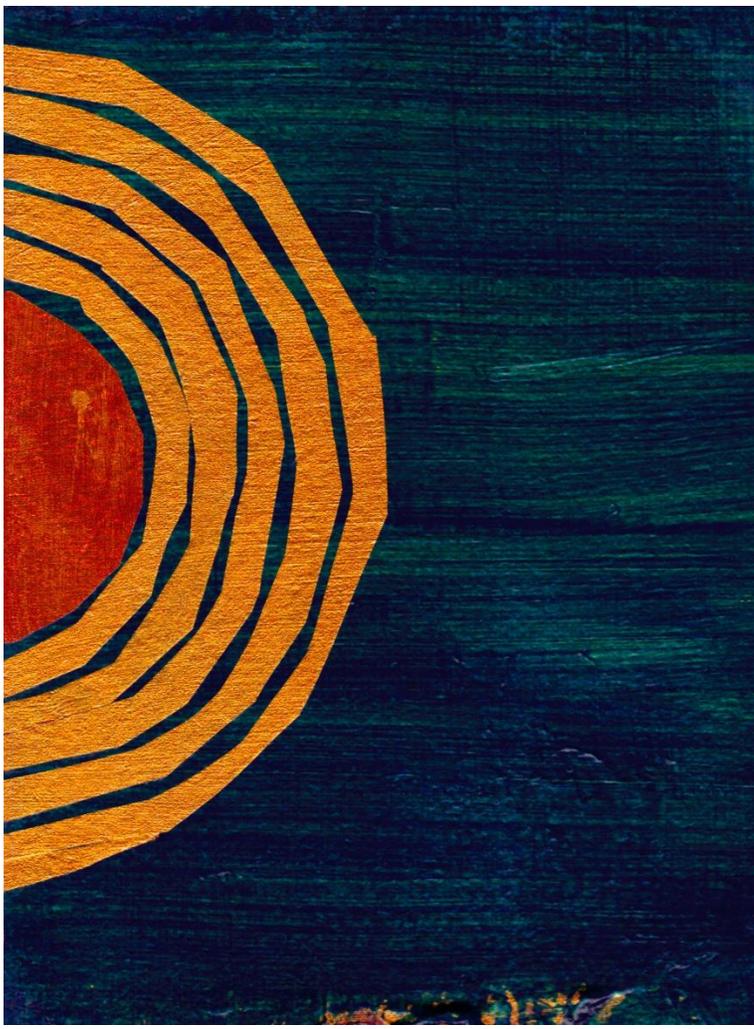


"An Ancient Light" | Jan Richardson



# Grace Episcopal Church

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2020 | 9:30am

Ministers | All of Us

Rector | Wren Blessing

Music | Martin Cockroft

*A bell rings. We listen to the longing in our hearts.*

## Gathering Song | Gather Your People

Words: Mary Louise Bringle | Music: Tony Alonzo



Gath - er your peo-ple, mer - ci-ful God,



gath - er the long - ing, the lost, and un-sure.



Gath - er your peo-ple, mer - ci-ful God,



name us and claim us as yours.

# THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

After the gathering song, the *Officiant* invites us to stand.

*Officiant* God above us, God beside us, God beneath us,  
**People** **God at our center, God at the edge, God with us.**  
*Officiant* God, you are gracious and full of compassion.  
**People** **Your mercy endures forever.**

*Adapted from a prayer written by Richard Carter in Liturgy on the Edge: Pastoral & Occasional Worship.*

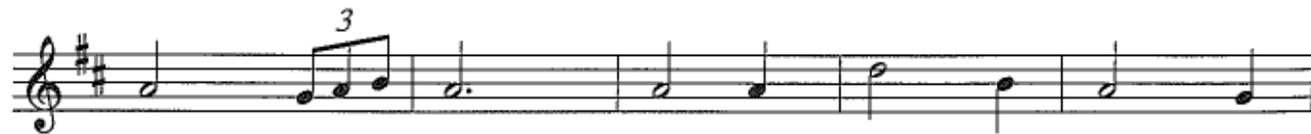
We remain standing and sing together.

