

# Church on the Hill

A Congregation of the  
Reformed Church in America  
167-07 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Flushing, NY 11358

**March 17, 2024**

**10:30 AM**



**Seventy-seven Times**

**By Lauren Wright Pittman**

**Inspired by Matthew 18:15-22**

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**Rev. Sally Ann Castle — Interim Minister**

**Mr. Sean Cotty — Music Director**

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

## Fifth Sunday in Lent

**BOLD** – Congregation responds

\* – Congregation Stands

**Prelude**

Improvisation on “Londonderry Air”

Sean Cotty

**Welcome**

**Votum**

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. **Amen.**

**Sentences of Scripture**

\* **Call to Worship**

Why are you here? **I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind, with a fire burning in my bones.** I see it! You're in the right place! This is God's house. The door is open to you. **Why are you here?** I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind, with a fire burning in my bones. **We see that in you! You're in the right place. This is God's house. The door is open to you.** Let us worship God. **Let us learn from the Spirit. Amen!**

\* **Hymn No. 200**

Lord Who Throughout

**Call to Confession**

Friends, when you study Peter's story in scripture it's almost impossible to ignore how much he loved to ask questions. He asks Jesus: “What does the parable mean?” “Where are you going?” “How many times should we forgive?” Like a tenacious toddler, Peter was full of questions, because Peter was eager to learn. I wish I was more like that. I still have so much to learn. So friends, let's be like Peter. Let's return to Christ with the humility of a student as we pray together the prayer of confession. Let this be a moment of learning. Let us pray:

**Prayer of Confession**

**Holy God, We long to be lifelong learners. We long to approach you with curiosity and an open mind. Instead, we often live as if we know best. We forget that the disciples called you “Rabbi, Teacher.” Forgive us for the**

times when we fail to be curious. Forgive us for the times when we assume we know best. Forgive us for the moments when we imagine that our learning is done and that we have all the answers. Like Peter— who was brave enough to ask, “How many times should we forgive?” — make us brave. Spark a desire in us to learn, and may our curiosity carry our faith into deeper waters. With hope and humility we pray, Amen.

## Kyrie

*Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.*

*Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.*

*Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.*

## Words of Forgiveness

Family of faith, when Peter asked Jesus, “How many times should I forgive?” Jesus responded with abundance. That abundance exists for you as well. No matter what you have done or left undone, no matter what lessons you have learned or are still learning, God’s abundant grace exists for you. God’s love will never run out. So hear and rest in this good news: You are forgiven. You are loved. You are invited to serve. **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## Anthem

Teach Me, O Lord

Thomas Attwood

*Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes;  
And I shall keep it, unto the end.*

## Prayer of Illumination

Teaching God, we want to learn your ways. We want to learn the ways of forgiveness. We want to learn the ways of grace. We want to learn your ways of love. That is part of why we return to your text week after week, because we are hungry to be more like you. So as we prepare to listen to your good Word, calm the noise in our minds. Center our spirits to focus on you so that we might learn and hear what we have missed in this story before. God, we want to learn your ways. Meet us here. Speak your truth. Help us listen. Amen.

## Responsive Psalter

**Psalm 119: 9-16**

Dorien Day

How can young people keep their way pure? **By guarding it according to your word.** With my whole heart I seek you; **let me not wander from your commandments!** I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin

against you. **Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes!** With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth. **In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.** I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. **I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.**

## **Gospel Reading**

### **Matthew 18: 15-22**

'If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.'

Then Peter came and said to him, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

## **\* 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.***

## **\* Hymn for Lent** (see following page)

Love Your Neighbor and Forgive

## **Sermon**

"Teach Me"

Rev. Sally Ann Castle

## **Affirmation of Faith**

**We believe that questions are a building block of faith. "How many times should I forgive?" "Jesus, where are you going?" "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" We believe that humble curiosity can open our eyes. "Where does it hurt?" "What do you need?" "How can I help?" We believe that God is a teacher. "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." "Here I am." "Send me." We believe that faith invites our whole being to engage, with**

all our heart, with all our mind, with all our strength. We believe. Help our unbelief. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

## Love Your Neighbor and Forgive

REDHEAD NO. 76 (7.7.7.7.7.7)

Words by Anna Strickland, 2023

Music by Richard Redhead, 1853



"Love your neigh - bor and for - give" Words so sim - ple  
Sounds of bombs and bul - lets ring War is all we've  
Love is ris - ky, peace is faint And for - give - ness



yet so hard We have wounds be - cause we've lived  
ev - er known Pac - i - fists are framed as weak  
feels na - ive All are sin - ners, all are saints



Cal - lus - es en - fold our hearts Jes - us reach - es  
We re - ly on might a - lone Jes - us paves the  
And we all God's grace re - ceive So we fol - low



out to touch Wounds and hearts that hold too much  
paths of peace Ev - en as the threats in - crease  
mer - cy's way Soft - en - ing our hearts to grace

