



GATHERING

Psalm 90

refrain by Hal Hopson

refrain sung by all:



God is our re - fuge, God is our strength.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place
from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born,
from age to age you are God. ***Refrain***

You turn us back to the dust and say,
“Turn back, O children of earth.”
For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past
and like a watch in the night; ***Refrain***

So teach us to number our days
That we may apply our hearts to wisdom.
Show your servants your works,
and your splendor to their children. ***Refrain***

May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us;
prosper the work of our hands;
prosper our handiwork. ***Refrain***

Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

1 Sing praise to God who reigns above, the God of all creation, the God of power, the God of love, the God of our salvation.

With healing balm my soul is filled, and every faithless murmur stilled: to God all praise and glory!

2 What God's almighty power has made God's gracious mercy keepeth; by morning glow or evening shade God's watchful eye ne'er sleepeth. Within the kingdom of God's might, lo! all is just and all is right: to God all praise and glory!

3 The Lord is never far away, but, through all grief distressing, an ever-present help and stay, our peace and joy and blessing, as with a mother's tender hand God gently leads the chosen band: to God all praise and glory!

4 Thus all my toilsome way along I sing aloud thy praises, that all may hear the grateful song my voice unwearied raises.

Be joyful in the Lord, my heart; both soul and body, take your part: to God all praise and glory!

***Confession and Pardon**

Eternal maker of the endless heavens,

Lowly Christ, befriender of the changing earth,

**Holy Spirit, wind over the flowing waters,
in everything we touch, in everyone we meet,
you are there, and we give thanks.**

**But where we have not touched but trampled you in
creation...**

**where we have not honored but avoided you in one
another...**

**where we have not received but rejected your
goodness...**

**where we have hidden, buried and neglected
the gifts you bestow upon us...**

forgive us.



God is our re - fuge, God is our strength.

Return, O LORD; how long will you tarry?

Be gracious to your servants.

Satisfy us by your steadfast love in the morning,
and we will glad all our days.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

***Hymn 582**

GLORY TO GOD

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

**¹ Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
Amen.**

**2 World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
Amen.**

***Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Matthew 25:14-30

- 14 “For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them;
15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once
16 the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents.
17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents.
18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.
19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.**

- 20 Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.'**
- 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'**
- 22 And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.'**
- 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'**
- 24 Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter,**
- 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'**
- 26 But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter?**
- 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.**

28 So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents.

29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

**The Reverend Rebekah Abel Lamar
"The Joy of Your Master"**

RESPONDING

***Affirmation of Faith (unison)**

In life and in death we belong to God.

**Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God, and the communion of the Holy
Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One
of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.**

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.**

**In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,**

to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Hymn 773

HEAVEN SHALL NOT WAIT

Heaven Shall Not Wait

- ¹ Heaven shall not wait for the poor to lose their patience, the scorned to smile, the despised to find a friend: Jesus is Lord; he has championed the unwanted; in him injustice confronts its timely end.**
- ² Heaven shall not wait for the rich to share their fortunes, the proud to fall, the elite to tend the least: Jesus is Lord; he has shown the master's privilege: to kneel and wash servants' feet before they feast.**
- ³ Heaven shall not wait for the dawn of great ideas, thoughts of compassion divorced from cries of pain: Jesus is Lord; he has married word and action; his cross and company make his purpose plain.**

4 Heaven shall not wait for triumphant Hallelujahs, when earth has passed and we reach another shore: Jesus is Lord in our present imperfection; his power and love are for now and then for evermore.

Anthem

I Believe

text: anonymous

music: Mark Miller

I believe in the sun, even when it's not shining.

I believe in love, even when I do not feel it.

I believe in God, even when God is silent.

Prayers of the People and 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 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.**

Offerings

Hymn 714 God of the Fertile Fields ITALIAN HYMN

stanzas 1 and 2 – choir

stanzas 3 and 4 - all

¹ God of the fertile fields, shaper of earth that yields our daily bread:
forth from your bounteous hand come gifts your love has planned,
that all in every land be clothed and fed.

