



ANAHEIM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

March 14, 2021

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## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

You are encouraged to join us in lighting a candle in your home as the service begins.

### CHORAL INTROIT

*What Wondrous Love is This?*

arr. Lloyd Larson

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Before we were born, before we took our first breath,  
**Before this week began, before this unprecedented year started,**  
Before we said, “I love you” or “I’m sorry,”  
**Before we figured out who we really are, or who we want to be,**  
Before it all— God loved us.  
**Unconditionally, freely, fully and honestly—**  
God loved us. Again and again, this is where our story begins.  
**Let us worship God!**

### **HYMN NO.353 (vs. 1, 3, & 5)** *Great God, Your Love Has Called Us Here* Tune, St. Catherine

*Great God, your love has called us here as we, by love, for love were made.  
Your living likeness still we bear, though marred, dishonored, disobeyed.  
We come, with all our heart and mind your call to hear, your love to find.*

*Great God, in Christ you call our name and then receive us as your own,  
not through some merit, right or claim, but by your gracious love alone.  
We strain to glimpse your mercy seat and find you kneeling at our feet.*

*Great God, in Christ you set us free your life to live, your joy to share.  
Give us your Spirit's liberty to turn from guilt and dull despair  
and offer all that faith can do while love is making all things new.*

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of love, we forget the beginning of the story— that we were made from love, to be love, to give love. We forget that first there was you, and you are love. We forget that out of that love you created us. We forget that from the very first day, you loved first. We forget, because a love like that doesn't make sense to us. Forgive our resistance to love ourselves. Forgive our hesitation to trust that even we could be made good. And forgive our tendency to pass that doubt on—from generation to generation. Write a new beginning for us that roots our confidence in your unrelenting love. With hope we pray, again and again. Amen.

## ANTHEM

*Pie Jesu* (Blessed Jesus)

arr. John Rutter

## SCRIPTURE

John 3:14-21

## SERMON

“Again & Again, God Loves First”

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

God of the here and now— we have heard the words,  
“for God so loved the world that he gave his only son,” Time and time again.  
We have read them on billboards, heard them in worship, and seen them on signs.  
And yet we know, there is a difference between hearing those words in passing  
and truly, deeply listening. We long to listen, God. We long to hear your truth.  
We long to know your love. Open our hearts and minds. We are listening. Amen.

## PRAYER OF REMEMBRANCE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

## HYMN NO.298

*There is a Wideness in God's Mercy*

*There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea;  
There's a kindness in God's justice which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows, are more felt than up in heaven;  
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.*

*For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.  
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's Word;  
And our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.*

## BENEDICTION

## CHORAL RESPONSE

## POSTLUDE

*You Are the Way; To You Alone*

'Dundee', arr. A. C. Lovelace