



July 9, 2023

BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our Mission
Proclaiming God's Word
Growing in faith and understanding
Welcoming all
Extending comfort and grace
Working for justice and peace
Nurturing creation
Being generous stewards of God's gifts

Service is also livestreamed and is available at www.blacksburgpres.org.

If you are new to Blacksburg Presbyterian Church and would like more information or to join our email list, please contact the church office at 540-552-2504 or email bpc@blacksburgpres.org.

*❖ Please rise in body or in spirit. We invite you to join in with the words in **bold**.*

SERVICE OF WORSHIP FOR THE LORD'S DAY
SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
JULY 9, 2023

❖ GATHERING AROUND THE WORD ❖

Thought for Meditation: "Understand this if you understand nothing: it is a powerful thing to be seen" — Akwaeke Emezi

Prelude: "Desert Interlude" from *Eight Bible Vignettes*

R. Nathaniel Dett

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Sarah Wiles & Sarah Windes

Centering Music: "Bist du bei mir"

J. S. Bach

Mary Wright, mezzo-soprano

Be thou with me and I'll go gladly
To death and on to my repose.
Ah, how my end would bring contentment,
If, pressing with thy hands so lovely,
Thou wouldst my faithful eyes then close.

translation by Z. Philip Ambrose

❖ **Call to Worship**

Ben Bailey

Eternal God, Maker of the skies above,
lowly Christ, Lover of the earth and its people,
unfettered Spirit, Giver of gracious gifts,
you are present among us.

O hidden mystery,
sun behind all suns,
soul within all souls,
in all we touch, in all we meet,
you are present among us.

As bearers of your image,
we come to be reshaped;
dependent on your mercy,
we ask to be made new.

❖ **Hymn 63:** "The Lord is God"

AZMON

The Lord is God, the Lord alone!
Give honor, thanks, and praise
to God, the maker of all things
and giver of our days.

With all your heart, with all your soul,
with all your mind and might,
O people, love the Lord your God,
the source of truth and light.

At night or day, at home, away,
together and apart,
O children, take these holy words
and keep them in your heart.

The Lord is God, the Lord alone!
Give honor, thanks, and praise
to God, the maker of all things
and giver of our days.

❖Prayer of Approach

Loving God, we have gathered to meet you.

We have come to listen to you, to seek you, to worship you.

You are the beginning of all things, the life of all things;

you knew us before we were born.

In you we become; in you we live.

Loving God, you are here and everywhere, around us and within us;
you know our inmost thoughts.

In you we hope; in you we live.

You are the source of serenity,

giving peace that is beyond our understanding.

In you we are still; in you we live.

Loving God, we live in you; we worship you.

Loving God, you live in us; we worship you. Amen.

Call to Confession: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

Hymn 475 (v. 3)

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.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,

in your gracious presence

we confess our sin and the sin of this world.

Although Christ is among us as our peace,

we are a people divided against ourselves

as we cling to the values of a broken world.

The profit and pleasures we pursue

lay waste the land and pollute the seas.

The fears and jealousies that we harbor

set neighbor against neighbor

and nation against nation.

We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom,

of intellect and reason,

and turn them into bonds of oppression.

Lord, have mercy upon us;

heal and forgive us.

Set us free to serve you in the world

as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Silent prayer)

Assurance of Forgiveness

Friends, hear and believe the good news:

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God!

❖Passing of the Peace

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

(Worshippers may exchange signs of God's peace, and children may come forward for a time of sharing faith together.)

❖ HEARING THE WORD ❖

Sharing Faith with Children

Susan Hunter

(Children in 1st grade age and up are invited to remain in the sanctuary. Children in kindergarten or younger may stay in the sanctuary or go downstairs to God's Garden or the nursery for nurturing and care. Please complete a sign-in sticker for each child.)

Prayer for Illumination

Holy Spirit,
You're present all the time.
Awaken us to that reality,
so that we may
see you,
feel you,
know you,
follow you.
Amen.

Scripture Reading

Genesis 16:1-16, 21:8-21
Common English Bible

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon: Grace in the Wilderness

Rev. Sarah Wiles

❖ **Hymn 653:** "Give Thanks to God Who Hears Our Cries"

MORNING SONG

Give thanks to God who hears our cries
and saves in troubled days
with wondrous works to humankind
that call for highest praise.
Let all who know God's saving love
sing grateful songs always.

