

Church on the Hill

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

April 7, 2024

10:30 AM



Feed My Sheep

By Nicolette Peñaranda

Inspired by John 21: 1-19

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Rev. Sally Ann Castle — Interim Minister

Mr. Sean Cotty — Music Director

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Second Sunday of Easter

BOLD – Congregation responds

* – Congregation Stands



Prelude

Improvisation on “O Filii et Filiae”

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

Jesus said, “**Follow me.**” Jesus said, **Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.**”
Jesus said, “**Forgive seventy times seven.**” Jesus said, “**Feed my sheep.**” In
response, we say: “**Here’s my heart. Take and seal it. Seal it for thy courts
above.**” Let us worship God with all our hearts.

* **Hymn No. 100**

My Jesus, I Love Thee

Call to Confession

For the last seven weeks we have been following the life and faith of Peter. Despite being one of Jesus’ most loyal disciples, Peter still made mistakes. He was faithful and messy, humble and afraid, loving and cautious. Friends, we’re a lot like Peter. **Despite our faith, we make mistakes. Despite our belief, we carry unbelief. Despite our love, we can cause hurt.** So like Peter, let us return to God in prayer, confessing the truth of our lives. **God’s grace does not stop with that humble yet fearful disciple. God’s grace reaches all the way to us.** Let us pray:

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, like Peter, we crawl out of the boat only to sink. You tell us your truth and we push it away. We ask about forgiveness and are surprised by abundance. We profess our faith and deny it three times. We run to the empty tomb and leave in silence. Over and over again, we find ourselves wandering along the journey of faith. Tether us to your heart. Forgive our surprise, our denial, and our limited imagination. Call us out of

the boat once more. We are eager to return to you. With humble hearts 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

Friends, the first time that Peter saw Jesus after the crucifixion, Jesus asked him three times, "Do you love me?" This repetition was not because Jesus doubted Peter's word. This repetition was Jesus offering Peter grace. You see, the last time Jesus and Peter were together, Peter said three times, "I do not know that man." So when Jesus returned, he asked Peter, "Do you love me?" And in that moment, he allowed Peter to turn his denials into love. Friends, the grace of our God knows no end. When we stumble, when we fall, when we deny God or cause harm, Jesus meets us where we are and offers us a second chance. So rest in this good news. Does God love you? Yes, yes, yes. God loves you. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God for a love that never ends.

Anthem

King All-Glorious

George M. Vail

Soloist - Brianna Barnhart

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore!

Mortals, give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore.

Jesus the Savior reigns, the God of truth and love:

When he had purged our stains, He took a seat above.

Lift up your heart! Lift up your voice! The Lord is King!

King all-glorious, Lord of Hosts almighty,

Thou art revealed in victory, o'er all the world ascended,

King all-glorious! Thou art revealed in victory.

Crown him with many crowns, The Lamb upon His throne;

Hark! How the heavenly anthem Drowns all music but its own:

Awake, my soul, and sing Of him who died for thee,

And hail Him as thy matchless King Through all eternity. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination

God of second chances and God of new life, we have spent our days wandering. Like Peter, we have had milled about through nearly every

state of faith. We have had courageous days and convicted days, learning days and questioning days. We have had days where we run to you, days for diving out of the boat, days for deep joy, and days where the pain of the world feels too close to bear. So as we bring our wandering hearts to you, we ask that you draw us in. Allow this story to spark something new in us. Allow this story of grace to give us pause and pull us in. We are listening. Amen.

Gospel Reading

John 21: 1-19 (p. 883-884)

Attila Sanislo

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

*** Hymn No. 559**

Make Room Within My Heart, O God

Sermon

"Here's My Heart"

Rev. Sally Ann Castle

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a God who shows up in our lives— surprising and catching us off- guard in the best of ways. We believe in a God who cares for God's people— a shepherd who longs for her sheep to be fed and tended. We believe in a God who took on flesh— a God whose love changed the world as we know it. We believe that this here-and-now God invites us out of the boat, calling ordinary people like Peter, like us, into a life of service and community. And so we give our hearts. We give our whole hearts and nothing less. Amen.

Anthem

In Remembrance

Buryl Red

*In remembrance of me, eat this bread,
In remembrance of me, drink this wine.
In remembrance of me, pray for the time,
When God's own will is done.*

*In remembrance of me, heal the sick.
In remembrance of me, feed the poor.
In remembrance of me, open the door,
And let your brother in.*

*Take, eat, and be comforted, Drink and remember, too
That this is my body and precious blood, Shed for you.*

*In remembrance of me, search for truth.
In remembrance of me, always love.
In remembrance of me, don't look above,
But in your heart.*

Look in your heart for God.

