# Shining from Within

"People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within."

These words from Elizabeth Kubler-Ross seem so appropriate for the beautiful glass windows that grace our beloved church building. On a sunny morning the colors of the images that sit in each section of the two windows shine as bright as the sun itself.

After several years of pondering how to replace our very large and weakened old plexiglass windows, an angel of sorts appeared and suggested that colorful blocks of glass resembling images that reflected our congregation was a possible solution.

In 1966, Chicago First Church of the Brethren hosted community meetings with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who had come to Chicago as part of the Chicago Freedom Movement. The congregation opened the church to him which left a lasting impact on us.

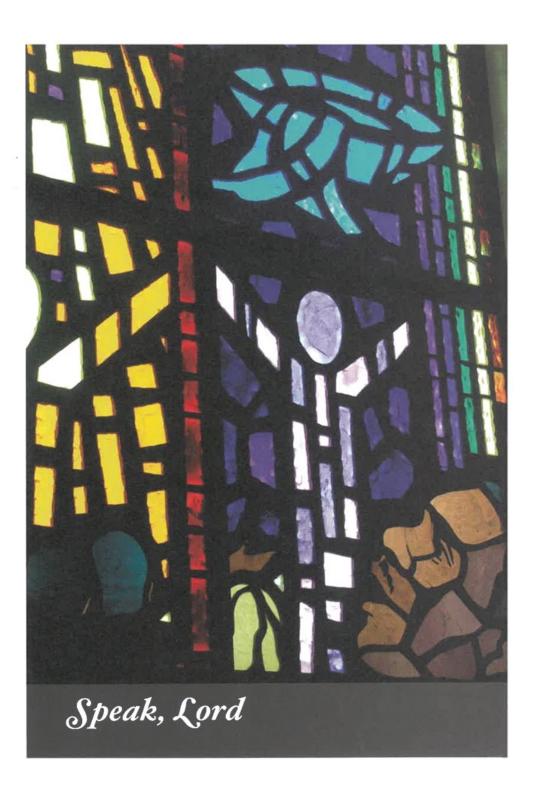
Twenty-five years ago the congregation came together with the windows architect and decided on a design that reflects the faith of the church and our history and community values. The images of Dr. King, children, and faith symbols remind the congregation of what a witness of peace, justice, and love means in our spiritual journey.

We were confident that these new windows would inspire us. But we had not anticipated how the world beyond our walls would experience these beautiful windows. In the darkness of night, as one drives along the expressway next to our building or passes by on the sidewalk, a little light shines from inside our church revealing the beauty that exists in the hearts of our people and the neighborhood.

-Mary Scott-Boria Chicago, Illinois

"Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening." So Samuel went and lay down in his place." (1 Samuel 3:9, NRSVue). Today's Bible readings from the lectionary: 1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51.

January 14, 2024, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Photo by Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford © Church of the Brethren. Living Word Bulletin Series © 2024 Brethren Press. Printed in the USA.



#### CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Hagerstown, Maryland

## MORNING WORSHIP

10:45 AM

January 14, 2024

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN GOD?

"Praise to the Living God" (Ritter)

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

**PRELUDE** 

Robin Davies, Worship Leader

Have you heard of our great God? He created all that is and reigns over it all. He rules with justice and mercy.

Have you heard of our great God? He is full of glory and his ways are perfect. No one can match his wisdom and understanding.

Have you heard of our great God? He knows each name and sees each person -- his love for us is unequaled. We belong to him and he calls us his own.

Come, now, and worship our great God, for he is worthy of all honor and glory and praise.

\*HYMN #37

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

[Verse 1]

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!

O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!

All ye who hear, now to God's temple draw near. Join me in glad adoration.

[Verse 2]

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth, shelters thee under his wings, yea, so gently sustaineth. Hast thou not seen how thy heart's wishes have been granted in what he ordaineth?

[Verse 3]

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee.

Surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend thee.