## **Anthem**

For Love of You

John Carter and Mary Kay Beall

*Kneel with me, here in sad Gethsemane;  
All of this I gladly do for love of you.*

*Walk with me, up the hill to Calvary;  
Every step I gladly take for your dear sake.*

*Cry with me on the cross of Calvary;  
Wear the crown I gladly wore,  
Bear the crown I gladly bore.*

*Die with me, here alone at Calvary;  
All of this I gladly do for undying love,  
For love of you.*

## **Offering**

\* **Doxology** (verse 3)

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

***O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.***

## **Prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving**

### **Prayers of the People**

#### ***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 trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom and the power  
And the glory, forever. Amen.**

\* **Hymn No. 586**

Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord

## **Sending**

Beloved wanderer, as you leave this place, may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve. May you look for God in every face. May you find the courage to get out of the boat, to run to the tomb, and to speak of your faith. And when the world falls apart, may you hear God's voice deep within, saying, "Take heart, it is I, be not afraid." You are called. You are blessed. In both your ups and your downs, you always belong to God. Go now in peace. Go trusting that good news. **Amen.**

## \* **Benediction**

**Response** (please be seated)

Sevenfold Amen

**Postlude**

O Mensch, beweine deine Sünde groß

J.S. Bach

\*\*Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.



# Announcements

## NEXT SUNDAY

March 24th, 2024 - Palm/Passion Sunday

Wandering Heart: "Songs of loudest praise"

Focal Scriptures: John 12: 12-16

Theme Connections: As Holy Week begins, Peter is no longer front and center, and so we imagine he is with the rest of the disciples when Jesus enters Jerusalem on a colt. As they witness crowds shouting hosannas, the disciples are confused. When they look back on this experience, perhaps they will remember the songs. The singing is surely etched in their memories. As we imagine ourselves in the crowd on this day, may we remember that they are supposed to be praising Caesar, but instead they are shouting for the one entering the city on a donkey. Their singing is subversive, courageous, and contagious. Their praise shows the ripple effect of public displays of faith.



## CALL FOR PASSION PLAYERS

Join the cast! Be a passion player!

This is your opportunity to participate in one of the most inspiring worship services of the year. COTH will present the Passion Narrative on Palm/Passion Sunday, March 24th during the worship service. There are speaking parts as well as audience participation roles. Please see Pastor Sally Ann if you would like to play a part in this special event.

Parts for all ages available! There will be two rehearsals (TBD).

## BIBLE STUDY

Lenten Bible Study- Tuesday, March 19th at 7 pm on Zoom

Fifth Week of Lent - Psalm 130: Waiting

Maundy Thursday March 21st - Psalm 116: Listening

*Pause, Spending Lent with the Psalms* by Elizabeth F. Caldwell

Each chapter helps readers to connect an image drawn from a psalm, such as paths, faces, blessing, tables, waiting, thanksgiving, listening, being alone or abandoned, and hands, with their own lives. At the close of each chapter, readers are invited to try a different prayer practice to help them continue to reflect on the theme and psalm each day. This intentional engagement—without feeling burdensome—opens just enough space and time for a creative spiritual practice to flourish, sustaining the life of faith during the Lenten season in ways that can make a difference in God's world.

Check the Weekly Email for Zoom information!



## **CHILDREN AT WORSHIP**

Children at Worship is ongoing! The class is for children ages 6- 13. During the service, the children will process out and be led to Room 2-E. Coinciding with the 6 Sundays in Lent, Children at Worship will be having a Lenten study!

**Special Pre-K Class on Palm Sunday** — There will be a special Palm Service Children's class for 4 and 5-year-olds. It will be led by Dr. Ian Rottenberg. We will meet in church first.

## **COFFEE HOUR**

Please join us for coffee hour after the service, downstairs in Gessner Hall. Thank you to Annette and Emma Berger for putting together today's Coffee Hour!

## **OFFERING**

If you feel called to give, offering plates are located in the rear of the sanctuary, where you can leave your offering upon entry or exit of the sanctuary.

## **BARGAIN BOUTIQUE**

The Bargain Boutique is open on Saturdays from 10 am- 1 pm. Donations are accepted on Saturdays only. \*We are unable to accept: Electronics, TVs, Furniture, Textbooks, and Large Toys/Stuffed Animals\* Find us on Instagram @cothbargainboutique for a fun look inside the Boutique and to find out about special sales and hidden gems!

## **JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!**

Be sure to sign up for our email list to keep up with the latest Church on the Hill happenings through the weekly email and the Beacon. A sign-up form can be found on **[churchonthehill.org](http://churchonthehill.org)**

## Prayer Requests

*If you would like to add a loved one to the prayer list, or if your loved one no longer needs to be on the prayer list, please contact the church office at [office@churchonthehill.org](mailto:office@churchonthehill.org)*

Karin Bennitt

The Bermudez Family

Diane Blagburn

Hank Boechmann

Katie and Clayton Buckley

The Cappellano Family

Richard D.

