

# The First Sunday in Lent

February 18, 2018



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America*

Dr. Ron Gonzales, Minister

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*Upon entering the sanctuary, please be sensitive  
to the congregation's preparation for worship, and please make sure  
all electronic devices are turned off or set to silent mode.*

## **-DRAWING NEAR TO GOD-**

### **Welcome and Silent Prayer**

Glorious Lord, it is the passion of our lives to worship you, the crown and glory of our souls to adore you. Enable us by your Spirit to do so now, that we may forget the world and be brought into the fullness of life as we gaze upon your beauty and holiness. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **\*Call to Worship**

Psalm 33.1-9

### **Prayer of Adoration**

### **\*Song of Praise to God**

*Hymn No. 24*

*VAST THE IMMENSITY, MIRROR OF MAJESTY*

## **-HAVING OUR HEARTS CLEANSED-**

### **Confession of Sin**

Our Father, forgive us for thinking small thoughts of you and for ignoring your immensity and greatness. Lord Jesus, forgive us when we forget that you rule the nations and our small lives. Holy Spirit, we offend you in minimizing your power and squandering your gifts. We confess that our blindness to your glory, O triune God, has resulted in shallow confession, tepid conviction, and only mild repentance. Have mercy on us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Silently Add Your Own Confession of Sin*

**Assurance of Pardon**

Isaiah 1.18

**\*Song of Praise to Christ**

*Hymn No. 156*

*O LORD, HOW SHALL I MEET YOU*

**\*Confession of Faith**

What does the law of God require?

**Personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience; that we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love our neighbor as ourselves. What God forbids should never be done and what God commands should always be done.<sup>1</sup>**

—The New City Catechism, No. 7

**Prayer for the Church and the World**

**-ATTENDING TO THE WORD-**

**Scripture Lesson**

Song of Songs 4.8-5.1

**Sermon**

*“A Foretaste of Heaven”*  
Rev. Ron Gonzales

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<sup>1</sup> And [Jesus] said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets” (Mt 22.37-40).

## \*Song of Response

### Before the Throne of God Above

C. Bancroft, V. Cook



1. Be - fore the throne of God a - bove, I have a strong, a per - fect  
2. When Sa - tan tempts me to des - pair, and tells me of the guilt with -  
3. Be - hold Him there! the ris - en Lamb, my per - fect, spot - less right - eous -



plea, a great High Priest whose name is Love, who ev - er lives and pleads for  
in, up - ward I look and see Him there who made an end to all my  
ness; the great un - change - a - ble I AM the King of glo - ry and of



me. My name is grav - en on His hands, my name is writ - ten in His  
sin. Be - cause the sin - less Sav - ior died, my sin - ful soul is count - ed  
grace. One with Him - self I can - not die, my soul is pur - chased with His



heart, I know that, while in heav'n He stands no tongue can bid me thence de -  
free. For God the Just is sat - is - fied to look on Him and par - don  
blood; My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my Sav - ior and my



part, no tongue can bid me thence de - part.  
me, to look on Him and par - don me.  
God, with Christ my Sav - ior and my God.

CCLI #2415226

## Worship of God with Tithes and Offerings

\*DOXOLOGY

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;*

*Praise Him, all creatures here below;*

*Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;*

*Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

words Thomas Ken, 1709; music Genevan Psalter, 1551; Public Domain

## **-OBSERVING THE SACRAMENT-**

### **The Lord's Supper**

We celebrate the Lord's Supper by coming forward and partaking of the bread and the cup. Wine is served in the inner ring of each tray; grape juice in the outer ring. We warmly invite to the Table all baptized Christians, who are living under the authority of Christ and his Church. By eating the bread and drinking of the cup, you are admitting that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Christ alone. If this does not describe you, we are glad you are here and commend to you the following prayers for your use during this time.

#### *A Prayer for those Searching for the Truth*

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life you promise. Amen.

#### *A Prayer of Belief*

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

#### *A Prayer for those Struggling with Sin*

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need and may turn from every false pleasure to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

### **\*Song of Thanksgiving**

*Hymn No. 693*

BLESSED ASSURANCE

## -GOING FORTH TO SERVE-

**\*Benediction**

2 Corinthians 13.14

### **Postlude and Silent Prayer**

Heavenly Father, we leave this place for a week in which busy activities and worshipful remembrance are intertwined. Teach us, even now, how to make every day a day of prayer, so that each day of our lives is filled with hope because of Jesus' death and resurrection. Amen.

\*Please stand if able.

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### **Our Nursery Helpers**

Sunday School

*Today:* Peter Early

*Next Week:* Peter Early

Worship

*Today:* Nicole Miller

*Next Week:* Sam Schroeder

### **Gatherings**

*Kids' Quest* is a catechism class for children, ages 5 through elementary grades, taught by Pastor Ron. It meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month (September through May), from 3:30 to 4:45 PM, at the church.

*The Leinweber Home Fellowship Group* is on break until March or April.

*The Martin Home Fellowship Group*, led by Eric Carpenter and Steve Davis, meets at Kathy Martin's (213 Chapra St), the first and third Thursdays of each month, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. They are studying the Song of Songs and all are welcome.

*The Men's Group* meets Wednesdays, from 6:00 to 7:30 AM, at Pastor Ron's office, for fellowship, prayer, and Bible study. The group is currently studying 2 Timothy and all are invited.

*Prayer Meeting:* We meet the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, at 6:30 PM in the sanctuary, to pray for one another, the kingdom and our world. Please join us.

## **Sermon Notes: "A Foretaste of Heaven" (Song of Songs 4.8-5.1)**

1. Smitten with Love

2. Where Gardens Thrive

## **Prayer Concerns**

*Rev. Andrew Allen* has begun a new course of chemotherapy that has shown some positive signs. His energy is returning and he is gaining weight. Pray that it has an arresting effect on the cancer, and that God continues to shower his peace on this family.

*Building Acquisition:* Pray for the leaders of Covenant and Crazy Love, as they continue to assess the building's needs and determine what would be required to move forward.

*Christ Central Presbyterian Church:* Pray for the Rev. Greg Joines, our church-planter in Corvallis, that God strengthens him and blesses the ministry of the Word, as he gives himself to the city and to the church he is planting.

*Florida Families:* Pray for comfort for the families and loved ones of those who were senselessly killed this week at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, in Parkland, Florida; and pray for us as a nation, that we wake up to the folly of thinking we can instill and expect goodness in ourselves and others apart from God.

*Bret Reller* is serving with Special Forces in the Middle East. Pray for his safety and the safety of his team, as well as for the success of their mission.

*Alister & Sarah Torrens (Kiev):* Pray for the Torrens, that God protects their marriage and family, opens doors for the gospel, and uses Alister's ministry at the seminary to strengthen the church in Ukraine and Eastern Europe.

## **Announcements**

*Birthdays this Week:*

February 19    Ena Crow

February 19    Nicole Miller

*Visitors:* Welcome to Covenant! We are glad you are here and would love to have you join us downstairs, following the service, for refreshments and a time of fellowship.

### **Explanation of Cover Symbol**

In the Greek language of the early Christian era abbreviations were typically the first and last letters of words, often with a superscription to indicate the missing letters. IC is a standard abbreviation of IHCOYC, the Greek "Jesus," XC the abbreviation of XPICTOC, "Christ"; and NIKA means "He conquers." The symbol then reads, "Jesus Christ Conquers by the Cross" or "Jesus Christ, Victor."