The Gayton Kirk

November 22, 2026 **11 AM Service**



"Homeless Jesus" Sculpture by Timothy Schmalz

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley

RINGING THE HOUR Debbie Mueller

PRELUDE Madeline Clore, piano

**Please rise in body or spirit*

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness! Come into God's presence with singing!
Know this! The Lord is God!
We are God's people, and the sheep of God's pasture.
So, enter God's gates with thanksgiving, and come into the sanctuary with praise.
Let us give thanks to God and bless God's holy name.
For the Lord is good; God's steadfast love endures forever!
God's faithfulness is for all generations!
Come, let us worship God!

***HYMN # 25** "O Lord, Our God, How Excellent" Madeline Clore, piano

CONFESSION and ASSURANCE OF PARDON Marion Brown

This is a holy time and a holy place set aside for holy people; yet what makes us holy is not our perfection, it is Christ's. Every sin that is found outside of the church is found inside of it. The only difference is that here we acknowledge our sin and lay it before the one who has the power and authority to redeem us. Trusting in the promise that God is for us, let us confess our sins together:

Almighty God, you are God of all creation, from beginning to end. All authority and power to direct the ways of the world are in your hands. Yet you saw fit to outfit humankind with the same freedom to choose and act that you have. We thank you for this power, but confess we often misuse it. We choose to do the things we know not to do. We take advantage, even as we sense our conscience pulling us away from what is wrong. We deny our own agency and ignore the sufferings and injustices of the world when we should be working to make a change. Forgive us, Merciful God, of our shallowness of heart and slowness of action. Fill us with the Spirit of Christ, the advocate for the least among us, that we be empowered to do justly, love kindness and walk humbly before you. Through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. So believe the Good News: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Amen.

IMAGINATIVE WORD Marion Brown

"How the Great Guest Came" by Edwin Markham

Before the cathedral in grandeur rose
At Ingelburg where the Danube goes;
Before its forest of silver spire
Went airily up to the clouds and fires;
Before the oak had ready a beam,
While yet the arch was stone and dream —

There where the altar was later laid,
Conrad the cobbler, plied his trade.
It happened one day at the year's white end —
Two neighbors called in on their old-time friend;
And they found the shop, so meager and mean,
Made gay with a hundred boughs of green.
Conrad was stitching with face ashine,
But suddenly stopped as he twitched a twine:
"Old friends, good news! At dawn today,
As the cocks were scaring the night away,
The Lord appeared in a dream to me,
And said, `I am coming your Guest to be!'
So I've been busy with feet astir,
Strewing the floor with branches of fir.
The wall is washed and the shelf is shined,
And over the rafter the holly twined.
He comes today, and the table is spread
With milk and honey and wheaten bread."
His friends went home; and his face grew still
As he watched for the shadow across the sill.
He lived all the moments o'er and o'er,
When the Lord should enter the lowly door —
The knock, the call, the latch pulled up,
The lighted face, the offered cup.
He would wash the feet where the spikes had been,
He would kiss the hands where the nails went in,
And then at the last would sit with Him
And break the bread as the day grew dim.
While the cobbler mused there passed his pane
A beggar drenched by the driving rain.
He called him in from the stony street
And gave him shoes for his bruised feet.
The beggar went and there came a crone,
Her face with wrinkles of sorrow sown.
A bundle of faggots bowed her back,
And she was spent with the wrench and rack.
He gave her his loaf and steadied her load
As she took her way on the weary road.
Then to his door came a little child,
Lost and afraid in the world so wild,
In the big, dark world. Catching it up,
He gave it the milk in the waiting cup,
And led it home to its mother's arms,
Out of the reach of the world's alarms.

The day went down in the crimson west
And with it the hope of the blessed Guest,
And Conrad sighed as the world turned gray:
“Why is it, Lord, that your feet delay?
Did you forget that this was the day?”
Then soft in the silence a Voice he heard:
“Lift up your heart, for I have kept my word.
Three times I came to your friendly door;
Three times my shadow was on your floor.
I was the beggar with the bruised feet;
I was the woman you gave to eat;
I was the child on the homeless street!”

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Tina Bechtle

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh upon your people gathered here today. Allow the fulness of your power, your majesty, your authority and your righteousness to fill this moment. Stir something up in us. Shake us from our reverie. Convict us of the truth we need to hear. And if we have asked you for too little, we pray you do something beyond what we can ever ask or even imagine. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING Tina Bechtle

Matthew 25: 31-46

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of
his glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as
a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, 33 and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the
goats at the left. 34 Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my
Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, 35 for I was hungry and
you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed
me, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you
visited me.’ 37 Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave
you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? 38 And when was it that we saw you a stranger and
welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? 39 And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and
visited you?’ 40 And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of
these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’ 41 Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You
who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, 42 for I was
hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and
you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not
visit me.’ 44 Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger
or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?’ 45 Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you,
just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ 46 And these will go away
into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life.”

SERMON "The Least of These" Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley

***HYMN # 692** "Spirit Open My Heart" Madeline Clore, piano

CALL TO OFFERING Janice Baldwin

The Apostle Paul declared that God loves a cheerful giver. Though God has all authority, and every right to levy a tax and demand a portion of what we have, God instead invites us to choose for ourselves how we will respond to the grace and the providence we have received. So whether we have much to give or much to receive, let us joyfully celebrate this offering.

We are invited to respond to God with our time, talents, and money.
Your offering can be placed in the offering plate long with prayers 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 or scan the QR code.

OFFERTORY Madeline Clore, piano

***DOXOLOGY # 606** Madeline Clore, piano

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (IN UNISON)** Janice Baldwin

Almighty God, all that we have comes from you, and we give thee but thine own. Bless now these gifts, that the reign of Christ may become manifest, and so that the fulness of Christ's glory may be revealed in the life and ministry of your church. Through Christ, in Christ, and with Christ we pray: Amen.

