



THE AMERICAN CHURCH IN PARIS

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

8 NOVEMBER 2020

WELCOME TO THIS SERVICE OF WORSHIP ONLINE

Announcements	Prelude in G minor	<i>J.S. Bach</i>
Prelude	Trumpet Tune Fred Gramann, <i>organist</i>	<i>Andrew Carter</i>
Introit	Surely the Lord is in this Place Jennifer Young, <i>soloist</i> Philip James Glenister, <i>piano</i>	<i>Robert J. Powell</i>
Welcome		Odette Lockwood-Stewart
Call to Worship		Jodi Fondell
Hymn	My Hope is Built on Nothing Less	<i>tune: SOLID ROCK</i>

***My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.***

Refrain:

***On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.***

***When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on his unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil. [Refrain]***

***His oath, his covenant, his blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay. [Refrain]***

***When he shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in him be found,
Dressed in his righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne. [Refrain]***

Prayer of Confession

Let us come before the Lord our God just as we are.

Let us confess our sin and our need of God.

Christ Jesus, we hear your invitation: "Follow me." We want to follow, but we also want to stay where we are. We want to receive Gospel freedom and new life in you, but we also want to cling to what we already know, what we already have. And so, we are stuck. Forgive us and free us, Lord. Calm our fears. Forgive our selfishness. Loosen our grip to help us to let go and to trust you with our whole lives. (Moments for silent confession)

In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Assurance of Forgiveness and Peace

If anyone is in Christ Jesus, that person is a new creation.

The old has passed away, the new has come.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and made righteous.

Thanks be to God!

Gloria Patri

Blessing of the Children

Allison Wheeler

Musical Offering

King of My Heart

Sarah and John Mark McMillan

Devon Graves, *guitar, vocals* Natalie Raynal, *vocals* Marta Hobbs, *videography, production*

Lighting the Candle for God's Global Vision of Compassion, Justice and Peace

Prayer for Illumination

Doug Fondell

The First Lesson – Joshua 24:1-3a, 22-25

Kate Snipes

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors — Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor — lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many."

Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." The people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Musical Offering

Pietà, Signore

Alessandro Stradella

In my sadness, Lord, have mercy upon me.

Philip James Glenister, *soloist* Fred Gramann, *organist*

The Second Lesson – Matthew 25:1-13

Walter Dickerson

Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, "Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him." Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out."

But the wise replied, "No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves." And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, "Lord, lord, open to us." But he replied, "Truly I tell you, I do not know you." Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

We Are Witnesses

Odette Lockwood-Stewart

Musical Offering

You Never Let Go

Mat Redmand

Devon Graves, *guitar, vocals* Natalie Raynal, *vocals* Marta Hobbs, *videography, production*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer (<i>in your mother tongue</i>)	
Invitation to the Giving of Tithes and Gifts	Victor Greene
Invitation to the 2021 Generosity Campaign	Don Farnan
ACP Story	Anjlo Ajmal
Offertory Music	Rejoice! <i>(Composed in honor of Reverends Doug and Jodi Fondell)</i> The ACP Bronze Ringers
Prayer of Dedication	Allison Wheeler
Hymn	Ten Bridesmaids Waited for the Time <i>tune: FOREST GREEN ("All Beautiful the March of Days")</i> Text: Copyright © 2014 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

***Ten bridesmaids waited for the time the party would begin,
They took their lamps to meet the groom, for they expected him.
The wise ones went outside to wait, with oil and some to spare,
They found the groom had been delayed while he was traveling there.***

***The foolish bridesmaids waited, too, with lamps that lost their light.
For, unprepared, they'd left their fuel back at the house that night.
The bridegroom came with festive shout; the party soon began.
The fools had lamps that soon went out; the wise had lights at hand.***

***O Lord, remind us that your Day will come with great surprise.
So may we faithfully obey as people who are wise.
For deeds of justice, words of prayer and acts of kindness, too,
Are ways we daily can prepare as we wait here for you.***

Benediction	Odette Lockwood-Stewart
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Congregational Amen

The American Church in Paris Online Community

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the **American Church in Paris** is dedicated to remaining a vibrant community and to providing online resources for worship, learning, spiritual formation, and well-being, and Christian Discipleship. We will follow government guidelines to carefully re-open church buildings for schools, worship, and community groups in a way that is safe, sustainable, and fair for all.

We will continue to **Worship Online** at acparis.org for the foreseeable future.

Please continue to check our website for the latest news and to participate in new opportunities every week.

Whether you are one of the thousands of viewers from many different countries who join us for online worship, or new to Paris and seeking a church family, we hope you will be patient until we can meet again in person.

In the meantime, we continue to pursue our mission **“to bear witness in word and deed to the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.”** God's grace and peace be with you!

Announcements

In need of prayer? If you would like members of the lay care ministry team, members of the prayer chain, and the pastoral team to uphold you in prayer you may contact us at prayerrequests@acparis.org.

Worship/Coffee Fellowship Online: Sundays at 10h45 via Zoom. At 11h00, we will worship online together via shared screen. Once the service has ended, we will return to the large group and then fellowship will follow in smaller break out groups. If you worship online at another time, please feel free to join the zoom meeting for the fellowship at noon! If you would like the Zoom link starting Sunday 15 November, please register here: acparis.org/worship-fellowship.