## Opening Song | King of Love

Words: Psalm 23; Henry W. Baker | Music: ST. COLUMBIA; Gaelic harm. by A. Gregory Murray



1. The King of love my shep - herd is, Whose good - ness  
2. Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow My ran - somed  
3. Con - fused and fool - ish oft I strayed, But yet in



fails me nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
soul he's lead - ing, And where the ver - dant  
love he sought me; And on his shoul - der



I am his, And he is mine for ev - er.  
pas - tures grow With food ce - les - tial feed - ing.  
gent - ly laid, And home, re - joic - ing, brought me.

## The Collect

Officiant      The Lord be with you.

**People      And also with you.**

Officiant      Let us pray.

Holy One, your goodness never fails. Draw near to us. Open our eyes and our lives to your comfort in the shadow of death, to your welcome in the presence of fear, and to your restoration in the midst of confusion, as we wait for the day when we know your compassionate touch, and see you face to face.

**Amen.**

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## WE TELL THE STORY

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*We are seated for the reading.*

### **The First Reading** | 1 Samuel 16:1-13

The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is now before the Lord.” But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

*After the reading, the reader will say*

The Word of the Lord.

**All      Thanks be to God.**

*We stand and say the Psalm.*

## **Psalm | 23**

The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.

**He makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.**

He revives my soul  
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;  
you have anointed my head with oil,  
and my cup is running over.

**Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

*We are seated for the second reading.*

## **The Second Reading | Ephesians 5:8-14**

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!  
Rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

*After the reading, the reader will say*

The Word of the Lord.

**All            Thanks be to God.**

We stand together and sing

## Gospel Song | It is Well

Words: Horatio Spafford, adapted by Martin Cockroft | Music: Philip Bliss, adapted by Martin Cockroft

It is well with my soul It is well with my soul

1. Make us well 2. Make us well

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the song, with lyrics 'It is well with my soul' repeated twice. The second staff contains the melody for the second line, with lyrics 'Make us well' repeated twice. The second staff includes first and second endings, indicated by '1.' and '2.' above the staff.

The Officiant then introduces the Gospel by saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**People**      **Glory to you Lord Christ.**

## The Gospel | John 9:1-41

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

*(Reading continues on the following page.)*

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

*After the Gospel the Officiant will say*

The Gospel of the Lord.

**People Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The musical notation is written on a single staff in 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of quarter notes and half notes. The lyrics are: "It is well with my soul It is well with my soul Make us well Make us well". The first two phrases are separated by a repeat sign. The last two phrases are separated by a first and second ending bracket. The first ending leads back to the beginning of the phrase, and the second ending concludes the phrase.

# OUR RESPONSE TO THE STORY

## The Homily

### Affirmation of Faith

*We stand and say*

**We believe in God above us,  
maker and sustainer of all life,  
of sun and moon,  
of water and earth,  
of all humanity.**

**We believe in God beside us,  
Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,  
born of a woman's womb, servant of the poor,  
he was tortured and nailed to a tree.  
Knowing full passion and deep sorrow, he died forsaken.  
He descended into the earth to the place of death.  
On the third day he rose from the tomb.  
He ascended into heaven to be everywhere present,  
and his Kingdom will one day be known.**

**We believe in God within us,  
the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,  
life-giving breath of the Church.  
She is the Spirit of healing and forgiveness,  
source of resurrection and of life everlasting. Amen.**

*We gather in prayer.*

### The Prayers of the People

*Stefan Waligur*

5 Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy on\_\_\_\_\_ us.

Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy, on\_\_\_\_\_ us

Officiant For those who are lost,  
**All we mourn.**

Officiant For all that is broken,  
**All we cry out.**

Officiant With those who weep,  
**All we weep**

Officiant Suffering Servant,  
**All hear our prayer.**

Officiant For those who are alone,  
**All we invite your presence.**

Officiant For those who are trapped inside,  
**All we ask your freedom.**

Officiant For those without a safe place,  
**All we beg your protection.**

Officiant Helper of the helpless,  
**All shelter your people.**

Officiant For those who labor on our behalf, healing tending delivering,  
**All we give thanks.**

Officiant For those whose work has been taken,  
**All we ask your provision.**

Officiant Upon those to whom our world looks for guidance,  
**All pour out your wisdom.**

Officiant Shepherd, guide us through the shadow of death.

