

The Gayton Kirk

January 25, 2026

11 AM Service



"The Olive Trees" by Vincent Van Gogh

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Mary Kay Scott

RINGING THE HOUR

Marney Titmus

PRELUDE

Margaret Storti, piano

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Mary Kay Scott

We gather at the threshold, between what has been and what is still unfolding.

We gather carrying stories of journey and loss, hope and fear, courage and uncertainty.

We come trusting that God meets us not only in settled places,

but on the road, at the border, in the in-between.

Come, let us worship the God who walks with us wherever we go
and calls us into faithfulness together.

Let us worship God!

HYMN # 451

“Open My Eyes That I May See”

Margaret Storti, piano

CONFSSION and ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Linda Smiley

Faithful God, we confess that change unsettles us. When the future feels uncertain, we cling tightly to what feels familiar. We confess that fear sometimes shapes our choices more than love. We admit that we turn away from those whose journeys are different from our own. We struggle to welcome the stranger, to listen before judging, to trust that your Spirit is at work beyond our comfort zones. Forgive us for the ways we close our hearts, harden our boundaries, and forget that we, too, are travelers on a road we did not choose. Help us follow you with open hearts.

Lord, hear now the confessions that silence draws from our hearts...

IMAGINATIVE WORD

“Kindness” by Naomi Shihab Nye (1952)

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth.
What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.

Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.

Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.
Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to gaze at bread,
only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
It is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you everywhere
like a shadow or a friend.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION AND SCRIPTURE READING

Tina Bechtle

Ruth 1: 6-22

⁶ When Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. ⁷ With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah. ⁸ Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me. ⁹ May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.” Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud ¹⁰ and said to her, “We will go back with you to your people.” ¹¹ But Naomi said, “Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? ¹² Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons— ¹³ would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord’s hand has turned against me!” ¹⁴ At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

¹⁵ “Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.” ¹⁶ But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.” ¹⁸ When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her. ¹⁹ So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?” ²⁰ “Don’t call me Naomi,” she told them. “Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. ²¹ I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.” ²² So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Mary Kay Scott

HYMN # 214

“You Are My Refuge, Faithful God”

Margaret Storti, piano

CALL TO OFFERING

Janice Baldwin

We are invited to respond to God with our time, talents, and money. Your offering can be placed in the offering plate along with prayer concerns written on the card attached to the bulletin.

Financial offerings can also be made by mail to P.O. Box 29635, Henrico, VA 23242 or donate by PayPal on The Kirk’s website www.thegaytonkirk.org website or scan the QR code.



OFFERTORY HYMN

Margaret Storti, piano

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Hannah Terrell

HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Mary Kay Scott

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise. O God, of every journey and every home. You created the world in love and called your people to walk with you through wilderness and promise, exile and return, loss and new beginnings. You have always been the God who goes before your people, meeting them on the road, dwelling among those who wander, and making room for those who seek refuge and rest. In every age, you have drawn near to the vulnerable and the displaced, to those living in fear or uncertainty, reminding them that they are not forgotten and never alone.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the faithful of every time and place, and with all creation singing:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Tune: Tracy Fedke, b. 1975 arr: Koiné

The musical score consists of six staves of music in common time with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are written in italics below the corresponding musical lines. The lyrics are:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God __ of heav-en - ly hosts.
Ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God __ of heav-en - ly hosts.
Heav-en and earth are full __ of your glo - ry. Ho-san - na! __
Ho - san - na! Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na! __
Ho - san - na! __ Bless-ed is he __ who comes! Bless-ed is he __ who comes!
Bless-ed is he __ who comes __ in the name of the Lord! __

Pastor continues in prayer

Hear us now as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

COMMUNION IS SHARED

You are invited to come forward to receive a piece of gluten-free bread and a cup of juice. We are invited to drink the cup together after all are served.

COMMUNION HYMN # 509

“All Who Hunger Gather Gladly”

Margaret Storti, piano

HYMN # 450

“Be Thou My Vision”

Margaret Storti, piano

BLESSING AND CHARGE

Rev. Mary Kay Scott

POSTLUDE

Margaret Storti, piano

WORSHIP NOTES

Would you like to become a member of the Gayton Kirk? Please let us know of your interest by contacting the church office.

For a copy of our weekly newsletter, *Kirk Happenings*, please go to thegaytonkirk.org, scroll down the website's front page, and click the box that says, "Kirk Happenings." You can also find our weekly calendar in the Kirk Happenings or online at <https://thegaytonkirk.org/calendar/>

COVER ART “The Olive Trees” by Vincent van Gogh | [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olive_Trees_\(Van_Gogh_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olive_Trees_(Van_Gogh_series))#

LITURGY <https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>

IMAGINATIVE WORD “Kindness” by Naomi Shihab Nye | <https://poets.org/poet/naomi-shihab-nye>

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