If you have ever wandered where
no human help was near,
and in your trouble cried to God,
who rescued you from fear,
then thank the God of steadfast love
who dries your every tear.

If you have ever lived inside
the prison of your gloom
and cried to God, who broke your bonds
and raised you from your tomb,
then praise the One who sets you free,
who makes dry places bloom.

If you drew near the gates of death,
too sick to eat or dress,
and cried to God, who heard your voice
and healed all your distress,
then sing with sounds of holy joy;
God's wondrous works profess.

If you have felt your courage fail
before a violent sea
and cried to God, who stilled the storm,
and made the wild wind flee,
then in the congregation praise
the One who heard your plea.

So praise the One whose love is great,
whose kindness is well-known.
Consider well the healing hand
and help you have been shown,
and tell the world what God has done.
Praise God and God alone!

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.	Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.
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Call to Offering

Offertory: "Dank sei dir, Herr"

attr. G. F. Handel

Thanks be to Thee, O Lord Thanks be to Thee, O Lord Thou hast led Thy people	With Thee Thine is now the land Thy hand protected us
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❖Doxology

LASST UNS ERFREUEN
Hymn 609

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit one. Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

❖Prayer of Dedication

❖ BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD ❖

❖Hymn 850: "In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness"

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

In a deep, unbounded darkness,
long before the first light shone,
you, O God, beyond all merit
worked a wonder faith makes known:
in your mercy, in your mercy,
you embraced us as your own,
evermore and evermore.

Though our world is ever-changing,
you are constant, firm, and sure,
faithful to your covenant promise.
Trusting you, we live, secure:
singing praises, singing praises,
long as heart and breath endure,
evermore and evermore.

Joy transforms our lips to boasting
only in your matchless grace,
sending Christ to dwell among us,
Word made flesh in time and space:
Friend and Savior, Friend and Savior,
in whose life we glimpse your face,
evermore and evermore.

God of Hagar, God of Sarah,
God of nomad Abraham;
God of Miryam, God of Moses,
Fiery Pillar, great I am:
lead us homeward, lead us homeward,
to the love-feast of the Lamb,
evermore and evermore.

❖Benediction

Postlude: "Short Prelude and Fugue in B-flat Major"

J.S. Bach



We welcome Mary Wright, a voice student at Virginia Tech, who will be the mezzo soloist in the Lord Nelson Mass on July 27.

Citations: Call to Worship from *Iona Abbey Worship Book*, revised edition. Prayer of Approach and Prayer of Confession from *The Worship Sourcebook*.

Today's prelude: R. Nathaniel Dett was a Black Canadian-American composer who lived from 1882-1943. He makes this inscription on the "Desert Interlude" as follows: "Desert Interlude . . . deals with that short period of time, wherein the banished Hagar, clasping the hand of Ishmael, her son, stood wonderingly, and despairingly in the desert, lost in dark contemplation. The loaf of bread was almost gone, and the water 'was spent in the bottle.' The heat of the wilderness, each moment grew more oppressive--what nostalgic thought of the home from which she lately had been thrust--what fears for the immediate future--what maternal dread for the fate of her child, filled her breast! What should she do? Was there no hope? Had God, even as Abraham, forsaken her?"

Art: Wesley, Frank, 1923-2002. *Hagar Speaking with the Angel*, from Art in the Christian Tradition, Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. (non-commercial use) <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-image/act-image-link.pl?RC=59241>, Original source: Estate of Frank Wesley, www.frankwesleyart.com/main_page.htm.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

This is a space for everyone. No matter who you are, no matter what your story is, no matter what--you are welcome here. May this be a time where your breathing slows, your heart opens, and you connect with the Holy One. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to explore some of what happens in the life and ministry of this community.

Serving: Church Opener: Tom Pospichal

Ushers: Chris Lawrence, Craig and Sarah Woolsey, and Heidi Swartzwelder, and Reed, Ella or Jackson Lawrence

Elder Serving Refreshments: Marilyn Hutchins

The flowers for the sanctuary today were provided by Benjamin Corl and Julie Burger to the glory of God and in honor of their July 6 wedding anniversary.

