

Wednesday February 24, 2021

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Order of worship- on our website
- Time and Talent on our website
- Wednesday Service at noon thru Lent
- Theme: Listening

OPENING: Poem

I went to a lecture once—
An interfaith conversation with
interfaith leaders.
Whispers bounced off the church's
tile floors
As people shuffled into place,
Carrying hope alongside assumptions—
Mixed into pockets like loose change.
About halfway through the evening,
A young woman in a blue hijab
began speaking.
She was the youngest person on the panel,
Seated far to the left. You might almost
miss her
If you weren't paying attention;
But not here, not when she spoke.
In quiet determination she told us of fear
and persecution.
She told us of hatred and racial slurs,
Thrown at her people from car windows
like bombs.
It was a truth I did not know,
And that truth ricocheted like sunlight
through the cathedral windows,
Touching almost everyone that day.
Then a man in the back, who could
have been me—
Who has been me—
Approached the microphone and said,
"Your people are persecuted. You live in
fear. You are battered by hate.
If that is true, then why am I just now
hearing about it?
Why is your story not on the news?
Why have you not spoken up about it?"
And the air was still, partly because we held

our breath in anticipation,
And partly because the Spirit slows her
dance when we stand at the edge
of truth.
The woman in the blue hijab leaned into
the microphone
And whispered with a quiet strength that
can only come from years of practice:
“We are screaming.”
If there is one truth in my life
That unfolds again and again,
It is the need to listen.
For again and again, I will try,
with good intentions,
To act and walk with love.
But again and again, I will make mistakes.
Again and again, I will say the wrong thing.
Again and again, they will call me Peter,
And again and again, they will be right.
So again and again,
I will pray for a truth that ricochets,
For ears that will listen,
And for space to hold truth.
If people are screaming,
And to be clear—people are screaming—
I do not want to miss it.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 22:21-31

21 Save me from the mouth of the lion!
From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued me.
22 I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
23 You who fear the Lord, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
24 For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,
but heard when I cried to him.
25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.
May your hearts live forever!

27 All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.

28 For dominion belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.

29 To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.

30 Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,

31 and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

SONG: Take oh Take me as I am ELW #814 (sing 3 times)

Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am

814

Take, oh, take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be;

set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949
Music: John L. Bell
Text and music © 1995 Iona Community, admin. GIA Publications, Inc.

TAKE ME AS I AM
77 74

REFLECTION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe.

Sometimes our belief is confident, Like a child on a dance floor— Unashamed and wildly genuine.

We believe.

Sometimes our belief is distant, Flickering and calling out to us
Like a lighthouse on the sea.

We believe.

Sometimes our belief shows up as passion,
Guiding the way we vote, shop, give, live, trust, and hope.

We believe.
Sometimes our belief is like a shadow—
Faith stitched to our heels, unmovable, unlosable, A gift for winding journeys.
We believe.
Sometimes our belief exists like growing pains. We step forward. We fall back.
But again and again,
Jesus invites us to listen,
To grow, and to take another step.
So again and again,
We speak these truths out loud: We believe.
We believe.
Again and again, we believe.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

PRAYER:

Teaching God,
You remind us to avoid going through the motions on autopilot so that we can engage our faith
with our whole hearts. You're worth our whole hearts. So today I pray: Be there in my fasting.
Be there in my praying. Be there in my walking and waking. Make this journey real. Make it rich.
Make it yours. Amen.

SENDING:

God of open doors,
Open arms,
And open conversations,
We know
Deep in our souls
That you are forever inviting us in.
Again and again,
You invite us to take another step closer,
Another step deeper,
Another step further,
In this journey of faith.
So with your invitation in our hands,
We pray for strength and wisdom.
Show us the next right step in this journey.
We are here.
You are here.
This is holy ground.
May this holy Lenten journey begin
Once again.
Gratefully we pray, **Amen.**