
Welcome, we're glad you joined us!

We welcome you to join us on a transformative journey.

Seeking God, we strive to know God and love God.

Serving others, we follow our Servant Savior to help bring fullness of life to others.

Sharing Christ's love with all, we proclaim the unconditional love of Christ filled with joy and hope.

Mary Alice Mawer, guest pianist
David Woods, liturgist

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

"Lead Us, Heavenly Father, Lead Us"
arr. Wilbur Held

CALL to WORSHIP

One: God meets us in the night –

**All: Before the sun rises,
Before the wound heals,
Before there are answers,
Before there is closure.**

Christ meets us in the light –

**Where joy is effervescent,
Where laughter is contagious,
Where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
And where people gather around the table.**

The Holy Spirit meets us at the threshold –

**At the edge of the water,
At the beginning of the wilderness,
At the start of something new,
On the edge of faith.**

And if God meets us in all those places,
Then surely God meets us in between –
Staying with us through the wilderness.

We are not alone. God is all around.

Let us worship the God of the here and now.

HYMN – *"The Glory of These Forty Days"* (vs. 1-2, 4) #165

The glory of these forty days
we celebrate with songs of praise;
for Christ, by whom all things were made,
himself has fasted and has prayed.

Alone and fasting Moses saw
the loving God who gave the law;
and to Elijah, fasting, came
the steeds and chariots of flame.

Then grant that we like them be true,
consumed in fast and prayer with you;
our spirits strengthen with your grace,
and give us joy to see your face.

PRAYER of CONFESSION

God who meets us where we are –

There is nowhere we can go that you are not.

**You were with Jesus at his baptism.
You were with him in the wilderness,
And even in between, you were there,
Saying aloud, "This is my beloved."**

We know that you are with us too –

In the good, the bad, and everything in between –

But so often we act like we are alone.

**Instead of coming to you with our hurt,
We hold it in or cast it onto others.
Instead of coming to you with our joy,
We credit ourselves and offer you nothing.**

How can we long for a deeper relationship with you

While living like you are nowhere to be found?

**Forgive our self-centered ways.
Remind us that in every breath,
in every step, you are there.**

You are the God who meets us where we are.

**Before and behind, above and below, within and
around. Amen.**

ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

Family of faith, if you hear nothing else today, hear this:

Christ is here. God sees you. God knows you.

Jesus meets you at the edge of every new beginning,
And God calls you beloved.

We are washed by the water.

We are called beloved.

Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

A TIME with YOUNG DISCIPLES

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

UNISON PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

Holy God, If we are honest,

faith often feels like water in our hands.

**No matter how hard we try to hold onto it,
some of it always slips through –**

**Like droplets of truth running down my wrists,
back toward our hearts.**

This human inability to hold onto you

leaves us thirsty for more.

So as we prepare to read scripture,

We pray that once again, you would meet us here.

Gratefully we pray,

Amen.

SCRIPTURE

In the beginning was the Word

And the Word was with God.

A reading from Psalm Mark 1:9-15

For the Word of God in scripture,

for the Word of God among us,

for the Word of God within us.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON *"Again & Again: Strengthening Our Knowledge of God"*
Pastor Lawrence

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

HYMN – *"Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"* (vs. 1, 3-6) #687

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home:

Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received its frame,
from everlasting thou art God,
to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight
are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night
before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guard while life shall last,
and our eternal home.

AFFIRMATION of FAITH –

The Second Helvetic Confession (excerpts)

Q. What is faith?

A. **Christian faith is not an opinion or human conviction,
but a most firm trust and a clear and steadfast
assent of the mind, and then a most certain
apprehension of the truth of God presented in the
Scriptures and in the Apostles' Creed, and thus also
of God himself, the greatest good, and especially of
God's promise and of Christ who is the fulfilment of
all promises.**

Q. What is the Church?

A. **The Church is an assembly of the faithful
called or gathered out of the world;
a communion, I say, of all saints, namely,
of those who truly know and rightly worship
and serve the true God in Christ the Savior,
by the Word and Holy Spirit,
and who by faith are partakers of all benefits
which are freely offered through Christ.**

Citizens of one commonwealth, they are all citizens of the one city, living under the same Lord, under the same laws, and in the same fellowship of all good things. For the apostle calls them "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19), calling the faithful on earth saints (I Cor. 4:1).

