



1ST SUNDAY IN LENT | FEBRUARY 21, 2021

REFLECTIONS

"Our saints and doctors, however brilliant and heroic, are rarely looked to for wisdom or example. The figure of Christ is our authority. No distinction can be made between his character and his meaning. No distinction can be made between his character and the great narrative of his life and death."

MARILYNNE ROBINSON | *WHEN I WAS A CHILD I READ BOOKS*

"Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works. If you see a poor man, take pity on him. If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him. Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye, and the ear, and the feet, and the hands, and all the members of our bodies. Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice. Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin. Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful... Let the ear fast...by not listening to evil talk and gossip... Let the mouth fast from the foul words and unjust criticism. For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers?"

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM | *SERMONS ON THE STATUTES*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust;
All let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me.
Leader Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.
**All Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.**
Leader All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.
All Let us turn our lives to the One who calls us; let us worship the One saves us! — from Psalm 25

SONG OF PRAISE

COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING / R. ROBINSON

1. Come Thou fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it,
mount of Thy redeeming love!

2. Here I raise my Ebenezer;
hither by Thy help I'm come;
and I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wandering from the fold of God
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed His precious blood.

3. Oh to grace how great a debtor,
daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy goodness, 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, oh take and seal it;
seal it for Thy courts above.

PRAYER OF ADORATION

All Lord God,
we gather in this time not because we are deserving of your love
and not because we have lived faithfully before your face.
We gather here because you have called us.
You loved us before we could love you. You have given your Son for our salvation.
For this we join all creation in blessing you, praising you, thanking you.
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! You are great, and greatly to be praised.
As we offer our praise, we long for you to mold us in the image of your Son,
whose death and resurrection give us hope.
Through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SONGS OF PRAISE

HE IS LORD / J. BARNETT

I will call on the name
of the Lord, my God
I will lift up my voice
to give praise to my King
*He's the light in the darkness
He's the calm in the storm
He's the hope of the righteous
He is Lord, He is Lord*

There is peace in the presence
of the Lord, my God
There is power in the blood
of the Lamb that was slain
*Every knee will bow,
every tongue confess that He is Lord
Every knee will bow,
every tongue confess that He is Lord*

MORE LOVE TO THEE / E. PRENTISS

1. More love to Thee, O Christ,
more love to Thee!
Hear Thou the prayer I make
on bended knee.
This is my earnest plea:
More love, O Christ, to Thee;
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

2. Once earthly joy I craved,
sought peace and rest;
Now Thee alone I seek,
give what is best.
This all my prayer shall be:
More love, O Christ to Thee;
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

3. Then shall my latest breath
whisper Thy praise;
This be the parting cry
my heart shall raise;
Still all my prayer shall be:
More love, O Christ to Thee;
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All

O Lord, you desire truth in our inward being;
teach us wisdom in our secret heart.
Send out your light, send out your truth,
and let them lead us to you, our true home.
Take from us the weight of our sin,
that room might be made for the spirit of truth.
Your truth sets us free; forgive us for rejecting it.
Speak your truth to us now,
and may we receive it with joyful hearts.
O Lord, you desire truth in our inward being;
teach us wisdom in our secret heart. **Amen.**

SONG OF RESPONSE & ASSURANCE

PSALM 126 / BIFROST ARTS

1. Our mouths they were filled,
filled with laughter
Our tongues they were loosed,
loosed with joy
Restore us, O Lord
Restore us, O Lord

CHORUS
Although we are weeping
Lord, help us keep sowing
The seeds of Your Kingdom
For the day You will reap them
Your sheaves we will carry
Lord, please do not tarry
All those who sow weeping
will go out with songs of joy

2. The nations will say,
"He has done great things!"
The nations will sing songs of joy
Restore us, O Lord
Restore us, O Lord

WORDS OF COMFORT & PEACE

Leader

The words of Jesus Christ are true and his truth sets you free. In him you are forgiven and given new life. In him, you are the beloved of God. Lean not on your own understanding, but believe Jesus and be at peace! — based on John 8:32; Proverbs 3:5

All

Thanks be to God!

Leader

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

All

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* Continue passing the peace to one another during announcements.