- 2 We would be stewards true, holding in trust from you all that you give; help us in love to share, teach us like you to care for people everywhere, that all may live.
- 3 **As grows the hidden seed to fruit that serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our toil be used, no gift of yours abused, no humble task refused your love bestows.**
- 4 **God of the countryside, dear to the Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our lives anew in faithful love to you. Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.**

***Chorus Mayenziwe/Your Will Be Done MAYENZIWE**

Ma - ye (Ma-ye) nzi - we 'nta - ndo ya - kho. Ma - ye (Ma-ye) nzi -
Your will be done on earth, O Lord. Your will be
(Your will) (Your will)

we 'nta - ndo ya - kho. Ma - ye - nzi - we 'nta - ndo ya -
done on earth, O Lord. Your will be done on earth, O

kho. Ma - ye-nzi-we 'nta-ndo ya - kho. Ma-ye-nzi-we 'nta-ndo yah - ko.
Lord. Your will be done on earth, O Lord. Your will be done on earth, O Lord.

*Benediction and Charge



ASSISTING IN WORSHIP:

Rebekah Abel Lamar, Pastor, Government Street Presbyterian Church, Mobile, Alabama

Andrew Beals, Ministry Team, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia

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Eric Wall, Conference Center musician

Montreat Summer Singers

SOURCES:

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The Affirmation of Faith is adapted from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

“Mayenziwe” chorus: South African traditional, as taught by George Mxadana, arr. John L. Bell; © 1990 Wild Goose Resource Group/Iona Community; GIA Publications, Inc.; OneLicense A-716815.

WELCOME TO SUMMER WORSHIP IN MONTREAT

All have a home here in the worship of the living God. In praise and prayer, joy and lament, scripture and preaching, arts and imagination, we come to be nourished by the sustaining grace and love of God offered to all people. Montreat is glad to welcome the congregations of the Montreat Presbyterian Church and the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church on Sunday mornings this summer.

THIS MORNING'S OFFERING supports the worship ministry of Montreat Conference Center. Offerings may be placed in the basket or made online at www.montreat.org/SWO. Members of Montreat Presbyterian Church and Black Mountain Presbyterian Church may designate their regular contributions to those congregations by using the printed envelopes available in the lobby (blue for Montreat Presbyterian Church, white for Black Mountain Presbyterian Church).

HEARING LOOP: Anderson Auditorium is equipped with a hearing loop. To use this technology, a hearing aid must be set to "T". For the best result, sit in sections closest to the walls.

USHERS: We are grateful to this morning's ushers from the Montreat Development Foundation Board.

AFTER WORSHIP: You are invited to greet our preacher, the Rev. Rebekah Abel Lamar, in front of the stage after worship. Rev. Lamar became Senior Pastor at Government Street Presbyterian Church in Mobile, AL in July of 2019. A native of Southwest Virginia, Rebekah is a graduate of Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC and holds an MA in Christian Education from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, VA. She completed her MDiv degree at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA.

SUNDAY LUNCH is served at 11:45 a.m. in the Galax Dining Room of Assembly Inn. Lunch is \$17.00 for adults (12+) and \$8.50 for children (5-11). Please purchase your ticket at the Front Desk of the Inn.

HYMN SING this week will take place at 7 p.m. at the **Presbyterian Heritage Center**. Always a summer favorite, tonight's program will be led by Conference Center musician Eric Wall. Please come at 6:30 p.m. to enjoy refreshments before the program begins.

ARTS, MUSIC, AND THEOLOGY Summer Lectures continues Tuesday, July 16, featuring Paul Hooker and Eric Wall, titled "Words and Music: Poetry, Hymns, and the Holy." Paul is a former associate dean at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary and author of several books and articles in the field of Hebrew Bible. Eric is assistant professor of sacred music and dean of the chapel at Austin Seminary. A familiar face in Montreat, Eric serves as the Conference Center musician and leader of summer worship.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT – HANNAH GARRITY



Well, this parable seems to promote slavery and capitalism. Surely it has been used as such. If God is the “master” figure here, abundance is earned by “reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter.” (Matthew 25:24, NRSVUE) So, where is the call to action? Where is the abundance? In the next part of the chapter, we find a possibility.

The PCUSA has offered a congregational designation as a Matthew 25 church particularly inspired by verses 37-40:

³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing?’

³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’” Matthew 25:37-40, NRSVUE

The art in worship today is grappling with deeper forms of abundance. Here we see an image of the PCUSA Matthew 25 logo. Within the shape of three people in a circle, patterns of an abundance of grace, abundance of welcome, abundance of healing, abundance of food, of water, of clothing overlay a background of newspaper stories of the world as it is now. This abundance is not reflected in a stage overflowing with dollar bills and coins, a huge check, nor a graphic of the profits from the 2023 stock market upswing. No, while that is the world we live in, it cannot be not the world God calls forth in this text. Can it?