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE and LORD'S PRAYER (sins...sin)

MUSIC for OUR OFFERING "O Come, Let Us Worship"
Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdi | Aaron Garner, soloist

Click here <https://onrealm.org/oxfordpresbychurch/-/give/now> to give online

PRAYER of DEDICATION

HYMN – "You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord" #43
(vs. 1 & 4)

You dwell in the shelter of the Lord,
who abide in his shadow for life,
say to the Lord, "My refuge,
my rock in whom I trust!"

Refrain
And he will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of his hand.

For to his angels he's given a command
to guard you in all of your ways;
upon their hands they will bear you up,
lest your dash your foot against a stone.
refrain

BLESSING

**Step by careful step,
we journey through Lent led by the Holy Spirit.
For this time of worship has filled –
our hearts with story,
our mouths with prayer, and
our breath with song. Amen.**

POSTLUDE "O Lord, throughout These Forty Days"
arr. David P. Dahl

The flowers on the left are given by Sue Wilson in memory of David Wilson and David Griffing. They shared a birthday on February 23rd.

The flowers on the right are given by Larry and Kathy Hardy in celebration of their 56th wedding anniversary and for their wonderful family.

Congregational Concerns: Betty Barnhart, Jim Baer, Rodger Cromer, John Curry, Bob Douglass, Nancy Gates, Genee Hesse, Ruth Miller, Jan Reinhart, Sarah Soika, John Woodruff.

Email congregational concerns to Judy Fisher, fisherrh@miamioh.edu, or contact the church office.

MINISTRY NEWS

Fellowship in the Virtual Molyneaux Lounge – Join us following the Congregational Meeting at this [link](#) on Zoom.

Lenten Creation Care Podcast Series – Podcasts are a great way to explore new ideas. This Lent, our Christian Education Committee teamed up with our Caring for Creation team to develop a series of "Caring for Creation" podcasts. Each week, you are invited to listen to one of the podcasts linked [HERE](#) and then join members of our Caring for Creation team on Sundays on Zoom starting at 11:45 am for a coffee hour discussion of the week's listening.

Information for Zoom Meetings is [here](#) (please scroll to bottom of document for more information)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89958739600?pwd=enVzaExRUGxOTIR1Q0kwbWFHYVNJQT09>

Worldchanging 101 at Youth Group – Youth Group will be meeting in the seminary building this Sunday evening at 6:30 p.m. Our 6-week book study of "Worldchanging 101" by David LaMotte continues with Chapter 9, "Community." The book is available in both paperback and Kindle form. Masks and facial coverings are required, and there will be temperature checks at the door. If you would like for the church to provide you with a physical copy of the book, please [contact Pastor Marc](#).

Lenten Reflections – In Lent, we're reminded that, again and again, we hold hope together throughout the Journey to Jerusalem. We need the 40 days of Lent because this season shapes us into more faithful disciples.

Each Wednesday throughout Lent, members of the OPC Staff will be offering individual messages of hope on our YouTube channel and social media pages.

Join us this Lent as again and again, we bring all of who we are to Christ and trust that God will meet us with hope, time and again, along the way.

OPW's Honored Woman Award – As we anxiously anticipate the arrival of spring in 2021, we are again seeking from our congregation nominations for the Honored Woman's Award. We wish to recognize that person who has given faithfully and selflessly to the betterment, growth and outreach of OPC. Please nominate by means of a letter indicating the contributions made to the church as a whole.

Letters must be received by February 28 to Susan King (Kingsusanhenkins@gmail.com) or Becky Quay (Quayrh@miamioh.edu) to be considered. Thank you.

Oxford Presbyterian Church
for a full ministry calendar, please visit:
<https://oxfordpresbychurch.org/calendar/>
Lawrence Bartel, Pastor ~ Marc van Bulck, Associate Pastor
Kent Peterson, Music Director ~ Lynn Jacobs, Organist

The First Sunday in Lent



Sunday, February 21, 2021



**Oxford
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