

Wednesday Worship

Denominational Welcome

Tori Smit
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Worship Leadership Introduction

Jami Vandock and Mary Todd Peters
2023 Event Co-chairs

Gathering Music

So Many Reasons to Rejoice!

Transcribed by Brandon Waddles

(Refrain) **Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!**
I have so many reasons to rejoice!

Come Bring Your Burdens to God

John L. Bell

Come bring your burdens to God.

Come bring your burdens to God.

Come bring your burdens to God for Jesus will never say no.

Come to the Water

John S. Foley, Matt Maher

GREETING

Marietta Wynands
Presbyterian Church (USA)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We gather today on the ancestral homeland of the Muscogee, Choctaw, Chicaksaw, and Shawnee people and we respectfully remember those who first called this land home. We acknowledge the injustices of colonization, as we commit ourselves anew to truth-telling and working toward justice and healing.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

All God's creatures live in a watershed – a natural boundary within God's world. A watershed is the ground that water flows in as it moves toward a stream, lake, or river. As singing of solo stanza begins, members of Birmingham area churches will bring forward containers of water representing the seven distinct watersheds.

As the water is poured into the baptismal font, we affirm that Christ, the Living Water, came to redeem the whole creation.

*Solo Stanza: O let all who thirst, let them come to the water.
And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord:
without money, without price.
Why should you pay the price, except for the Lord?*

We give you thanks, O God, for the waters of life.
Together with all creation, we depend on water for our very being.
We offer gratitude for these, our waters:
 the Cahaba river that unites us, the lakes that calm us,
 the streams that surround us, the pipes that carry water to our homes.
We bless these gifts that they might nurture our lives.
We steward these gifts that they might nurture the earth.

Let all who thirst come to the waters.

All: Let us come to the spring of water whose waters never fail.

Sung Stanza

**And let all who seek, let them come to the water.
And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord:
without money, without strife.
Why should you spend your life, except for the Lord?**

We give you thanks, O God, for your salvation through water.
We remember your abundant grace and liberating power
in deliverance from the flood
in passage through the Red Sea
in water gushing from rocks in the wilderness.

We hold to your word that teems with life-giving waters,
from the banks of the Jordan River to the river of life that flows from the cross.
We enter in to Jesus' death through these waters,
Cleansing us of our sin and raising us to new life.

Let all who thirst come to the waters.

All: Let us come to the spring of water whose waters never fail.

Sung Stanza

**And let all who toil, let them come to the water.
And let all who are weary, let them come to the Lord:
all who labor, without rest.
How can your soul find rest, except for the Lord?**

We give you thanks, O God,
for the grace-filled community born in these baptismal waters.
For the reconciling waters that make us one in you.
For all our relatives in Christ whom we have never seen
but to whom we are bound.
For the ways you are made known to us in community,
alive for the sake of the world.
For our baptismal identity that grounds us, sustains us,
and calls to be neighbor to one another in your great love.

Wash away our brokenness,
Immerse us in your love and restore us to wholeness.
You, O God, are the water we crave, the fountain of life, the cleansing spring,
our never-failing watered garden.

Let all who thirst come to the waters.

All: Let us come to the spring of water whose waters never fail.

REMEMBERING OUR BAPTISM

Participants are invited to pass the cup of water to one another, pausing for each person to take an opportunity to dip a finger and make the sign of a cross on their head. As the cup is passed, you are invited to share the following greeting:

*Remember your baptism and be thankful! **Thanks be to God!***

Solo Stanza

*And let all the poor, let them come to the water,
Bring the ones who are laden, bring them all to the Lord:
bring the children without might.
Easy the load and light: come to the Lord.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Joyce Vance
Moravian Church North America

Wondrous God, **inspire our weary world to turn its gaze towards you as doubts and fears take root in our lives. Turn our disbelief into faith and cultivate in us a sense of wonder and curiosity, that we might see you breaking into our lives and into our world again. We pray in the name of Jesus, from whom we learn unforced rhythms of grace. Amen.**

ANTHEM

His Eye Is On the Sparrow

OCT8VE
arr. Ben Bram

GOSPEL READING

Irma Williams
CERCA

Matthew 11:28-30 (The MSG)

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Mateo 11:28-30 NVI

El mensaje
28-30 “

¿Estás cansado? ¿Desgastado? ¿Quemado en la religión? Ven a mí. Sal conmigo y recuperarás tu vida. Te mostraré cómo descansar de verdad. Camina conmigo y trabaja conmigo, observa cómo lo hago. Aprende los ritmos no forzados de la gracia. No pondré nada pesado o mal ajustado sobre ti. Hazme compañía y aprenderás a vivir con libertad y ligereza.

Estos son Las palabras de Dios

SERMON

Dr. Michael W. Waters

“Bend without Breaking”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Come Bring Your Burdens to God

John L. Bell

**Come bring your burdens to God.
Come bring your burdens to God.**

Come bring your burdens to God for Jesus will never say no.

(After each petition) Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Doreen Sterba DeZur
Awards and Scholarships Team Member

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

OFFERING: Val Murphy & First Light

Sherry Bray & Camilla Jones
First Light, Local Mission

OFFERTORY

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

OCT8VE
arr. Jamey Ray

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Merciful God, **we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us, our selves, our time and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As Christ our Savior taught us, we are bold to 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 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.

BENEDICTION

Dr. Michael W. Waters

Go out into the world in peace;
have courage;
hold on to what is good;
return no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted;

support the weak, and help the suffering;
honor all people;
rejoicing that you are the beloved of God
and that you live in the power of the Holy Spirit.

SENDING HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy

OCT8VE

arr. Adrian Westney Jr.

OCT8VE will sing the 1st two stanzas. The Congregation is invited to stand to sing the final stanza.

**Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

DISMISSAL

Breathe in. You belong.

Breathe out deeply. You are God's beloved.

Thanks be to God!

CREDITS

So Many Reasons to Rejoice! As transcribed by Brandon Waddles © 2017, GIA Publications

Come Bring Your Burdens to God John L. Bell © 2008 WGRG, Iona Community Scotland, GIA Publications

Come to the Water John S. Foley, Matt Maher © 1978, John B. Foley, SJ, and OCP Publications

Thanksgiving for Baptism created in collaboration with Emilie Bouvier

Benediction adapted from *This Far by Faith: An African American Resource for Worship, Augsburg Fortress* © 1999