



WESTMINSTER

— Presbyterian Church —

Albany, New York
March 19, 2023 ~ The Fourth Sunday in Lent
Service of Worship 10:00 a.m.



Welcome to Westminster! We're glad you're here.

- **If you're visiting us this morning, we would love to meet you and greet you!** We invite you to fill out the Welcome Card in the pew and put it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher in the back.
- **After worship, please join us downstairs as we continue our fellowship at coffee hour.** We gather in the hall located directly under our sanctuary. Stairs are located on either side of the State Street entrance to our building.



WE ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

(Let the notes of our Opening Prelude be the musical curtain through which we pass as we gather to worship together. Let the preparation we make together be prayerful.)

Prelude

O Mortals, Grieve for Your Sin

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)



Call to Worship

Lisa Petter

One: The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in love.

Psalm 103:8

All: Let us worship God!



Opening Hymn #451

Open My Eyes, That I May See



Prayer of Confession

Lisa Petter

One: Are you thirsty for grace? Are you hungry for mercy?
God is calling; come to the waters.
Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

Isaiah 55:1

**All: God of mercy,
you sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost.
We confess that we have strayed from you
and turned aside from your way.
We are misled by pride,
for we see ourselves pure when we are stained,
and great when we are small.
We have failed in love,
neglected justice,
and ignored your truth.**

**Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sin.
Return us to paths of righteousness
through Jesus Christ, our Savior.**

(Time of silence)

Assurance of Forgiveness

Lisa Petter

One: Listen, so that you may live:
The steadfast love of the Lord never fails
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

All: Thanks be to God.

Passing The Peace

Lisa Petter

Words of Welcome

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

Choral Anthem

The Invitation

Craig Courtney

Oh, Come, you who thirst, come to the water, and you who have nothing,
you who have nothing come buy, come buy and eat. (text is repeated)
Come, come, come to Me. (repeated)

Seek Me, seek Me, while I may be found. Call on Me, call on Me, while I
am near. (text is repeated)

Come, all who thirst, come to the water (repeated), and you who have
nothing, and you who have nothing, come buy and eat. Come, come, come to
Me, Oh come, come, come to Me. Oh.

WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD



Prayer for Illumination

Gracious God, our way in the wilderness,
guide us, by your Word, through these forty days,
and minister to us with your Holy Spirit,
so that we may reformed, restored, and renewed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?”

Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

Sermon

"Commit to One (Small) Thing"

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

Musical Meditation

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Gathering Celebrations and Concerns

Prayer Hymn #692

Spirit, Open My Heart



Prayers from State Street

Ned Trudeau

Prayers of the People

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

The Lord's Prayer

**All: 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.**



Offering

Lisa Petter

Offering Hymn #710

We Lift Our Voices

Responding to God's Call

Lisa Petter on Two Together

WE ARE SENT IN GOD'S NAME



Closing Hymn #432

How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord

Charge and Benediction

Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff

Choral Response

Go Now in Peace

Don Besig

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of every day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know He will guide you in all you do.
Amen, Amen, Amen

Postlude

All Glory Be to God on High

George P. Telemann (1681-1767)



We welcome Margaret Randall as this week's accompanist. Thank you Margaret!

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Open My Eyes, That I May See 451

1 O - pen my eyes, that I may see glimps - es of truth thou hast for me.
 2 O - pen my ears, that I may hear voic - es of truth thou send - est clear.
 3 O - pen my mouth, and let me bear glad - ly the warm truth ev - ery - where.

Place in my hands the won - der - ful key that shall un - clasp and
 And while the wave notes fall on my ear, ev - ery - thing false will
 O - pen my heart, and let me pre - pare love with thy chil - dren

set me free. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy
 dis - ap - pear. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy
 thus to share. Si - lent - ly now I wait for thee, read - y, my God, thy

will to see. O - pen my eyes; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
 will to see. O - pen my ears; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
 will to see. O - pen my heart; il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!

The first woman to publish a collection of her own anthems, this author/composer has created in this hymn a sung prayer for illumination. It not only asks God to help us understand Scripture but also prays for the strength and courage to make God's love known to others.

692 Spirit, Open My Heart

Capo 3: (D) (G) (D) (G) (A7)
 F B^b F B^b C7

Refrain

Spir - it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of

(Bm) (D/A) (G) (A7) (Bm) (D/A) (Em)
 Dm F/C B^b C7 Dm F/C Gm

liv - ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing

(D) (G) (Em7) (D) (G) (D)
 F B^b Gm7 F B^b F *Fine*

and in giv - ing. Spir - it, o - pen my heart.

(D) (G) (D) (G)
 F B^b F B^b

1 God, re - place my ston - y heart with a heart that's
 2 Write your love up - on my heart as my law, my
 3 May I weep with those who weep; share the joy of

(A7) (Bm) (D/A) (G) (A7)
 C7 Dm F/C B^b C7

kind and ten - der. All my cold - ness and
 goal, my sto - ry. In each thought, word, and
 sis - ter, broth - er. In the wel - come of

(Bm) (Em7) (D) (G2) (G)
 Dm Gm7 F B^b2 B^b *to Refrain*

fear to your grace I now sur - ren - der.
 deed, may my liv - ing bring you glo - ry.
 Christ, may we wel - come one an - oth - er.

The pace and diversity of modern life often hinder us from remaining vulnerable to our emotions and to the humanness of other people. This prayerful text to be open to such joys and pains draws on Ezekiel 11:19 and 36:26 in stanza one and echoes Jeremiah 31:33 in stanza two.

We Lift Our Voices 710

We Are an Offering

We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our
 lives up to you: we are an of-fer-ing. Lord, use our
 voice - es; Lord, use our hands; Lord, use our
 lives; they are yours: we are an of-fer-ing.
 All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we
 give to you, we give to you. We lift our
 voice - es; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you:
 we are an of-fer-ing; we are an of-fer-ing.

This praise and worship song can best be understood as reflecting on and expanding 1 Chronicles 29:14b: "For all things come of you, [O Lord,] and of your own have we given you." There are also echoes of Paul's appeal for Christians to be living sacrifices (Romans 12:1).

How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord 432

Capo 1: (D) (A) (Bm) (G) (D) (A)(D)
 Eb Bb Cm Ab Eb Bb Eb

1 How clear is our vo - ca - tion, Lord, when once we heed your call
 2 But if, for - get - ful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;
 3 We mar - vel how your saints be - came in hin - dranc - es more sure:
 4 In what you give us, Lord, to do, to - geth - er or a - lone,

(G) (Em) (A) (F#m) (Bm) (G) (Em)
 Ab Fm Bb Gm Cm Ab Fm

to live ac - cord - ing to your word and dai - ly learn, re - freshed, re -
 if world - ly pres - sures fray the mind and love it - self can - not un -
 whose joy - ful vir - tues put to shame the ca - sual way we wear your
 in old rou - tines or ven - tures new, may we not cease to look to

(A7) (D) (A7)(B) (Em) (G)(A7) (D)
 Bb7 Eb Bb7 C Fm Ab Bb7 Eb

stored, that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.
 wind its tan - gled skein of care: our in - ward life re - pair.
 name, and by our faults ob - scure your power to cleanse and cure.
 you: the cross you hung up - on, all you en - deav - ored, done.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This reflection on Christian vocation was written to provide a new text for a pre-existing tune, and the poet has crafted his words so well that the two parts mesh smoothly. The tune is named for a noted British boarding school, whose music director was a friend of the composer.