Volunteers with artistic talent are needed: Looking ahead to the season of Advent, which begins on 29 November, we would like to decorate the sanctuary Advent wreath differently for each of the four Sundays, possibly incorporating the same theme in the altar decorations. Please contact Fred Gramann for more details if you are interested in this special project. music@acparis.org

GratiZoom – An online gathering devoted to Thanks Giving and Giving Thanks: Sunday 22 November at 17h00 via Zoom. Please join this special gathering where we will focus on our gratitude for all that God is doing in the midst of this challenging season, and how ACP is inspiring the lives and faith of others. Additionally, we will have an update on the finances of ACP and prayerfully consider how each one of us can continue to generously support the missions and ministries of our church and community. We'll also have a chance to share in Zoom breakout groups and connect with others from the ACP community. Register at acparis.org by 21 November in order to receive the GratiZoom link.

Online installation service invitation: Today at 21h (Paris time) via zoom. The Presbytery of Southern New England and The First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan, in Connecticut cordially invite you to the Installation of The Rev. Dr. Scott Herr. This special service will be streamed live via Zoom and you may join using the following details: Meeting ID: 962 9517 9448 Passcode: FPCNC+

Children's Ministries

Kids' Monthly Bible Study 2020-21: 15 November 12h45 via Zoom. This virtual monthly Bible study is for all children seven and older. We will spend the year studying the Lord's Prayer. Please contact Rev. Allison Wheeler at childrensworsip@acparis.org for more information, and/or register at acparis.org.

Threaded Together: A Children's Ministry Initiative. During these days when we cannot safely experience the joy of being all together in person, our Threaded Together initiative offers different ways for us to stay connected, and for parents and children to experience support from church staff, volunteers, and other families. Register at acparis.org/threadedtogether to participate in a family small group or contact childrensworship@acparis.org for information.

ACP Children's Music Ministry Fall program 2020: Join us in lifting a joyful noise unto the Lord through voice and instrument, in praise, prayer, and thanksgiving. The ACP children's choirs will continue via virtual choir rehearsals sent as private YouTube video links to watch, alternating with Zoom rehearsals. Children of all ages are welcome. See acparis.org/childrensmusic for registration.

Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Fall 2020-2021 program *Out There: Together in One Place*. For more information contact Pastor Victor Greene at youthpastor@acparis.org.

Adult Ministries

Monthly Women's Fellowship: Today 16h via Zoom. Tendayi O. Chirawu, leader of ACP's Writers Group, will discuss the impact Luke 22:32 had on her life when in Namibia, and reflect on her life and faith considering Simon. Tendayi will also speak about the resilience of the ACP Writers' Group and their new anthology. Visit acparis.org for details on how to join.

Virtual Thurber Conversation: 10 November 19h30 via Zoom. Dr. Greg Garrett will speak on “Race, Film, and Hope: Living into Reconciliation.” Visit acparis.org for details on how to join or for more information.

Bloom Where You’re Planted: 14 November 15h (Paris time). ACP’s popular expat orientation seminar will feature top speakers and informative workshops and this year it will be virtual. Participants will be able to watch from anywhere, live on Zoom, or later via a recording. For more information, see BloomParis.org. Share the link with friends or colleagues who dream of moving to France one day.

Women’s Monthly Bible Study: 15 November 13h30-14h30 via Zoom. All women are welcome to join this study on Women of the Old Testament, led by Teri Lee Valluy. Register at acparis.org/women-sunday.

Making Sense of the Bible: This six-week, small group pursuit of greater Biblical understanding will begin early in November. If you would like to participate in a “Making Sense of the Bible” small group encounter with others via Zoom or in-person, please register your interest at acparis.org.

Sunday Afternoon Adult Bible Study: Sundays 16h-17h30 via Zoom. All adults are welcome to join this study as hosts Nathaniel Akujobi and Patti Lafage lead us through an in-depth study of the book of Philippians. To register and receive the Zoom link please sign up at acparis.org.

Women’s Weekly Bible Study: Tuesdays 10h-12h via Zoom. Join us for our virtual study of “Job, an Unlikely Story of Joy.” Contact Katherine for more information at womensbiblestudy@acparis.org.

Men’s Ministry Bible Study at ACP: Thursdays 7h30-8h30, in the ACP Theater. In-house and Zoom option available. Register at acparis.org/men-thursday.

Read all about it – inspiration information, news, and events from ACP in the most recent edition of the Spire. Available now on the app, or at acparis.org.

For more information on all the offerings for children, youth, and adults mentioned above, see acparis.org.



2021 Generosity Campaign

Jeremiah reminds of us of God's plans for a future with hope.

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

The act of generosity is an integral part, along with faith, love, and kindness, of this plan; it inspires hope.

One of ACP's goals is for 100 individuals or families in our congregation to take the spiritual step of committing to be generous contributors to God's work at the ACP by pledging their donation for 2021. This goal is not focused on the amount that each individual or family commits but about the very act of pledging to be purposeful about our role in carrying out the ACP's mission. Normally 45 families take this spiritual step – please help us meet our goal of 100 in 2021! Let's show our collective generosity, pledge now at acparis.org/generosity.



American Church in Paris

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