Officiant For all that is obscured,  
**All we ask for light.**

Officiant From our selfishness and greed,  
**All we repent.**

Officiant From our anxiety,  
**All we turn.**

Officiant God of love,  
**All cast out our fear.**

*Adapted from a prayer written by Emily Cool Greener.*

5 Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy on \_\_\_\_\_ us.

Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy, on \_\_\_\_\_ us

Leader God of insight, open our eyes to see the world as you envision it. Thank you for all who give of themselves for the good of their neighbors here and around the world. Bless leaders of nations, faith communities, health care centers, and families with courage, integrity, honesty, and patience. Guide Bishops and church leaders who make difficult decisions. Have mercy on people in refugee camps and in places of war.

*We pause for prayers to be offered silently or aloud.*

Leader In your mercy,  
**All hear our prayers.**

Leader God of insight, open our eyes to see with compassion the struggles of those around us. In the face of the pandemic, give us strength to comfort those who are anxious or upset, and sustain health care workers who care for the sick. Provide for households losing income. Bless researchers working to find a vaccine and encourage doctors, nurses, health care and social workers who care for all who are sick. Strengthen all who serve and support the vulnerable. Provide shelter for those experiencing homelessness.

*We pause for prayers to be offered silently or aloud.*

Leader In your mercy,  
**All hear our prayers.**

Leader God of insight, help us to see one another with love, even from a distance. Bless those who seek to draw communities together in safe ways. Encourage those who take food to people in quarantine, who struggle to get to their jobs, and any who are afraid, depressed, or in despair. Comfort those of us who grieve the death of loved ones. We name before you now those who have asked for our prayers, and those whose needs we carry with us.

*We pause for prayers to be offered silently or aloud.*

Leader In your mercy,  
**All hear our prayers.**

5 Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy on \_\_\_\_\_ us.

Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy, on \_\_\_\_\_ us

Officiant Let us pray.

**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.  
 And lead us not into temptation,  
 but deliver us from evil.  
 For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
 for ever and ever. Amen.**

## GOING OUT INTO GOD'S WORLD

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### The Blessing

*The Officiant offers a blessing.*

Live without fear: your Creator has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you with an endless love. Go in peace to follow the good road and may God's blessing rest upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

# Closing Song | Prayer of Peace

Words: Based on a Navajo prayer; David Haas | Music: David Haas

1. Peace be - fore us, peace be - hind us, peace  
2. Love be - fore us, love be - hind us, love  
3. Light be - fore us, light be - hind us, light  
4. Christ be - fore us, Christ be - hind us, Christ

un - der our feet. Peace with - in us, peace  
un - der our feet. Love with - in us, love  
un - der our feet. Light with - in us, light  
un - der our feet. Christ with - in us, Christ

o - ver us, let all a - round us be peace.  
o - ver us, let all a - round us be love.  
o - ver us, let all a - round us be light.  
o - ver us, let all a - round us be Christ.

## Briefly It Enters, and Briefly Speaks

I am the blossom pressed in a book,  
found again after two hundred years. . . .

I am the maker, the lover, and the keeper. . . .

When the young girl who starves  
sits down to a table  
she will sit beside me. . . .

I am food on the prisoner's plate. . . .

I am water rushing to the wellhead,  
filling the pitcher until it spills. . . .

I am the patient gardener  
of the dry and weedy garden. . . .

I am the stone step,  
the latch, and the working hinge. . . .

I am the heart contracted by joy. . . .  
the longest hair, white  
before the rest. . . .

I am there in the basket of fruit  
presented to the widow. . . .

I am the musk rose opening  
unattended, the fern on the boggy summit. . . .

I am the one whose love  
overcomes you, already with you  
when you think to call my name. . . .

~ Jane Kenyon from *Collected Poems* (Graywolf Press, 2005)