

# A Vigil for Unity & Hope

April 22, 2021 at 7 p.m.

*Presbytery of Baltimore*

## **Meditative Music**

Clair de Lune by Debussy

We Shall Overcome

I want Jesus to Walk with Me

We have Come

Performed by Matt Mat, First of Howard County

Performed by Aeolians, Oakwood University Alumni

Arranged by Bruce Henderson, Madison Avenue

Performed by Handbell Choir, Springfield

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**Prelude** - Hallelujah, Salvation & Glory

Grace Choir

**Welcome/ Call to Worship**

Rev. Karen Brown, Hope

**Opening Prayer**

Pastor Anita Bishop-Johnson, Mt. Paran

**Opening Hymn of Praise** - # 772 Live into Hope

Brown Memorial Park Avenue

**Prayer of Confession**

Past Moderator Guy Moody, St. John United

Gracious God,

Tonight, we remain far from the justice you demand for all your children. We know what you require of us, O God, because you have spoken it for thousands of years through prophets of old and prophets of today to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. You have shown us what is right through a brown-skinned, radical preacher, whom we have come to know as the Christ, the one you sent to save us from ourselves.

Loving God, to the degree that I or any white persons praying here tonight have participated—knowingly or in ignorance—in 400 years of unjust practices, we humbly confess our complicity and ask your forgiveness here and now. And each person here tonight cries out to you for every time we have sown hatred instead of love, exemplified doubt not faith, fallen into despair when we should have hoped for your promise, or hidden in darkness when you called us to be beacons of your radical love.

Too often, those of us with privilege do not walk hand-in-hand with our siblings of color. We do not listen always with open hearts and minds. We are often slow to strive for the equity you demand of us as your people. We are not always open to new possibilities for all who come to the table, regardless of the color of our skin, who or how we love, or how we choose to worship you.

For all these things, we humbly ask your forgiveness and abundant grace in the name of love personified, our Savior, Jesus Christ,

Amen

**Musical Selection:** Your Hands by JJ Heller & Katheryne Herzig

Nathan Mitchell &

Rebecca Bell Echols, Light Street

**Assurance of Pardon** – Rev. Tanya Wade, Grace

**Musical Selection:** Beautiful City from *Godspell*

Greg Knauf, Catonsville

**Psalm 22: 1-8, 14-16, 19**

Presbytery Moderator Audrey Trapp, Faith

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?  
O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;  
and by night, but find no rest.

Yet you are holy,  
enthroned on the praises of Israel.  
In you our ancestors trusted;  
they trusted, and you delivered them.  
To you they cried, and were saved;  
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

But I am a worm, and not human;  
scorned by others, and despised by the people.  
All who see me mock at me;  
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;  
“Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver—  
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!”  
I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out of joint;  
my heart is like wax;  
it is melted within my breast;  
my mouth[a] is dried up like a potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;  
you lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs are all around me;  
a company of evildoers encircles me.  
My hands and feet have shriveled;

But you, O Lord, do not be far away!  
O my help, come quickly to my aid!

**1 John 4:7-12** – Elder Gayelle Sama, St. John United

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also

ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

**Musical Selection:** Liturgical Dance

Grace JAM Dancers

**Isaiah 58:6-12**

Rev. Melissa Lopez, First of Bel Air  
and Rev. Ken Kovacs, Catonsville

Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?  
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?  
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator<sup>[a]</sup> shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.  
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.  
If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.  
The Lord will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.  
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

**Musical Selection:** Jesus Promised (Jordan Mills, Grace)

**Jeremiah 31:31-34** – Rev. Keith Paige, Cherry Hill

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

**Musical Selection:** “We Offer Praise,” (Deacons Brea Parris and Zackery Parris, Knox)

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Rev. Phyllis Felton, Madison Avenue:

“We do not celebrate, nor do we gloat at this verdict, for there is no joy in what has happened here. But we do hope this means a new beginning and a movement that begins to dismantle the structures of racism that have festered for far too long. The reality is George Floyd should still be among us. Instead, he has become a symbol of the need for change in the process of policing. It is [our] prayer that this verdict is the first step.” Let us pray.

