

**First Central
Congregational**
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LENT THEME: TO BE MORE . . .

March 29, 2020

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Prelude

The Ash Grove

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Katie Miller

***Greeting and Passing of the Peace**

"The Peace of God be with you."

In Unison: **Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

** Let us rise in body or spirit.*

Call to Worship

Laura Mitchell, liturgist

The prophet asks: Can our soul-weary bones live again?

O God, you know!

We ask: Can we dance again after mourning, loss and grief?

O God, you know!

The gift is sure and unmistakable:

God's breath poured out as new life for weary souls!

Let us celebrate the gift of God's new life,

And come to worship God in laughter and dancing!

***Processional Hymn** O God, Our Help in Ages Past

Black Hymnal, No.25

ST. ANNE

***Invocation**

Compassionate God, the wind of your Spirit is the very sign of life for all who long for you. One breath from you and we are rescued from the arid valley of dry bones, given muscles and sinews and joy with which to praise you, and filled with the holy hope you grant to all your faithful children. Let our whole lives be filled with the life-breath of the Spirit, that what has lain dormant may burst into bloom. Amen.

***Gloria**

Black Hymnal, No. 759

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three in One; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Conversation with the Children

Rev. Katie Miller

Contemporary Lesson

And the people stayed home

Kitty O'Meara

Baptism of Lucille Quenaud

Statement about Baptism

Questions to the Family

Congregational Assent

We who witness and celebrate this sacrament of baptism, on behalf of the whole Church, promise love, support, and care to Luci as she lives and grows on her faith journey.

The Act of Baptism

The Prayer for the Baptized

We give you thanks, O Holy One, Mother and Father of us all, for Luci and for your love of her acknowledged here today in water and spirit. Embrace

us all as your daughters and sons. Give to Luci strength for life's journey, courage in time of suffering, the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and the hope of new life, through Jesus Christ, who makes us one. Amen.

Word in Music

Katie Miller, soloist

Prophetic Lesson

Ezekiel 37: 1-14

Pew Bible, Page 759

For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God within us,
For the Word of God among us,
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

To Be More . . . Hopeful

Rev. Dr. Scott Jones

* Hymn

Child of Blessing, Child of Promise

Black Hymnal, No. 325

STÜTTGART

*Prayer of Confession

Revitalizing God, your power goes far beyond our own, and yet still we act as though the pains of this world have final claim upon us. We give in to the despair and hopelessness of death, not trusting in your ability to call forth new life from the tombs of our lives. Forgive us for doubting your power to raise up new life in the midst of all the deaths we experience. Forgive us for wanting to limit you to "the last day" or "the world beyond this one", not trusting you to move and act among us, within us, through us. Forgive us, and open our eyes to the wonder of new life sprouting into being in our very midst. Amen.

*Words of Assurance

Even in our reluctance, even in our brokenness, God provides a path to wholeness and renewal. God has mercy on us and forgives us. What good news.
Thanks be to God.

Prayers

Pastoral Prayer

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.

Offertory

Knicker Bocker

*Hymn of Dedication

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*Offertory Prayer

By your surprising grace, Dear God, our eyes are opened, our ears unstopped, our hearts attuned to the needs of others. We give so more people may know your love and forgiveness. We support the ministry of this congregation and the wider church. Expand our horizons, we pray. Amen.

*Recessional Hymn

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less *Black Hymnal*, No. 403
SOLID ROCK

*Benediction

Benediction Response

Bouma

May you hear laughter in the wind. May you see hope in the light.
May you find courage in your faith. May you know joy in your God.

Postlude

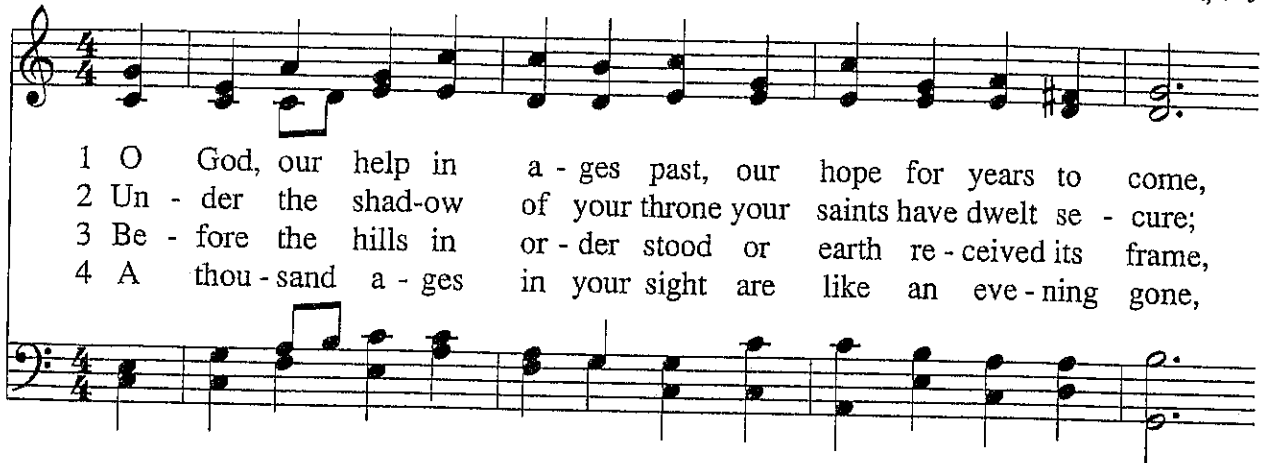
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O God, Our Help in Ages Past