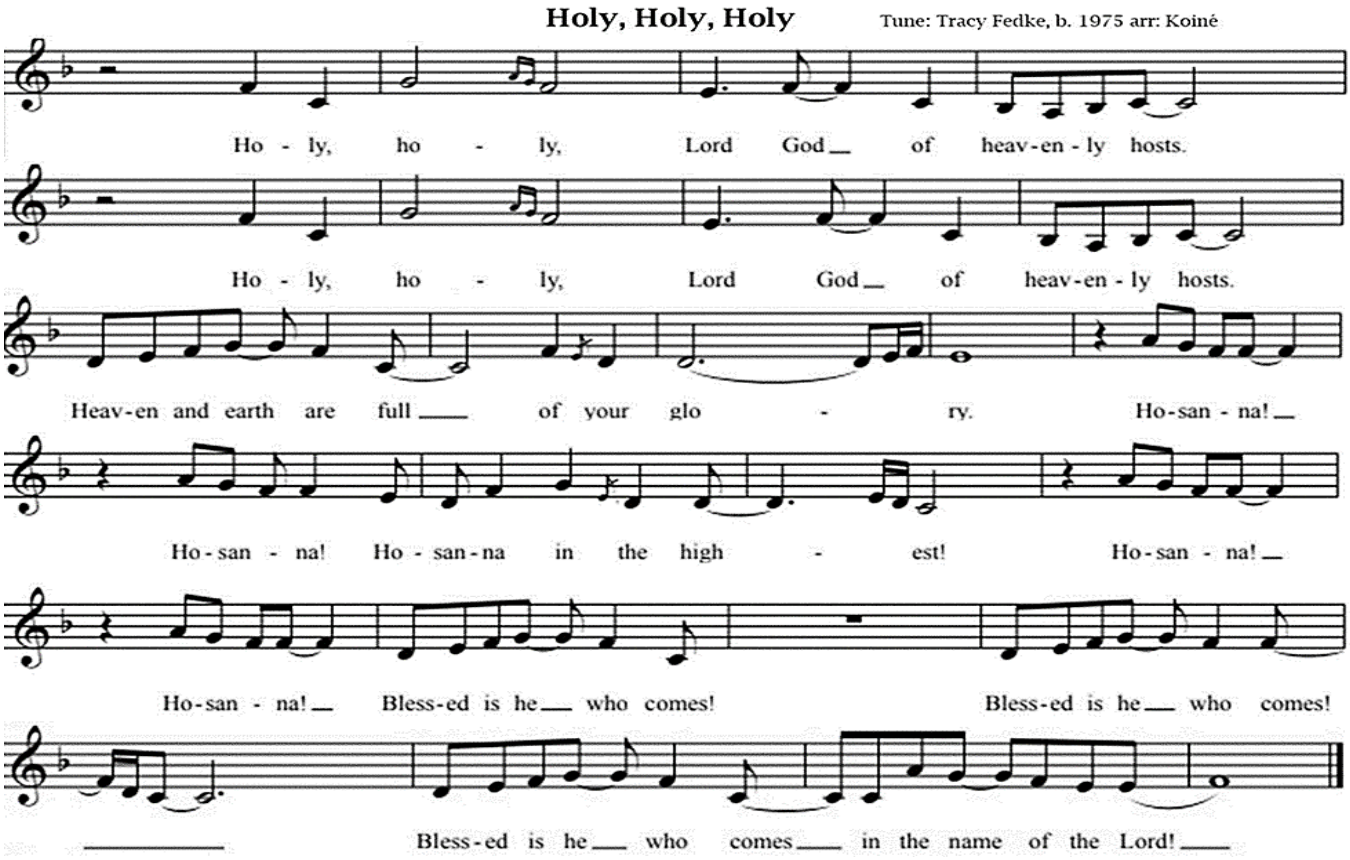
HOLY COMMUNION Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley

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.

We give you thanks and praise, O God –
For the glory and joy of creation
For the work of reconciliation
For the promise of love eternal
And for those who walk with us.
So we offer you the words of a song
Sung by angels and saints
Joining our voices to the great cloud of witnesses as we say these words:



Blessed are you, O God;
Blessed is your Son, Jesus, our host at this table.
Blessed is your Spirit, who settles in us and among us,
And within these gifts of bread and cup, transforming them,
Making them sacred, and filling not for our bodies but for our souls.
So with gratitude and praise we come to your table, ready to be filled, ready to be sent out, ready to be your people in the world.

Prayers of the People

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION IS SHARED

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

COMMUNION MUSIC

CLOSING PRAYER		Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley
***HYMN # 123**	"It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"	Madeline Clore, piano
***BLESSING AND CHARGE**		Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley

POSTLUDE

(During the postlude, meditate and pray about your worship experience today)

WORSHIP NOTES

We welcome all to worship today. If you are visiting and would like to know about the Gayton Kirk, please be in touch with the pastor or any member.

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 "Homeless Jesus" Sculpture by Timothy Schmalz
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22Homeless_Jesus%22_Sculpture_by_Timothy_Schmalz,_Nelson_Mandela_Place,_Glasgow.jpg

LITURGY Presbyterian Outlook

IMAGINATIVE WORD "How the Great Guest Came" by Edwin Markham
https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/how-great-guest-came

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The Gayton Kirk Presbyterian Church
Mail to: P.O. Box 29635, Henrico, VA 23242
Physical Address: 11421 Gayton Road, Henrico, VA
gaytonkirk@gmail.com 804-741-5254