

CELEBRATING THE SABBATH
First Sunday in Lent

February 21, 2021 at 10 o'clock



The end we seek is a society at peace with itself, a society that can live with its conscience.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr
"How Long, Not Long" speech

PRELUDE

<https://www.theworkofthepeople.com/open-unto-me>

Improvisation on "Hilary"

James Boratko

SHARING OUR WELCOME VIRTUALLY

WE COME TO WORSHIP

As we call ourselves to worship today, we are using a prayer by Howard Thurman:

Open unto me — light for my darkness.

Open unto me — courage for my fear.

Open unto me — hope for my despair.

Open unto me — peace for my turmoil.

Open unto me — joy for my sorrow.

Open unto me — strength for my weakness.

Open unto me — wisdom for my confusion.

Open unto me — forgiveness for my sins.

Open unto me — love for my hates.

Open unto me — thy Self for myself.

Lord, Lord, open unto me!

Amen

Howard Thurman

HYMN #568

'Tis the Gift to Be Simple

Join as you are able!

[Click here to see hymn](#)

**'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free,
'tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
and when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'twill be in the valley of love and delight.**

**When true simplicity is gained
to bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed,
to turn, turn, will be our delight
till by turning, turning we come round right. (Repeat)**

OPENING PRAYER

**In this season of pandemic winter,
we are reminded of a gentle arc of colors --
the rainbow crafted from water and light.**

**In the silent questions of doubt,
in the vertigo of Your seeming absence
whispers a silent promise
the covenant of your forever being-here.**

**We praise You, God, for rainbows and promises
and the courage we may find in their comforting presence as we begin our worship,
where we are, as we are.**

Amen

John van de Laar, adapted

A MOMENT FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

Lauren Dube

ANTHEM

Ah, Holy Jesus
The Whitechapel Handbell Choir
Jessica Berube, director

arr. Jason W. Krug

SCRIPTURE LESSON

[Genesis 9:8-17](#)

Jimmy Quinn

SERMON

A Snowmelt (rainbow) Covenant

Erica Avena

A TIME OF 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.

A WORD FROM A PARTNER IN MINISTRY

Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA)
First Church Core Team

RESPONDING WITH OUR GIFTS

Offertory

O Sacred Head Now Wounded
The Whitechapel Handbell Choir
Jessica Berube, director

arr. Jason W. Krug

To Give an Online Offering Now: <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/donate/give>
Or Give by Text: Text *GIVE* to (860) 222-7870. Click [here](#) to watch a demo video.

Doxology, Words: Hymnal, No. 47; Tune: Hymnal, No. 46

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

HYMN #334

Sing My Song Backwards

Join as you are able!

**Sing my song backwards from end to beginning,
Friday to Monday, from dying to birth.
Nothing is altered, but hope changes everything;
sing "Resurrection!" and "Peace upon Earth!"**

**Stretch out a rainbow from cross to nativity.
Deck out the stable with shepherds and kings,
angels and miracles, glory and poetry:
sing my song backwards till all the world sings!**

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BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Fugue in G minor, BWV 578
The "Little"

J. S. Bach