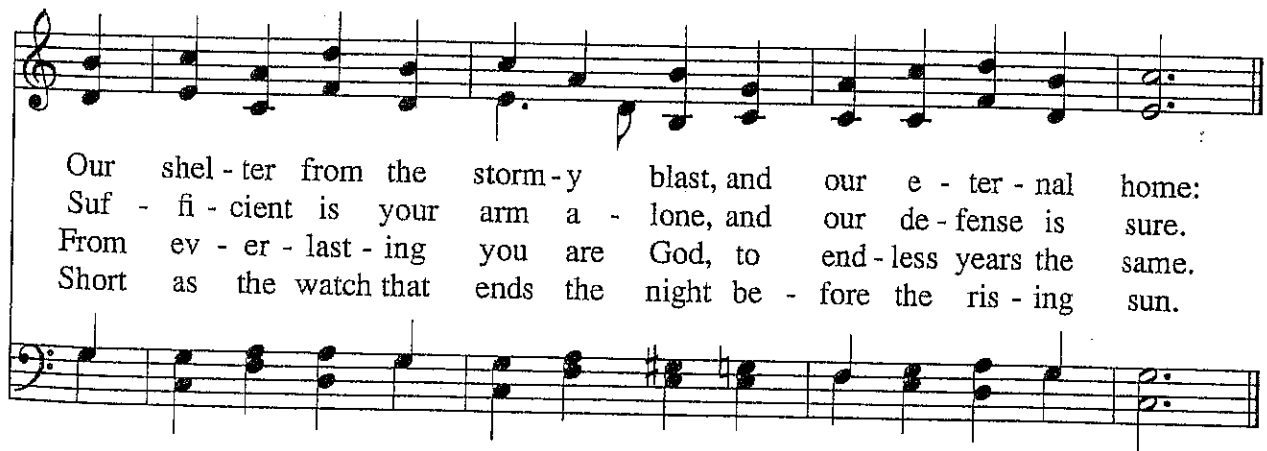
25

Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

Ps. 90:1-2, 4-5



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2 Un - der the shad-ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



Our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
Suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
From ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
Short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ev-er-roll-ing stream,
soon bears us all away;
We fly for-got-ten, as a dream
fades at the o-pen-ing day.

6 O God, our help in a-ges past,
our hope for years to come,
Still be our God while trou-bles last,
and our e-ter-nal home!

Watts, minister of a Congregational church in London, wrote theological and philosophical works and hundreds of "hymns of human composure" (everyday language). He augmented the congregational singing of psalms with a new style of hymnody.

Tune: ST. ANNE C.M.
William Croft, 1708

Child of Blessing, Child of Promise

Ronald S. Cole-Turner, 1981

1 Child of bless-ing, child of prom-ise, bap - tized with the Spir-it's sign;
 2 Child of love, our love's ex-pres-sion, love's cre - a - tion, loved in-deed!
 3 Child of joy, our dear-est trea-sure, God's you are, from God you came.
 4 Child of God your lov - ing Par - ent, learn to know whose child you are.

With this wa - ter God has sealed you un - to love and grace di - vine.
 Fresh from God, re - fresh our spir - its, in - to joy and laugh - ter lead.
 Back to God we hum-bly give you; live as one who bears Christ's name.
 Grow to laugh and sing and wor - ship, trust and love God more than all.

Ronald Cole-Turner, a teacher of theology, is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. He is an award-winning author on the interface of science and religion.

Tune: STUTTGART 8.7.8.7.
 Attrib. to Christian F. Witt (1660-1716), in
 Psalmodia Sacra, Gotha, 1715

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My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Matt. 7:24-27; 1 Cor. 3:11; Heb. 6:19; Rev. 11:15

Edward Mote, c. 1834; alt.

1 My hope is built on noth-ing less than Je - sus' love and
 2 When shad - ows veil my Sav - ior's face, I rest up - on un -
 3 Christ's oath and cov - e - nant and blood sup - port me in the
 4 When Christ shall come with trum - pet sound, oh, may I then in

righteous-ness; I dare not trust this earth - ly frame, but
 chang-ing grace; In ev - ery high and storm - y gale, my
 ris - ing flood; When all a - round my soul gives way, Christ
 Love be found, Dressed in God's righ - teous - ness a - lone, fault -

Refrain

whol-ly lean on Je - sus' name.
 an-chor holds with - in the veil. On Christ, the sol - id Rock, I stand;
 then is all my hope and stay.
 less to stand be - fore the throne.

all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand, all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

Announcements

March 29, 2020

Prayers: for all the doctors, nurses, health care professionals, and first responders, as well as medical researchers, who are all working hard to keep us healthy!

Chancel flowers and decorations: sponsored this month by *Randy & Mary Solberg; Sophie Feng*. Many thanks to *Joyce Wilson* for her beautiful painting! Special flowers this morning are from *Bloom in the Desert* in Palm Springs in honor of *Luci's* baptism.

Happy Birthday this week: to *Ken Welk*.

Baptism: During worship we will celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism for *Lucille Elizabeth Quenaud*, child of *Sarah Lara-Toney & Laurent Quenaud*.

Fair Trade Coffee: sponsors this month are *Jeannie Bates, Terry & Pam Beranek, Lamar & Vickie Jones, Elizabeth Wearin*.

FirstKids: 1 p.m. on Zoom. Kids through sixth grade.

Activities for the Coming Week, March 30 – April 4

Lectionary Readings: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-54.

Monday: Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m., Pastor's Study.

Wednesday: Bible study, 3 p.m. on Zoom
FirstYouth, 8 p.m. on Zoom

Next Sunday, April 5

Worship: 10:30 a.m. on You Tube

FIRSTKids: 1 p.m. on Zoom. Kids through sixth grade.

Want to donate electronically? Please scan the QR code.