Do this in remembrance of me.

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.**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

One of the first things Jesus did after the resurrection was feed his disciples. The Gospel of John tells us it was a beach fire—bread and fish, cooked over an open flame. Immediately the disciples knew it was Jesus because Jesus was always feeding people! Jesus was always telling the left out and the ignored, the hurting and the hungry, the sick and the hopeful, “I have a seat saved for you.” Friends that is why we come to this table 2,000 years later. **We come to remember. We come to be close. We come to get a taste of the kingdom of God.** So come hungry. Come seeking. Come with your wandering heart and your fickle faith and know that Christ has a seat saved for you. Christ always has a seat saved for you, and nothing can ever change that. For this is the joyful feast for the people of God. **Thanks be to God!**

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving / Prayers of the People

God of second chances, God of grace, meet us here. Just as you met the disciples at the beach, meet us here. **Meet us now. Walk toward us and gather us in.** For God, like Peter, we have known storms. This week, people in this room and online, have grieved. This week, people in this room and online, have felt overwhelmed by the news cycle and helpless to make a difference. This week, people in this room and online, have been lonely, stressed, or uncertain. *(prayers of lament or petitions)*

You know what our wind and waves look like. You know the nature of our storms, so just as you walked toward Peter, walk toward us. **Meet us here. Meet us now. Gather us in.** Fortunately, like Peter, we have also seen you stop the storms. We have seen your fingerprints in our lives in ways we did

not always expect. **So with gratitude in our hearts, we come to you today to say thank you. Thank you for this church family that feels like a home.**

(prayers of gratitude and joy)

Thank you for the stars in the sky that remind us of your vastness. **Thank you for stories of hope and forgiveness that inspire us to love.** And thank you for the unending grace that encircles our wandering hearts. God, we have been back and forth, to and from, on this journey of faith. For every time that you walked the valley with us, for every time that you have met us on the mountaintop, and for every time you have stayed still while we ran toward you, **we give you thanks. Never stop meeting us here, meeting us now, gathering us in.** With wandering but grateful hearts, we pray the words your son taught us to pray, saying: **Our Father,...**

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.**

Prayer Response

Hear Our Prayer, O Heavenly Father

*Hear our prayer, O heavenly Father,
For the dear Redeemer's sake. Amen.*

Distribution

The Bread we break is the Bread of Life.

The Cup we share is the Cup of Promise.

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

*** Hymn No. 470**

Jesus Loves Me

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)

All Shall Be Well!

*All shall be well! For on our Easter skies
See Christ the Sun of Righteousness arise.*

Postlude

Fugue in G Major BWV 541

J.S. Bach

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

Announcements

COFFEE HOUR

Please join us for coffee hour after the service, downstairs in Gessner Hall.

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**

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

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

Bob Iovale

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

Yvette Sanford

Trevor Sealy

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.

THESECONDSUNDAYOFEASTER

Wandering Heart: "Here's My Heart"

(Inspired by "The Lanyard" by Billy Collins)

Here's My Heart

As a child I made a nativity set for my
mother—
pinch pot clay, uneven angel wings,
hair made with the help of a garlic
press,
Joseph's staff rolled out like I was God
and it was an earthworm.
There was nothing beautiful about it,
nothing whispering of talent,
but I made it for my mother!
So I wrapped
that questionable piece of art in a
box
and gave it to her
like I was handing her a Picasso.
Here, mother,
you carried me in your womb.
You bandaged my knees when I fell.
You made soup when I was sick.
You rocked me to sleep as an infant
and sewed my costumes by hand.
In return, I made you this haphazard
nativity!
And in my childlike mind,

I thought that the small white lamb,
molded from a lumpy piece of clay,
could somehow make us even,
could somehow balance the scales,
could somehow pay her back.
And bless my mother,
because in her grace,
she smiled and she displayed that
hodge-podge nativity set
on the mantel
as if it were her pride and joy.
(I believed that it was.)
Maybe that's the way it is with God.
I say, Here's my heart
and God smiles.
And God takes it.
And despite the ragtag nature of my
human-hearted faith,
whatever I can give always ends up
on
God's mantel.
Whatever I can give always calls for
pride and joy.