

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JANUARY 28, 2018

4TH SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY



GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

WELCOME

As the welcome pads are passed down your aisle, please help us to celebrate your worshipping with us today by signing the register.

PRELUDE

My Lord, What a Morning

Johannes Michel

A Thought as You Prepare for Worship

*"Coming out of the dark, I finally see the light now.
It's shining on me
Coming out of the dark I know the love that saved me
You're sharing with me." — Gloria Estefan*

INTROIT

Breathe on Us, Breath of God

R. Jackson

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In this season of Epiphany, God calls us

to leave our comfortable lives, to journey into that unknown, yet strangely certain, land called faith.

On sleepless nights, in fear's shadows, we toss and turn with doubt's questions,

Today's cover art is the stained glass window "Nicodemus' visit," by artists of Stained Glass, Inc. of Greenville, Texas.

*An asterisk * indicates that you are invited to stand in body or in Spirit as you feel led and are able. Please join in on the liturgy printed in **bold italics**.*

hoping, like Nicodemus, to find Jesus and to listen willingly to his responses.

In this winter season, we long to follow Jesus,
wherever he may go, wherever he may lead, just like Nicodemus, and so, so many others. Let our following begin here, in our worship and praise.

*HYMN

Purple, No. 314

Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness

*OPENING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR NEED OF GRACE

We want to celebrate our goodness, and all the good we do, but you do not want to hear it, Generous Grace. You know how easily we slip off the paths you will for us when we come near the distractions of the world. We are sometimes more comfortable in the shadows of doubt, than basking in the warm sun of trust. Forgive us, and fill us with new faith, Keeper of all hearts. If we will but listen to you, we will learn your ways. Help us learn your ways, so that we proclaim the good news with our lives, and bear witness to the One who came to save not only us, but all the world—Jesus Christ, our Brother, Savior and Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF RESTORATION

Let us lift up our eyes! God loves the world, loves you and me, so much that Jesus came to grace us with life.

Our hope comes from God, who lifts us up when faith has fallen, to place us on the Way of Peace and Grace and Truth. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*RESPONSE

O God, You Are My God

Purple, No. 743

*SHARING THE PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Today's version of the Lord's Prayer can be found in the Purple Hymnal on page 35 and uses "debts" and "debtors."

This week in Sunday School Northminster's youngest will be learning about Jesus' cleansing of 10 lepers.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

HYMN OF PREPARATION Verse 1, Purple, No. 286
Breathe on Me, Breath of God

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Lord of light, shine upon us and through us. Revealing Spirit, bring yourself closer to us in your Word as we hear it read and proclaimed. Use this time and use us to accomplish your good will. Amen

ANTHEM *God So Loved the World* J. Stainer

SERMON READING John 3: 1-21 NT, pp. 93-94
This is the word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

SERMON *Coming Out of the Dark*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*HYMN *In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness* Purple, No. 850

STATEMENT OF FAITH
Apostle's Creed (Ecumenical) Purple, Page 17

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

RESPONSE Verse 3, Purple, No. 286
Breathe on Me, Breath of God

SHARING OUR LIFE AND MINISTRY

WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING

Call to Offering

Offertory *Let the Peace of Christ* Molly Ijames

*Response *Doxology* Purple, No. 607

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of grace and glory, you have enriched our lives with so many gifts, the greatest of these being Jesus the Christ. He taught us how to enrich the lives of others with a love expressed in practical and caring ways. We offer these funds and the service of our lives as evidence of his love alive in us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The third chapter of John, which begins with Jesus' meeting with Nicodemus, is considered by many to be one of the most liturgically significant chapters in the New Testament. In it you will find some of the most well-known passages in all of the 4th Gospel.

The simple and stirring "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" had an unlikely composer, Rev. Edwin Hatch. Hatch was a British scholar in biblical Greek and a theologian who served as a theology professor at Trinity College in Toronto and a classics professor at Morrin College in Quebec City. After returning to Britain, his family became very close to the writer Lewis Carroll.