Ponder anew what the Almighty can do, as with his love he befriends thee.

[Verse 4]

Praise to the Lord, oh, let all that is in me adore him!

All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!

Let the "amen" sound from God's people again; gladly forever adore him.

### \*OPENING PRAYER

All-knowing God, We gather together with praise and thanksgiving for who You are, and for all that You have done for us. You know us better than we know ourselves—all our thoughts and actions—and yet You love us. No matter where we go or what we do, Your love encircles us—ahead and behind—gently leading and guiding and blessing. We praise You for Your love and Your faithful presence in our lives. May Your Spirit move in our hearts and minds as we worship together—examine our attitudes and actions, lay bare the things we need to confess, challenge us with Your Word, and guide us on to paths that lead to life. For we are Your people, called by Your name. Amen.

## A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

#### SERVICE OF GIVING

## Call to Giving

We have been bought with a price. God has made a costly investment in humanity. For love's sake, God sent Christ among us. For love's sake, we make the offering of ourselves and our resources the high point of our worship.

We joyfully give as one body, both gathered in his house of worship and gathered through virtual technology. We give by placing our offerings in the plate, mailing to or dropping off at the church, or using Paypal. Together, as we give, we declare our dedication to Jesus and our obedience to serve him.

Offertory "Winter's Song" (Simone)
\*Response #119 "Doxology"

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We have heard you calling us, loving God, in the cries of your children – cries for bread, for justice, for relief. We have seen you beckoning to us amid the corporate greed and social distortions of our day. We have felt the pain of sisters and brothers caught up in damaging relationships that violate your holy temple within them. We want to help, and we believe your church can be Christ's healing presence for them. Show us the way to be messengers of your gentle judgment and powerful good news. May our offerings be used for the transformation of church and society, individuals and groups. Amen.

MORNING ANTHEM "The Lone, Wild Bird" (Johnson)
Temple Choir

## SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

Please remember our worship is also on Facebook Live and our website.

Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public.

An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN #556

"Lord, thou hast searched me"

[Verse 1]

Lord, thou hast searched me and dost know where'er I rest, where'er I go. Thou knowest all that I have planned, and all my ways are in thy hand.

[Verse 2]

My words from thee I cannot hide; I feel thy pow'r on ev'ry side – oh, wondrous knowledge, awful might, unfathomed depths, unmeasured height!

[Verse 3]

Where can I go apart from thee, or whither from thy presence flee? In heav'n? it is thy dwelling fair. In death's abode? lo, thou art there.

[Verse 4]

If I the wings of morning take, and far away my dwelling make, the hand that leadeth me is thine, and my support thy pow'r divine.

[Verse 5]

If deepest darkness cover me, the darkness hideth not from thee. To thee both night and day are bright; the darkness shineth as the light.

## **RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE READING #823**

Psalm 139:1-18

One: O Lord, you have searched me and you know me.

All: You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

One: You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with

all my ways.

All: Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.

One: You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.

All: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

One: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

All: If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

One: If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

All: even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

One: If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

All: even the darkness will not be dark to you; for the light will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

One: For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

All: I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

One: My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body.

All: All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

One: How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

All: Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you.

MESSAGE "The Creator Knows" Pastor Twyla Rowe

\*HYMN #553 "I am weak and I need thy strength"

[Verse 1]

I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r to help me over my weakest hour. Help me through the darkness thy face to see. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Chorus]

Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray. Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Verse 2]

Help me tread in the paths of righteousness. Be my aid when Satan and sin oppress. I am putting all my trust in thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

## [Chorus]

Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray. Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me. [Verse 3]

I am lost if you take your hand from me. I am blind without thy light to see.

Lord, just always let me thy servant be. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Chorus]

Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray. Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

## \*BENEDICTION

After the Benediction, you may be seated.

Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.

\*POSTLUDE

"Walking With the Master"

(Smith)

\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship Thank you for joining us in worship today.

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