Nursery and God's Garden Sign-in Stickers (one per child): Complete information about each child and parent(s) on the sign-in sticker.

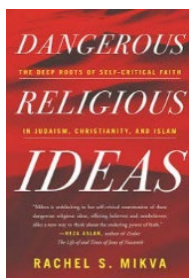
Headsets for the hard of hearing are available. Speak to an usher to use them for the worship service.

You can send prayer requests for Prayers of the People in Sunday worship and/or to be added to the *MidWeek Update* and website prayer list to Rhonda at rhonda@blacksburgpres.org.

Text or QR Code to Give: To give by text, send keyword **bpcva** and an amount to phone number 77977 (e.g., bpcva 20). If it is your first time, there will be a brief registration process. To give via QR code, use the camera app on your phone and follow instructions. Thank you for your support of BPC's ministry.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Interfaith Reading Group, beginning today, July 9, 4:00 pm: BPC is excited to be partnering with several other congregations and the Blacksburg Jewish Community Center to begin an interfaith reading group. Our first book is *Dangerous Religious Ideas: The Deep Roots of Self-Critical Faith in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* by Rachel Mikva. We will meet at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, 600 Prices Fork Road.

There are used copies available in the office. If you're able to give a \$9 donation, that will cover the cost, but please don't hesitate to take one as a gift if cost would be a barrier for you. You are welcome to come even if you haven't been able to read the first chapter of the book.



Savoring Sacred Music, Sundays, July 9, 16, 23, 9:00 am, in Westminster: Larry Wyatt will be leading a three-week class on sacred music. Each week will focus on a different element of appreciating and understanding classical music used in worship (see topics for each class below). Whether you are a musician or a listener, well-versed in musical theory or completely new to the dynamics of music, this class will deepen your spiritual engagement with sacred music.

- July 16: Expression in Music – It’s Not Just a Pretty Tune
- July 23: A Very Big Picture - History of Hymns

THIS WEEK

**FH-Fellowship Hall, HCR-Hatcher Conference Room,
WM-Westminster, SNC-Sanctuary, GS-Gathering Space**

Sun., July 9:

- 9:00 am: Savoring Sacred Music Class: Handel’s *Messiah*, led by Larry Wyatt, WM. See announcements for details.
- 10:30: Worship Service, SNC
- 4:00 pm: Interfaith Reading Group, Luther Memorial Lutheran Church. See announcements for details.

Sunday – Saturday, July 9-15: Montreat Youth Conference

Mon., July 10:

- 12:00 pm: Deacons meeting, HCR

Tues., July 11:

- 9:30-2:00 pm: Quilters, FH

Thur., July 13:

- 3:30-4:30 pm: AIM meeting, Zoom
- 5:00-6:00 pm: Thursday Hangout Hour at Rising Silo Brewery (2351 Glade Rd). Feel free to show up at the meeting time or contact the church office.
- 7:00-8:00: Bach and Friends with Fiona Hughes, violin. Ben Wyatt will be playing cello as part of this performance, BPC sanctuary. Free admission. Thursday Night Indoor Concert series, 2023 Summer Arts Festival. See below for more information and about upcoming events.

Sun., July 16:

- 9:00 am: Savoring Sacred Music Class: Expression in Music – It’s Not Just a Pretty Tune, led by Larry Wyatt, WM. See announcements for details.
 - 10:30: Worship Service, SNC
 - 4:00 pm: Interfaith Reading Group, Luther Memorial Lutheran Church. See announcements for details.
 - 7:00: Session meeting, HCR
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursdays in July, 7:00-8:00 pm: 2023 Summer Arts Festival, Thursday Night Indoor Concerts, BPC Sanctuary. Free admission. (More information about these performances and other events can be found here: performingarts.vt.edu)

- **07/20:** Alma Ensemble
- **07/27:** Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* – Community Sing, conducted by Dr. Larry Wyatt. (To participate in the community sing, visit bit.ly/SummerArtsHaydn23)

Thur., July 20:

- 4:00 pm: Community Ministries, Zoom

Sun., July 23:

- 9:00 am: Savoring Sacred Music Class: A Very Big Picture - History of Hymns
- After worship-12:15 pm: Thank-You Gathering for Larry and Amanda, FH

Mon., July 24:

- 1:00-3:00 pm: Knitwits, WM