Thomas Degnen

Gabriel DeMelo

Lucas Ditta

Joanne Dunckhahn

Alison Friedman

Michael Gittens

Adam Gonzalez

The Greer Family

Rudy Jakob

Mary Kansfield

The Family of

Rev. Norm Kansfield

Mike Kenny

Susan Laurita

Donna Lemay

The Liao/ Lin Family

Gessa Markantonis

Rose McLain

Donna McLernon

Christian Mender

Kathy Mender-Murphy

Paul Mobius

Mary Moder

Lillian Mukai

Marti and Tom Pearce

The Family of Rev. Bob Perless

Iris and Ralph Prager

Nina Proschel

Patrick Sullivan

Ed Surujballi

Virginia Young



The sanctuary is looped for the hard of hearing. In order to connect to the system, please sit in the north set of pews (on your right when you enter the sanctuary) and set your hearing device to the "T" setting.



Nancy Gessner, Victor Han, **Vice Presidents**  
Nancy Gessner, **Clerk**

*Consistory & Staff*

**Elders**

- Linda Diez
- Nancy Gessner (VP)
- Victor Han (VP)
- Rhoda Jabbour
- Sarah White

**Deacons**

- Ginny Chan
- Emerson Chen
- Jerry Lutz
- Adriene Toy

**Sean Cotty**, Music Director: [sean.cotty@churchonthehill.org](mailto:sean.cotty@churchonthehill.org)  
**Amanda Sudolsky**, Office Administrator: [office@churchonthehill.org](mailto:office@churchonthehill.org)

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[www.churchonthehill.org](http://www.churchonthehill.org)



# THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

## Wandering Heart: "Teach Me"

### Teach Me

Teach me about the ways of the wind,  
about the ways of the world,  
about the ways of the heart.

Teach me about the soft crook of my lover's arm,  
and the way two souls can hold each other close.

Teach me about forgiveness, about the language of I'm sorry  
and the softness of sincerity.

Teach me about abundance, about seventy-times-seven  
and all the days of my life.

Teach me about joy, about its contagious weaving  
and its soul-healing.

Teach me about mercy, about open hands and deep breaths.

Teach me about the dawn of time and the stars in the sky.

Teach me what matters most.

Teach me what is mine to do.

Teach this achingly curious heart  
until I run out of questions  
or I run out of days.

Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
and I will have a life well-lived.

## **Nominations for Consistory Election**

In May, at our annual congregational meeting, Church on the Hill will elect **one (1) new Elder** and **one (1) new Deacon** to the consistory. At this time, the congregation has the opportunity to nominate members of the congregation to serve in this office. Members of the congregation are able to nominate themselves.

When discerning whom you might nominate to serve in this office, please keep in mind the following:

- 1) Elders are women and men set apart for a ministry of care and oversight of all the ministries and members of the congregation. The elders are called to provide spiritual care to the members of the church and to the minister. They are to be people of spiritual commitment, desiring to love and serve both God and neighbor in the church and in the world.
- 2) Deacons are women and men set apart for a ministry of mercy, service, and outreach. Deacons are called to oversee the benevolences of the church and to care for those in material need. They are to be people of spiritual commitment and compassionate spirit, desiring to love and serve both God and neighbor in the church and in the world.
- 3) Nominations and elections are not a popularity contest in the church. Rather, we should prayerfully consider the character, wisdom, spiritual gifts, and talents of individuals that will contribute to the leadership of the congregation and the overall mission of the church.

## Consistory Nominations

I would like to nominate the following person(s) for the office of...

Elder at Church on the Hill:

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Deacon at Church on the Hill:

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Nominated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominations may only be made by active confessing members of Church on the Hill. Nominations that are anonymous will not be considered. You may place your nomination in the offering plate or you can drop it off in the church office no later than **March 24th**.

After nominations are submitted, the nominations committee will present a slate to Consistory for approval. The Consistory-approved slate will then be presented to the congregation prior to the congregational meeting, at which, members will vote to elect our new Consistory member.

# Easter Donations

The Worship Committee has decided not to ask for donations for the Sanctuary flowers this year but still wishes to continue our tradition of honoring those we remember and appreciate at Easter. This year we are asking that you donate to any of the church funds (Music, Food for Kids, Community Concerts, Sanctuary Technology, etc.) and as in the past indicate that your donation is in memory of/in appreciation of/in honor of someone you choose. These donations will be listed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday.

Thank you for your donation.

Please accept my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ (fund).

Given By: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of • In appreciation of • In honor of

(Circle one)

All gift mentions will be included in a special insert in the Easter bulletin. Please make checks payable to "Church on the Hill", with the name of the fund you wish your donation to go to in the memo. Ginny Chan will be accepting donations after church during Lent. If you'd like to contribute online, please visit our [Tithe.ly](#) page. All donations must be received by March 24th to ensure that they will be in the bulletin on Easter Sunday.