



**SUMMER WORSHIP
MONTREAT CONFERENCE CENTER**

**July 28, 2024, 10:30 a.m.
Anderson Auditorium**

GATHERING

Prayer of the Day

*Hymn 667 When Morning Gilds the Skies

LAUDES DOMINI

Confession and Pardon

**God of judgement and renewal,
we admit to you and to each other
that we have not always loved you or our neighbors
as fully as you call us to love.
We have failed to be good stewards
of the air, the water, animals, and plants.
We have turned away from you
and toward our own self-interest.
We have been shortsighted,
and we are humbly sorry.**

**Help us turn back to you, O Lord,
to reach toward you as a tree sends its roots out toward the water,
that we may better love you and faithfully serve you;
in Jesus' name we pray.**

Hymn 792 There Is a Balm in Gilead
all singing refrain

BALM IN GILEAD

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God!**

*Hymn 582 Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

*Peace

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

Welcome to Summer
Worship in Montreat.
All have a home here as
the family of God.
In praise and prayer, joy
and lament, scripture and
preaching, arts and
imagination, we are
nourished by the
sustaining grace and love
of God offered to
everyone.

WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Romans 8:28-39

Holy wisdom, holy word.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon Comfortable With the Uncomfortable
The Reverend Dr. Chris Currie

RESPONDING

Hymn 821 My Life Flows On HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING
stanzas 1, 2, and 3 – choir
stanza 4 – all

*Affirmation of Faith

We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.
The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,
sets us free to accept ourselves
and to love God and neighbor,
and binds us together with all believers
in the one body of Christ, the Church.
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.
With believers in every time and place,
we rejoice that nothing in life or in death
can separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Anthem

G. F. Handel

If God be for us, who can be against us?
Who shall lay any charge to God's elect?
It is God who justifies – who is to condemn?
It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again,
who is at the right hand of God,
who makes intercession for us.

Prayers of the People

The Affirmation is taken
from *A Brief Statement of
Faith*.

This aria from Handel's
Messiah is not heard as
often as other parts of that
work. It comes from Part
Three of the oratorio,
where text and music
consider resurrection
eschatology, and trust in
God's promises.

Offerings

No road is an endless one;
each day dies with the sun;
dreams fly when day's begun; be done with your fears.
Some flourish thru wind and rain; some only curse their pain;
some know no loss nor gain; be done with your fears.
Some by choice, some by chance, children of circumstance,
still learn to smile and dance to hide their tears.
Each life has a lonely end; all have at least a friend;
no stream's without a bend; be done with your fears.
Some by chance, some by choice, need to cause to rejoice,
still raise a single voice to hide their tears.
No road is an endless one; each day dies with the sun;
dreams fly when day's begun; be done with your fears.

Robert Bruce Cumming

Two pieces of music
accompany our offering.
One is an anthem
composed by Bob
Cumming; the second is a
folk-like hymn that draws
from language in Romans
8. Both pieces anchor us
repeatedly in a central
affirmation:
Somos del Señor.
We belong to God.

*Hymn 822 When We Are Living

SOMOS DEL SEÑOR

*Prayer of Thanksgiving 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 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.**

Belonging to God in all
times, as the previous
hymn told us, we sing
here of the coming of
God's realm and of our
sure walk with God
towards it.

SENDING

*Hymn 742 We Will Walk with God

SIZOHAMBA NAYE

*Benediction and Charge

*Voluntary

Assisting in Worship:

Christina and Adele Carlisle

Ian Copeland, clarinet

The Reverend Dr. Chris Currie, Pastor,

St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, Louisiana

Richard DuBose, President, Montreat Conference Center

Michaela English, Summer Staff Music Intern

Hannah Garrity, Liturgical Artist

Lynn Gilliland, Usher and Worship Coordinator

Alec Peters, Ann Laird Jones, Liturgy Writers

Eric Wall, Conference Center musician

Montreat Summer Singers

Sources

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WELCOME TO SUMMER WORSHIP IN MONTREAT

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.

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.

CHILDCARE: for children six months of age through completed kindergarten is available today at the Updike Building from 10:15 a.m. until fifteen minutes after worship.

USHERS: We are grateful for our ushers today from Sally Jones Pottery at the Currie Craft Center: Frank Dodson, Cathie Dodson, Gatewood Campbell, Johnny Campbell, Nancy Hyde, Sarah Peters, Alec Peters, Lewis Galloway, Bunny Alexander, Mike Caulfield, and Caitlin Wallace-Rowland.

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. in Assembly Inn Lobby. Our leader will be Eunice Wonderly Stackhouse, DMA, who has taught Piano and Music Theory at several colleges and recently retired from 23 years at Montreat College.

ARTS, MUSIC, and THEOLOGY Summer Lectures end on Tuesday, July 30. This one features Siler Sloan and is titled "What Should I Pack? Lessons from the Appalachian Trail." From an early love of the mountains, Siler decided during college he wanted to hike the Appalachian Trail after graduation. He worked for two years to save money and started his thru-hike at Amicalola Falls State Park in Georgia on March 18, 2023.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

A great theologian told me recently that nothing separates us from the love of God. She specified that this extended to my own actions. Nothing that I've ever done has separated me from the love of God? Growing up adjacent to the piety politics of pulpits, this news landed like a fissure, an opening to a new understanding. I had no idea. I have always felt that my own missteps were like wedges between God and me.

The art today meditates on the antithesis of a wedge between. The art meditates on a perpetual embrace. An embrace rippling out, never ending: Mother God embracing, never separating Herself from me or from anyone. All of these things in the world: the violence, the pain, the loneliness, the hurt, the harm, all of it happening while She holds each of us close. Is it all happening within God's loving arms? Is the perpetual conflict around and within us held in loving embrace? Abstract shapes help to disrupt the idea that this amount of love could ever be personified in image, word, or deed. The grandeur of this love is impossible to grasp, yet a delight to imagine.

Dr. Marcia Riggs, Christian ethicist, Womanist theologian, and retired J. Erskine Love Professor of Christian Ethics and Director of ThM Program at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, says that her definition of ethics is *intercultural encounter*. She recalls her years of sitting in the intercultural tension with her students, embraced by the Holy Spirit. She says of her recent research on Religious Ethical Mediation, "Even when you've got energies of conflict, the energies of the Spirit get bigger and bigger. That's what's encompassing what we are, calling us into this work we are going to do... that's where we create the ethical." Painted with dye on silk, the banners of embrace are separated on stage. Visually, we begin the service in tension, in conflict, in an incomplete state. And still, as we prepare to worship God, we give thanks for the great and mysterious glory of Her never-ending embrace.

Artist, Hannah Garrity