** Check our website for the latest updates and ways to invest in the life of our church and city.

THE OFFERING & OFFERTORY

If you're accustomed to giving during worship on Sunday mornings, please consider giving online and setting up a recurring or one-time gift through the Subsplash platform. (Subsplash has one of the lowest transaction fees and reduces our fees the more people give online.) To give online, visit <https://gracepasadena.org/give>. Questions? Email info@gracepasadena.org.

THE MORNING LESSON – JOHN 16:7-17

⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹² "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

¹⁶ "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me." ¹⁷ So some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" [ESV]

THE SERMON – BRANNIN PITRE

Lenten Sermon Series: The Character of Jesus

Sermon Title: "The Counsel of Jesus"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE - THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader Mighty God, in this season of Lent, give your Church the courage to give up her preoccupation with herself and turn her toward your world in love. Though divisions are deep in our families, city, country, and world, give this congregation to grace to minister reconciliation to one another and to extend your hospitality to all. For this, O Lord, we pray.

All Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Prince of Peace, in this season of Lent, give your world the grace to give up war, hatred, jealousy, quarrels and strife. Turn the hearts of all peoples to yourself, and come to reign over us. Be with our elected leaders; fill them with your mercy and wisdom that they may be instruments of peace. For this, O Lord, we pray:

All Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Merciful Spirit, in this season of Lent, help us to give up our selfishness and to reach out in care toward the sick, the lonely, and those who suffer. May they know the healing touch of the wounded hands of Jesus and the light of his presence. We pray for those in the grips of freezing temperatures, especially the homeless and those without electricity or heat. Give us eyes to see our neighbor and the image of God in them. Cultivate in us curiosity and compassion. For this, O Lord, we pray:

All Lord, hear our prayer.

A COMMUNION PRAYER FOR ADVENT

All God of love, nourish us with your grace in body and soul.
By your life-giving word make us one as you are one.
As in Jesus Christ you gave yourself to us,
so may we give ourselves to you, living according to your holy will.
Keep our feet firmly in the way where Christ leads us;
make our mouths speak the truth that Christ teaches us;
fill our bodies with the life that is Christ within us.
In his holy name we pray. **Amen.**

CLOSING SONGS

WE ARE NOT OVERCOME / *BIFROST ARTS*

Flesh will fail, bones will break	Because of His great love
Thieves will steal, the earth will shake	We are not overcome
Night will fall, light will fade	Because of His great love
The Lord will give, and take away	We are not overcome
Put no trust in the earth	Have no fear, for your life
In the ground you stand upon	Turn your cheek, Turn your cheek
Flowers fade into dust	Bear the yoke, love in death
The Lord will make a place for us	The Lord will give life and breath

GRACE TO YOU & PEACE / *MUSIC: F. ORTEGA*

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
Grace to you and peace from God our Father
And the Lord Jesus Christ
And the Lord Jesus Christ
And the Lord Jesus Christ

BENEDICTION & SENDING

Leader Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Be filled with the Spirit and go in power to love and serve the world. — based on Proverbs 3:5-6

All **Come, Lord Jesus, come! Amen!**

LENT

Lent is here! Starting on Ash Wednesday, Lent lasts for 40 days (the Sundays in Lent are not considered part of the season). It ends on the Easter Vigil, the day before Easter Sunday. During this season, our attention is drawn to the suffering of Christ. As we contemplate his suffering, the Spirit draws us more deeply into his suffering and makes us ever more ready to pick up our crosses to follow Jesus and his example of love. A somber season, the color of the season is purple to represent Christ's suffering and royalty. Black is often used during Holy Week, especially on Good Friday. For more information about Lent, please see the Lenten Prayer guide on our website.

GIVING & BUDGET

	<u>JAN-DEC '20</u>	<u>JAN '21</u>	<u>FEB '21</u> ¹
OFFERINGS & CONTRIBUTIONS _____	472,102	30,025	19,591
BUDGETED GIVING _____	468,00	36,000	36,000
DIFFERENCE _____	+4,102	-5,975	-16,873

¹as of 2/05/2021; figures exclude directed gifts from outside donors