



"God's Covenant with Abraham"

THE 2ND SUNDAY IN LENT
A Service of the Word

February 28, 2021 ✦ 10:00 a.m.



The 2nd Sunday in Lent

Every time you listen with great attentiveness to the voice that calls you the Beloved, you will discover within yourself a desire to hear that voice longer and more deeply. — Henri Nouwen, Life of the Beloved

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit gathers us in unity on the first day, the day of Christ's resurrection

Prelude — “Praeludium in F minor, BWV 534” by Bach

Dr. Patricia Snyder

Welcome

News from our Life Together

Greeting

One: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Many: **And also with you.**

Call to Worship

One: “Walk before me, and be blameless,” said God to Abram, “And I shall make my covenant between me and you.”

Genesis 17:1-2, paraphrased

Quite openly, we've measured that distance.

Many: **Quite openly, we've stayed away.**

One: Quite openly, we've distanced ourselves.

Many: **Quite openly, we didn't want to be closer.**

One: Quite openly, we are not blameless.

Many: **Quite openly, we are here. We are here to open ourselves to our in-between God. Amen.**

Hymn — “The God of Abraham Praise”

this bulletin, pg. 6

Prayer of Confession

Many: **We are quite open about our successes.**

We feel free to boast when we have done well,

but we are not quite so open when things have gone wrong.

We do not praise God anyway.

Instead, we recognize the distance

between me and you

between you and God

between God and me.
 Let's be quite open about it
 as we open ourselves
 to our Living God in silence

Silent confession of our transgression.

PRAYER FOR MERCY: KYRIE

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us; Christ, have mer - cy up -
 on us; Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Words of Assurance

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

* **RESPONSE:** "Take, O Take Me as I Am"

TAKE ME AS I AM

Take, O take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be;
 set your seal up-on my heart, and live in me.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading — Genesis 17: 1-7; 15-16

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasizes the firmness of God's promise.

Sermon — “Always Close”

Rev. Dr. Debbie Pallatto-Fontaine

The *refrain* (“Take, O Take Me as I Am” – music above) is repeated.

RESPONSE

We begin our lives of responding to the gospel in prayer and offering

Responding with our Gifts

Give online: Go to www.storrscongchurch.org and click the green “Give now...” button.

Text: Text “StorrsCongChurch” to 73256, followed by your gift amount (i.e. “StorrsCongChurch \$100”).

Those participating via Zoom are welcome to submit prayer petitions (joys and concerns) via the Chat feature. To protect privacy, surnames will not be used.

Call to Offering

Dedication

**Many: In-between God,
Bless these gifts with your love
So that we might share them quite openly
With all who need your change. Amen.**

OFFERTORY MUSIC — “A Lenten Prayer” by Hopson

Choral Scholars

Sarah Marze, Audrey Rivetta, Cooper Clarke, Jonah Garcia

Lord, who throughout these forty days for us did fast and pray,
Teach us with thee to mourn our sins, and close by thee to pray.

Jesus walked this lonesome valley, he had to walk it by himself;
Oh nobody else could walk it for him, he had to walk it by himself.

We must walk this lonesome valley, we have to walk it by ourselves;
Oh, nobody else can walk it for us, we have to walk it by ourselves.

You must go and stand your trial, you have to stand it by yourself,
Oh, nobody else can stand it for you, you have to stand it by yourself.

And through these days of penitence, and through thy Passiontide,

Yea, evermore, in life and death, O lord with us abide.

The Prayers of the People, ending with The Lord's Prayer

Many: 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 glory forever. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us forth in mission for the world

Hymn — “The Church of Christ in Every Age”

this bulletin, pg. 7

Benediction

Postlude — “Sonata No. 3 (*excerpt*)” by Mendelssohn

Dr. Patricia Snyder

Following the postlude, the Zoom Meeting will remain open for those who wish to connect and chat—a bring-your-own-coffee “coffee hour”! We look forward to connecting with you!

49 The God of Abraham Praise

1 The God of A-braham praise, who reigns en-throned a - bove,
 2 Your spir - it still flows free, high surg - ing where it will.
 3 Your good - ly land we seek, with peace and plen - ty blest,
 4 You have e - ter - nal life im - plant - ed in the soul;

the An - cient of E - ter - nal Days, the God of love!
 In proph-et's word you spoke of old and you speak still.
 a land of sa - cred lib - er - ty and Sab - bath rest.
 your love shall be our strength and stay, while a - ges roll.

The Lord, the great I AM, by earth and heaven con-fessed,
 Es - tab - lished is your law, and change-less it shall stand,
 There milk and hon - ey flow, and oil and wine a - bound,
 We praise you, liv - ing God! We praise your ho - ly name:

we bow be - fore your ho - ly name, for - ev - er blest.
 deep writ up - on the hu - man heart by your strong hand.
 and trees of life for - ev - er grow with mer - cy crowned.
 the first, the last, be - yond all thought, and still the same!

Shaped by its traditional Jewish tune, this selection of English stanzas conveys the essence of the *Yigdal*, a canticle based on a medieval Hebrew statement of faith about the nature of God and often used in synagogue worship, alternately chanted by cantor and congregation.

TEXT: Moses Maimonides, 12th cent.; vers. Daniel ben Judah Dayan, 1404; stanzas 1, 3, trans. Thomas Olivers, c.1770, alt.; LEONI
 stanzas 2, 4, trans. Max Landsberg, Newton M. Mann, and William C. Gannett, 1884, 1910, alt. 6.6.8.4.D
 MUSIC: Jewish melody, 17th cent.; adapt. Meyer Lyon and Thomas Olivers, 1770

320 The Church of Christ in Every Age

1 The church of Christ in ev - ery age, be - set by
 2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
 3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
 4 For Christ a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
 5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -

change but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
 of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
 church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
 fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
 be - dience to our Lord: to care for all, with -

her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
 bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
 sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
 share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
 out re - serve, and spread Christ's lib - er - at - ing word.

In this challenging text by a British Methodist minister, the odd-numbered stanzas develop the image of "the servant church," while the second surveys the many needs and the fourth describes the true source of strength for the task.

TEXT: Fred Pratt Green, 1969
 MUSIC: William Knapp, 1738
 Text © 1971 Hope Publishing Company

WAREHAM
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Notes and Acknowledgements

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If you have any questions about how to make a contribution, or about your giving history, feel free to contact our Collector, Donna Latincsics (contact info available through the church office).

We envision our community as a welcoming, historic, and progressive Christian community. *We are an Open and Affirming congregation: Believing that each of us is unique and blessed with special talents from God, each a creation of God's love, alike and yet different, we open our doors and our ministry to all. We accept into full participation in the life of this Church: people of any age, economic status, gender, marital status, race, sexual orientation, and physical, emotional and mental capability. As a community, we will work to put aside all prejudices and to affirm and promote the worth and dignity of each person.*

STORRS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

***We share in God's love by growing in faith,
courageously seeking justice, and generously caring for all people.***

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