Celtic Worship

The **bodhrán** is a frame drum of Irish origin. A goatskin head is tacked to one side (synthetic heads or other animal skins are sometimes used). The other side is open-ended for one hand to be placed against the inside of the drumhead to control the pitch and timbre. One or two crossbars, sometimes removable, may be inside. The bodhrán is considered to be the native drum of the ancient Celts and was possibly used originally for winnowing or wool dying, with a musical history that predated Christianity, native to southwest Ireland. It is also called a poor man's tambourine.



Embracing the example of Jesus,
our welcome knows no boundaries
and is extended to ALL people.

November 22, 2026

Welcome to worship!
If you are worshipping at home, and would like to participate in Holy Communion,
please have bread and wine or juice set aside.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley
Keith Parkhouse *(has set the table)*

We gather at God's feast. We listen to Holy Scripture. We hear music that connects our hearts. We are fed the nurturing grace of God through the brokenness and poured out life of Jesus the Christ. The table is set. All are welcome.

PRELUDE # 692 "Spirit, Open My Heart" Hymns Made Fresh

BODHRAN CALL TO WORSHIP

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rusty Deyerle

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!

BAPTISMAL WATERS

Rusty Deyerle
Nancy Parkhouse

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God, we too might walk in newness of life. *(Water is poured into the font.)*

IMAGINATIVE WORD

Nancy Parkhouse

"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!"

~ moment of silence ~

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Bland Weaver

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

Bland Weaver

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."

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Reflection and Discussion

Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley

Special Music # 123

"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

Hymns Made Fresh

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:

Sanctus (please see the screen)

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 receive a piece of gluten-free bread and a cup of juice as they are passed. Please hold the cup until all are served. We will drink the cup together.

Prayer After Communion

Extinguishing the Light — Rusty Deyerle

Lord of all light, as we go forth into the world,
we extinguish the lights here that
represent the presence of the Holy in our midst.
But we will carry the light in our hearts,
and we pray that as we go about our work in the world,
we will shine with the love of God.

Blessing — Rev. Dr. Rebekah Motley

Offering

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.com or scan the QR code.

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.

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worship notes

PRELUDE "Spirit, Open My Heart" by Hymns Made Fresh
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RN-4ru2dE28&list=RDRN-4ru2dE28&start_radio=1

LITURGY Presbyterian Outlook

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

SPECIAL MUSIC "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" by Hymns Made Fresh
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4T721TOrtZg&list=RD4T721TOrtZg&start_radio=1

We have received permission form Hymns Made Fresh to use his repertoire.

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What is going on in the larger context:

- The Gospel of Matthew, along with the rest of the Bible, has been considered sacred text by the Christian Religion since at least 325 AD (This is when the Council of Nicaea met to "put into writing" what the official Christian religion would be. However, these beliefs had already been in circulation for hundreds of years at that point.)

- A sacred text is any writing that a religious tradition venerates, holds as authoritative, or turns to for spiritual guidance, moral laws, and insight into ultimate reality.

- Sacred texts, or Scripture should be used to provide a framework of understanding. They should also be discerned together in community and informed by scholarship. At the very least, they should be respected for their deep, rich history. We may not agree with them, but we can learn from them.

- This parable of the Sheep and Goats is the third of three eschatological parables in Matthew 25. It should be understood as Jesus urging the disciples to live into their faith. Last week's parable told us that we would be held accountable for our actions. This week's parable tells us what those actions should be.

Who is the original audience and what would they have understood:

- This is Jesus' final discourse before his arrest. These parables act as a final emphasis of Jesus' earthly teachings. If the Sermon on the Mount as Jesus' thesis statement, this is his closing argument: There will come a time when believers will be judged by how they acted out their faith.

- Once again, we see a group being divided into two categories: sheep and goats. However, we are not told how many folks are in which category.

What sources are being used:

- Throughout the Gospel of Matthew there is an idea of eternal punishment, an outer darkness, etc. This is not original or unique to Matthew. Jesus, along with the Gospel writers, were deeply informed and shaped by their Jewish faith. It was their context, and we cannot take them out of it. In that context, and I would also argue that in the context of most major world religions, there is an idea that God has given humanity 'marching orders' and if we fail in following those marching orders, we will be held accountable for that. However, the modern concept of hell should not be read into this passage.

What words or phrases should we understand:

- *toutōn tōn adelphōn mou elachistōn* translated to "the least of these who are my brothers and sisters" is an echo of Matthew's language referring to the community of believers: (*adelphoi*; 5:22–24, 47; 7:3–5; 12:46–50; 18:15, 21, 35; 23:8; 28:10) and "little ones" (*mikroi*; 10:42–44; 18:6, 10, 14)