, O God"

SOUTHWELL

Statement of Faith – from A Sanctified Art

Deacon Katharine Daly

We believe that flowers need the rain. We believe that humans need community.

We believe that bodies need rest. We believe that hearts need connection.

We believe that mornings need sunrise. We believe that seasons need change.

We believe that grief needs space. We believe that change needs time.

We believe that love needs security. We believe that pain needs art.

We believe that joy needs company. We believe that our spirits need God.

Again and again, our spirits need God.

Fortunately for us, we trust that God is here.

God is at work in our lives. God never gives up. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Call for the Offering

Deacon Katharine Daly

Offertory

"Arise My Soul, Arise"

Forrest

Christina DeMaio, soloist

*At this time, you are invited to offer your tithes and offerings,
by writing a check and putting it in an envelope to the church,
or through our church's online giving website
(<https://bedfordpresbyterian.org/giving/one-time-gifts-pledges/>),
or by scanning this QR code and making a donation.*



*Your giving has a direct impact on the ministry and mission
of Bedford Presbyterian Church! Thank you!*

Song of Response (Hymn # 606)

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

Deacon Katharine Daly

Almighty God, may the gifts we offer be made perfect through Christ to glorify you and bless the world. Amen.

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

Pastor John Sawyer

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.

GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

Hymn # 209 (see below)

"My Song is Love Unknown"

LOVE UNKNOWN

Charge and Benediction and Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you.
And with you.

Closing Song

NORTHUMBRIA MORNING BLESSING

*May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever he may send you.
May he guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.
May he bring you home, rejoicing, at the wonders he has shown you.
May he bring you home, rejoicing, once again into our doors.*

Postlude



Liturgists and Leaders in today's worship service –

The Reverend John Sawyer, Pastor
Mrs. Barbara Flocco, Director of Music
Elder Alicia Wooldridge, Liturgist
Deacon Katharine Daly, Liturgist
Christina DeMaio, Special Music
Marc Murai, Elder Michael Chen, and Kirk Wilson, Sound and Video Technicians
Members of our IT and Communications Committee and Covid-19 Task Force

Information on ways to access audio and video versions of today's service can be found at www.bedfordpresbyterian.org.

Have Mercy, God, upon My Life 421

(Psalm 51)

1 Have mer - cy, God, up - on my life, and
 2 My guilt is heav - y on my mind; I
 3 Now teach me wis - dom in my soul; I
 4 Cre - ate in me a faith - ful heart, a
 5 Then I will praise you with my heart, my

make me clean with - in: pour out your ev - er -
 know what I have done: a - gainst your jus - tice
 long to see your face. Let bones, once bro - ken,
 spir - it right and new. Sus - tain me with your
 mind, my soul, my voice. You save the least and

faith - ful love and wash a - way my sin.
 I have sinned, a - gainst you, God, a - lone.
 sing with joy, and heal me by your grace.
 sav - ing love and keep me close to you.
 seek the lost; let all the world re - joice!

Psalm 51, paraphrased here, has traditionally been known as one of the seven penitential psalms, and it is used annually on Ash Wednesday. But this psalm is not just about human sinfulness; it is also about God's willingness to forgive and restore sinners. That is good news.

Remember Not, O God

430

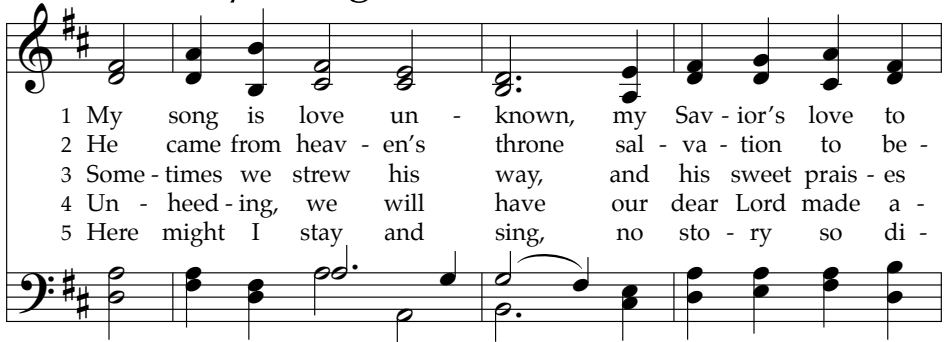
(Psalm 79)

1 Re - mem - ber not, O God, the sins of long a - go;
 2 O Lord, our Sav - ior, help, and glo - ri - fy your name;
 3 Then, safe with - in your fold, we will ex - alt your name;

