



**THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

**Nicodemus and Jesus**

January 23, 2022

**Park Hill Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)**

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*inspired by Rev. Teri Peterson and written for BibleWorm*

PRELUDE

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

All who seek the kingdom of God, come. From the confines of pre-made opinions,  
from the well-worn box of “the way things have always been,” from the muffled cocoon of personal comfort,  
into a good and spacious land, **come and be born anew!**  
into a community of love and justice, **come and be born anew!**  
into the light of life. **come and be born anew!**  
Let us praise the Lord!

\*HYMN OF PRAISE      “Open The Eyes Of My Heart”      #452  
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart;  
I want to see you; I want to see you; Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart; I want to see you; I want to see you;

To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory.  
Pour out your power and love as we sing “Holy, holy, holy.”

Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy,  
I want to see you.

CALL TO CONFESSION AND CONFESSION

O God, We do not know where you are leading, so we ask for the blessing of curiosity to overcome our fear. When we speak without understanding, give us also ears to listen for your story in the voices of others, and voices to confess what we do not know, and how we have failed to live as you call. Let us confess together, saying  
Merciful God, **we confess.**

Loving God, you come among us that we may recognize the truth and so live your abundant life, even now. Your grace opens us to the honesty that allows us to change directions. Merciful God, **we confess,**

that we do not want to look at ourselves in the full light of your day. We prefer stories that justify our choices and make our experience the “norm” so that we do not need to listen to other’s experiences. Merciful God, **we confess,**

that we find it easier to pretend everything is fine, because then we have no need to change. Merciful God, **we confess,**

that we would rather blame others than admit we have made this mess ourselves, and we need your help and that of others to get out. Forgive us, Holy God, and turn our eyes to look directly at our own shadows. Help us to face those things that have hurt us, others, and your creation, and to tell the truth about them, that we may be healed.

HYMN OF FORGIVENESS

“Mighty To Save,” vs. 2

So take me as You find me. All my fears and failures. Fill my life again.

I give my life to follow everything I believe in. Now I surrender  
Savior He can move the mountains. My God is mighty to save. He is mighty  
to save. Forever Author of salvation. He rose and conquered the grave.

Jesus conquered the grave.

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Be comforted and hear the good news of the gospel: If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he has made atonement for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. Friends, believe this Good News, In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God. Amen!**

## TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell

## READING

John 3:1-21

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?"

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' <sup>8</sup> The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

<sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

<sup>11</sup> "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you <sup>12</sup> do not receive our testimony. <sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

<sup>17</sup> "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup> Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup> And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because

their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

## SERMON

Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell

ANTHEM "Here I Am To Worship," vs. 1, 2 performed by Annabel Stavey  
Light of the world You stepped down into darkness. Opened my eyes let me see. Beauty that made This heart adore You. Hope of a life spent with You

So here I am to worship. Here I am to bow down.  
Here I am to say that You're my God. And You're altogether lovely.  
Altogether worthy. Altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days Oh so highly exalted. Glorious in heaven above.  
Humbly You came To the earth You created All for love's sake became poor

So here I am to worship Here I am to bow down  
Here I am to say that You're my God And You're altogether lovely  
Altogether worthy. Altogether wonderful to me

## APOSTLE'S CREED

Video

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Please join together in prayer for each other and the world, saying,  
Lord of Life, **hear our prayer.**

You are Love, O God, and your love brings life to all.  
We approach with gratitude and praise for you make space for our confusion even as you draw us into your heart. Lord of Life, **hear our prayer.**

We do not understand how, but your Spirit is at work, and we give you thanks, as we pray for your guidance for those who wander in the shadows: shadows of grief, despair, or mental illness, shadows of addiction, loneliness, or fear, shadows of poverty, violence, or injustice. Let your light shine with hope and possibility, Lord of Life, **hear our prayer.**

Fill our hearts to overflowing with grace, that we may be agents of your help, reaching out, advocating, lifting up, and caring for our neighbors. Give us ears to hear their stories, and minds open ready to trust them. Give us hands ready to share our resources and wills ready to act. Lord of Life, **hear our prayer.**

Bring your people through the deep and into new life, opening out before us with beauty and justice. Move our feet to be like your feet, swift with good news and the working out of justice. Open our hands to be ready to receive your goodness and pass it on to others. Open our minds to perceive new possibilities. Open our eyes to your kingdom emerging into this world, even now. Lord of Life, **hear our prayer.**

Help us to pray as Jesus taught us, saying...

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, they 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.**

#### GIVING OF OUR OFFERINGS AND TITHES

Today we offer ourselves and our gifts to God while at home and seemingly separated, and yet we are united in gratitude for God's faithfulness to us, that nothing need stop us in our freedom from worshiping you and declaring our faith. Today we can give by mailing an offering to the church address or by giving online through our webpage. Your gifts maintain our ministries, many of which continue whether we worship in this space or elsewhere.

And during this time of anxiety and illness, if you find yourself in need—physical, mental, spiritual or financial—please tell our elder for Congregational Care, Mary Henry, or our Pastor Marie.

\*DOXOLOGY "Doxology" #607  
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise Christ all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit ever more, praise Triune God whom we adore. Amen.**

\*PRAYER

#### \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Please "pass the peace" in a phone call, letter, or text, saying to someone else, "May the Peace of Christ be with you." **"And also with you."**

#### \*HYMN OF SENDING

"To God Be The Glory"

Video

To God be the glory, great things he hath done!  
So loved he the world that he gave us his son, who yielded his life an atonement for sin  
And opened the lifegate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the earth hear his voice!  
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the people rejoice!  
Oh come to the Father through Jesus the Son,  
and give him the glory great things he hath done!

Great things he hath taught us, great things he has done,  
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;  
But purer and higher and greater will be  
Our wonder our transport when Jesus we see.

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the earth hear his voice!  
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Let the people rejoice!  
Oh come to the Father through Jesus the Son,  
and give him the glory great things he hath done!

#### \*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

"The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD's face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

#### \*POSTLUDE