



The People of Washington Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
gather for the

Worship of God

February 4, 2023; 9:30am: 5th Sunday after the Epiphany

Chiming the Hour

The Atwood Carillon

Greeting

The Spirit of God is with you...
And also with you!

Glennis Covault

Call to Worship

Lift up your hearts...
We lift them to the Lord!

Glennis Covault

Prelude

Prière à Notre Dame (Léon Boëllmann)

Sol M. Rizzato

Meditation for Preparation

"Miamas is Granny and Elsa's favorite kingdom, because there storytelling is considered the noblest profession of all. The currency there is imagination; instead of buying something with coins, you buy it with a good story. Libraries aren't known as libraries but as 'banks,' and every fairy tale is worth a fortune."

—Frederick Backman, *My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry*

Hymn of Praise 491

As Grain on Scattered Hillsides

MERLE'S TUNE

Invocation

Debbie Walker

Hymn of Prayer

O Holy Dove of God Descending¹

LOIS

O ho - ly Dove of God de - scend - ing, you are the love that knows no end - ing.
O ho - ly Wind of God now blow - ing, you are the seed that God is sow - ing.
O ho - ly Rain of God now fall - ing, you make the Word of God en - thral - ing.
O ho - ly Flame of God now burn - ing, you are the pow'r of Christ re - turn - ing.

All of our shatt - ered dreams you're mend - ing: Spir - it, now live in us.
You are the life that starts us grow - ing: Spir - it, now live in us.
You are that in - ner voice now call - ing: Spir - it, now live in us.
You are the an - swer to our yearn - ing: Spir - it, now live in us.

Prayers of the People

God of wind, rain, and flame...
Give us life that keeps growing.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Mother/Father/Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin*dom 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 kin*dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. AMEN.

Sung Response

Seeds²

SEEDS

These seeds you have sown in our hearts and in our bones, cov - er them with your love. Use our
hands, use our feet, to show your love and your peace, and cov - er us, cov - er us, cov - er us with love.

Invitation to Stewardship

Nathan A. Russell

Offertory

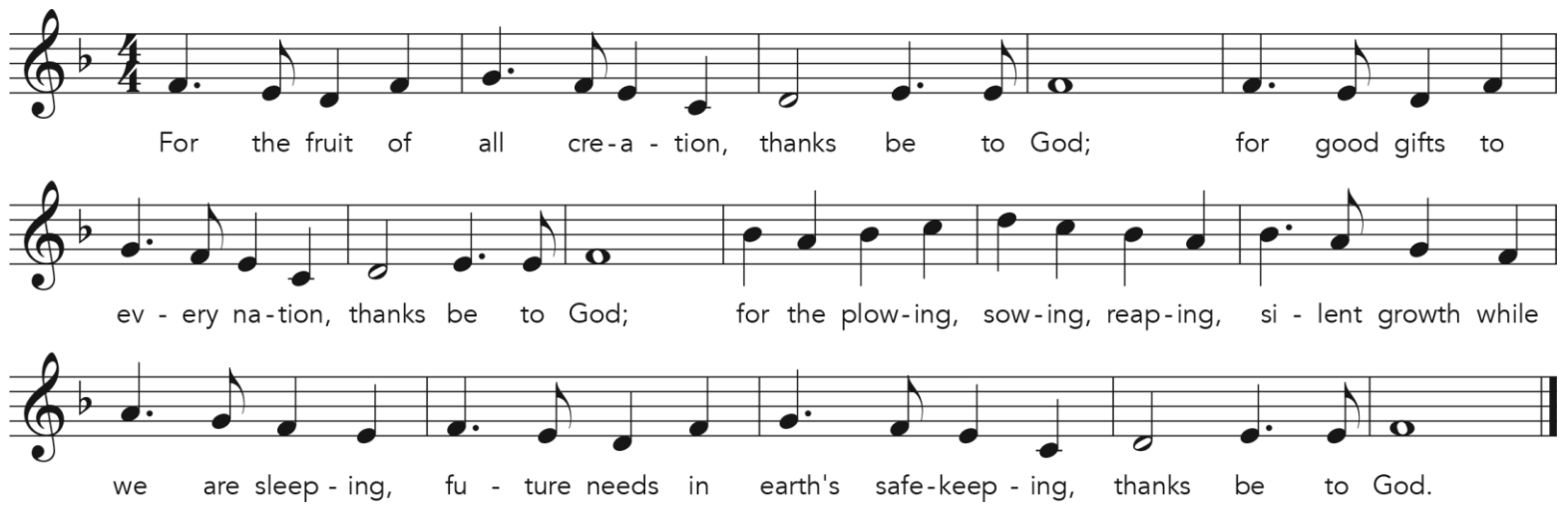
Prelude on "Gift of Finest Wheat" (Charles Callahan)