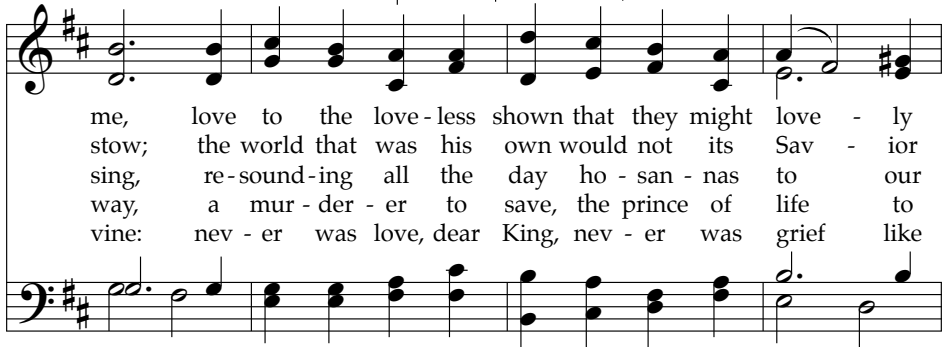
in ten - der mer - cy vis - it us, dis - tressed and hum - bled low.
 de - liv - er us from all our sins and take a - way our shame.
 our thank - ful hearts with songs of joy your good - ness will pro - claim.

This paraphrase of selected verses from Psalm 79 distills the tone of communal lament that runs through that psalm. Because the sense of shame and the longing for restoration extend to the whole community, this psalm is usually associated with the Jewish exile in Babylon.

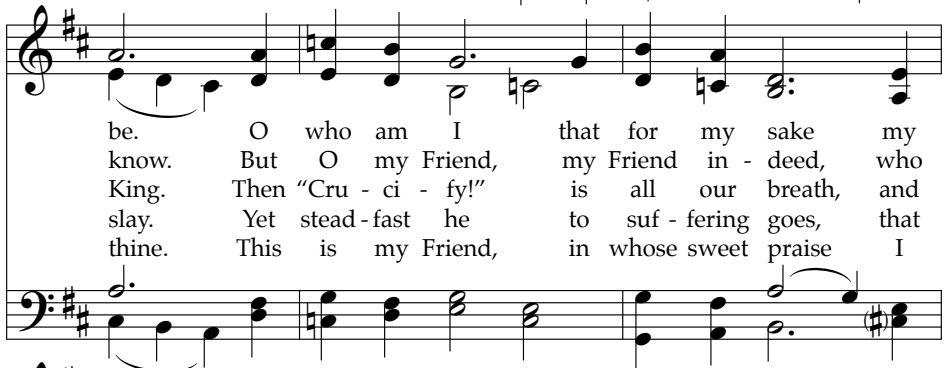
My Song Is Love Unknown 209



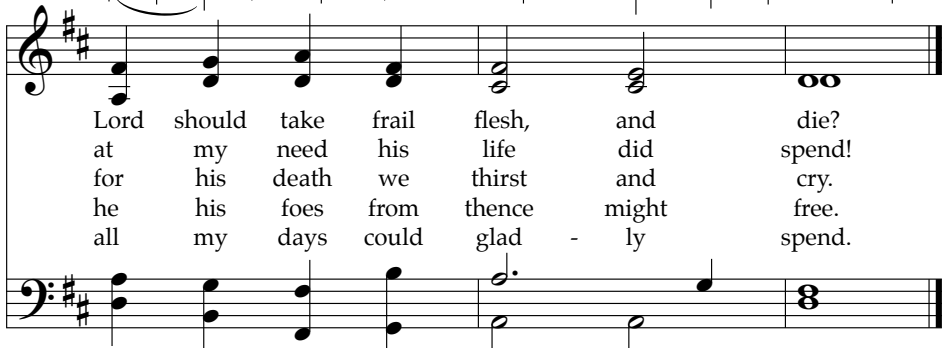
1 My song is love un - known, my Sav - ior's love to
 2 He came from heav - en's throne sal - va - tion to be -
 3 Some - times we strew his way, and his sweet prais - es
 4 Un - heed - ing, we will have our dear Lord made a -
 5 Here might I stay and sing, no sto - ry so di -



me, love to the love-less shown that they might love - ly
 stow; the world that was his own would not its Sav - ior
 sing, re-sound-ing all the day ho - san - nas to our
 way, a mur - der - er to save, the prince of life to
 vine: nev - er was love, dear King, nev - er was grief like



be. O who am I that for my sake my
 know. But O my Friend, my Friend in - deed, who
 King. Then "Cru - ci - fy!" is all our breath, and
 slay. Yet stead - fast he to suf - fering goes, that
 thine. This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise I



Lord should take frail flesh, and die?
 at my need his life did spend!
 for his death we thirst and cry.
 he his foes from thence might free.
 all my days could glad - ly spend.

The opening line here could equally well have been a courtier's lament for a secret affair, but it soon becomes a path into a vivid and poignant reflection on Christ's Passion. This 17th-century text is beautifully embraced by its sensitive and lyrical 20th-century tune.