

A Service of Commitment to Christ
Baltimore Presbytery
September 9, 2021 via Zoom

Christ is a person to be trusted, not a principle to be tested. The Church is a movement, not a meeting house. The faith is an experience, not an exposition. Christians are explorers, not map makers.

George MacLeod

*Please add your voice to the **bold** print.*

Prelude – For Everyone Born

Opening Sentences

*To Pharisees minding their business,
and fishermen mending their nets:*

“Follow me!”

*To the money-handlers, the lawyers,
the intellectuals, the power-brokers:*

“Follow me!”

*To the caregivers and cleaners,
the married, the single,
the young and the old,
country-folk, suburbanites and city-dwellers:*

“Follow me!”

*Then and now, together and apart,
willing and doubting, ready or not,
Jesus says:*

“Follow me!”

Prayer

*You call us God.
You call us to walk your way.
You show us in Jesus how we should live.
You give us your Holy Spirit to keep us in the way.
And we are grateful.
Love and justice is what you require of us, God –
love for you and justice for ourselves and our neighbors.
And we try.
And sometimes we get it right
and sometimes we fail,
but we try.*

(a time of silence)

*Thank you for these words of Jesus which summon us and give us life:
Don't be afraid
You are forgiven.
I call you friends.
Come and follow me.*

Amen.

Hymn – Will You Come and Follow Me?/The Summons (John Bell)

Scripture Lesson – Philippians 1:3-6, 9-11

Meditation – The Rev. Dorothy Bolton

Affirmation of Faith

**We are called by God
to be the church of Jesus Christ,
a sign in the world today
of what God intends for all humanity.
The great ends of the church are:
the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;
the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
the maintenance of divine worship;
the preservation of the truth;
the promotion of social righteousness;
and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.
Thanks be to God!**

Installation and Commissioning of Presbytery Leadership

The Call to Discipleship

Prayer of Installation and Commissioning

*Faithful God, in baptism you claim us;
and by your Spirit you are working in our lives,
empowering us to live a life worthy of our calling.
We thank you for leading these your people to this time and place.
Establish them in your truth, and guide them by your Spirit,
that in your service they may grow in faith, hope and love,
and be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.*

**Almighty God,
in Jesus Christ you called disciples and, by your Spirit,
made them one church to serve you.
Let your Spirit rule your church,
so that we may be joined in love and service to Jesus Christ,
who, having gone before us,
is coming to meet us in the promise of your realm.
Amen.**

Invitation to Commitment

As a sign of your commitment to Christ's service, you are invited to light a candle.

Affirmation – from *A Brief Statement of Faith* (1977)

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Prayer of Commitment

*In gratitude
for this place, those around us, Christ among us,
we give ourselves to you, O God.*

*Take us out to live as changed people
because we have met the risen Christ
and cannot be the same.*

**Ask much of us, expect much from us,
enable much by us, encourage many through us.
So may we live to your glory
both as inhabitants of earth
and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven.
Amen.**

Hymn – How Great Is Our God (Chris Tomlin)

Blessing

Postlude – This Little Light of Mine (Traditional)



Leadership of today's Service include:

Teaching Elder Dorothy Boulton, Catonsville Church
Teaching Elder Mary Gaut, Stated Clerk
Lea Gilmore, musician, Govans Church
Teaching Elder Sue Lowcock Harris, First Church Howard County
Ruling Elder Cecil Phillips, Dickey Memorial Church
Teaching Elder Jackie Taylor, General Presbyterian
Ruling Elder Audrey Trapp, Faith Church

Resources used or reworked include: PCUSA Book of Occasional Services, 1993; The Iona Abbey Worship Book, 2017