Sol M. Rizzato

Doxology 714

For the Fruit of All Creation (v.1)

AR HYD Y NOS



For the fruit of all cre-a - tion, thanks be to God; for good gifts to
 ev - ery na-tion, thanks be to God; for the plow-ing, sow-ing, reap-ing, si - lent growth while
 we are sleep - ing, fu - ture needs in earth's safe-keep - ing, thanks be to God.

The Reading Mark 4:1-20 Nathan A. Russell
 For the Word of God in its promise and covenant...
Thanks be to God!

Sermon *On the Trail of the Messiah: Sow What* Nathan A. Russell

Discipline of Silence
 "When we seek universal morals from a genre that is designed to surprise, challenge, shake up, or indict and look for a single meaning in a form that opens to multiple interpretations, we are necessarily limiting the parables and, so, ourselves. If we stop with the easy lessons, good though they may be, we lose the way Jesus's first followers would have heard the parables, and we lose the genius of Jesus's teaching. Those followers, like Jesus himself, were Jews, and Jews knew that parables were more than children's stories or restatements of common knowledge. They knew that parables and the tellers of parables were there to prompt them to see the world in a different way, to challenge, and at times to indict. We might be better off thinking less about what they "mean" and more about what they can 'do': remind, provoke, refine, confront, disturb. . . ."
–Amy-Jill Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus*

Hymn of Communion 395	<i>Seed, Scattered and Sown</i>	SEED SCATTERED
Invitation to Commune		Nathan A. Russell
Prayer at the Table		Abe Reshad
Words of Institution		Nathan A. Russell
Invitation to Discipleship		Nathan A. Russell
Hymn of Discipleship 604	<i>That Cause Can Never Be Lost or Stayed</i>	OSTERGAARD
Benediction and Charge		Nathan A. Russell
Postlude	<i>Trumpet Voluntary (Gordon Young)</i> And all the people said... AMEN!	Sol M. Rizzato

Today's artwork is *Sower at Sunset*, 1888 by Vincent Van Gogh. From <https://www.vincentvangogh.org/sower-at-sunset.jsp> "Peasant imagery and especially that of the 'Sower' was something that Van Gogh turned to numerous times throughout his career. His affiliation with this subject was partly as a response to the work of the romantic Realists such as Millet, and a reflection of his own socialist ideals. The sower in particular was a figure that Van Gogh saw in terms of representing the eternal cycle of agricultural life, of honorable endeavor and tradition, and symbolized these qualities to the artist.

The sun was also a symbolic element for Van Gogh, and in many of these paintings, it shines with an unearthly luminescence. Here he has created a great orb of light, from which short precise brushstrokes radiate outwards so that the whole sky becomes bathed in golden rags. The rest of the canvas is made up of short, quick brushstrokes that lend the ground a textured and slightly surreal feel. Barely perceptible are two crows that emerge from the fractured background, while the figure appears to be part and parcel of the land on which he works."

¹Words and Music: Bryan Jeffery Leech, 1976

²Text and Music: Seth Crissman and Greg Yoder, 2017

EVENTS THIS WEEK

Sunday, February 4

- 11:00am: Two Or More: Scripture discussion group {Gibbens Room}

Monday, February 5

- Nathan in Texas Monday-Friday
- 3:00-4:00: Worship Committee Meeting (Hybrid).

Tuesday, February 6

- 7:30am: Upper Room Devotional Hour (Zoom)

Thursday, February 8

- 10:00am: All Church Social Hour (Zoom)

Sunday, February 11: Transfiguration Sunday (and Pastor Nathan's last Sunday before sabbatical)

- Following worship, we'll gather in the Fellowship Hall to wish Pastor Nathan "bon voyage" as he begins his sabbatical on Ash Wednesday (February 14)



We are thrilled that you are worshiping God with us! Scan this QR code to register your attendance, submit a prayer request, and make a contribution.

WACC is a **Green Chalice Congregation** in covenant care of God's creation.

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