Ms. Keyarra Jackson, Youth Rising Coalition:

Hear, Merciful God, the pleas of your people! We lift our voices seeking your Presence for our living; your light and truth as manna for the journey, courage to speak Justice to power and Love to an embattled nation. Pray for Us, Jesus!

Come into the upper room in which we cower; dispel our fear with your mercy; strengthen our witness with the power of the Holy Spirit so that our advocacy for justice and peace will spread like a contagion from believer to neighbor to enemy til we are compelled to acknowledge our kinship and defeat every dimension of hate. ***Merciful God, hear our prayers.***

Deacon Loretta Parrish, Knox:

We acknowledge that the ‘struggle for justice is far from over and that ‘we once again find ourselves in mourning for those who have lost their lives at the hands of police. Bless the families and friends who grieve the loss of their lives.

- Duante Wright, 20-year-old, shot by a police officer who claims she meant to tase him
- 13-year-old Adam Toledo, shot by police in Chicago
- Breonna Taylor
- Eric Garner
- George Floyd

- Ahmaud Arbery
- Trayvon Martin
- Sandra Bland
- Atatiana Jefferson
- and far too many others, whose names we say in the silence of our own hearts.

“This is the beginning of change —...a true change in the very fabric of society. “...God reach into the hearts of every individual in this country and tear away everything that smacks of racism, bigotry and privilege. God replace it with the warm embrace of compassion, justice, mercy and love.” ***Merciful God, hear our prayers.***

Rev. Michele Ward, Brown Memorial Park Ave:

Merciful God, hear our prayers for a world that continues to grapple with a relentless virus, and our gratitude for the light beginning to emerge at the end of a long and deadly tunnel.

As vaccines are at last becoming available for COVID-19 and as people begin to be inoculated around the globe, we give thanks for all whose tireless labors have brought us to this day: technicians, scientists, medical personnel, biotech companies and government agencies that have worked together to find a cure that will restore our communities to wholeness and health.

We pray that the reach of these vaccines will encompass the world, especially those places where medical resources have far too often been inadequate to the need — places where histories of colonialism have left abiding scars and where under resourced medical systems are overwhelmed by the essential work of caring for those who have been infected. ***Merciful God, hear our prayers.***

Deacon Kristen Brown, Madison Avenue:

We continue to pray for healthcare workers around the globe who are running ragged after months of high-risk essential work on the frontlines of this pandemic. Grant them strength, endurance, wisdom and courage for the living of these days. We pray for all who are desperately ill, for those who grieve the loss of loved ones and for those whose physical, mental and economic well-being have been most severely impacted by the havoc wrought by the pandemic. Grant wisdom to all entrusted with civic leadership as they discern and negotiate just ways in which to aid those most afflicted. Move our hearts to put partisanship aside for the common good, so that safeguards against the coronavirus will not be ignored and that our communities may be restored and revitalized. Let us live in the Spirit of Christ for one another and for our world. ***Merciful God, hear our prayers.***

Elder Susan Krehbiel, Presbytery of Baltimore:

Lord, we are Easter People, lead us to embody your passion for the growing of the beloved community. Break every chain that binds our hearts and imagination to hate and feed us with your love. Pour out your anointing Peace, empowering us to serve one another ‘til all lives matter and kinship with Jesus binds & preserves our unity as the body of Christ.

To you, o God, deliverer of mercy and justice, we pray. Amen.

*Quoted Text from the 4/20/2021 Letter from the Stated Clerk Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and adapted by Rev. Phyllis Felton*

*Vaccine Prayer Text by Rev. Dr. Roger Gench, Presbyterian Outlook, December 2020 and adapted by Rev. Michele Ward*

**Hymn** – It is Well with My Soul

Christ Our Anchor

**Charge and Benediction** – Rev. Jackie Taylor, General Presbyter

**Postlude** – He is Exalted

Aaron Thacker, Springfield

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**People of color violently killed this year in Baltimore City**

*In memory of those who have lost their lives to violence in Baltimore City, may God grant them peace and bring healing to their loved ones and to the City of Baltimore.*

**Homicide victims from April 11 to April 17**

Shamyar Austin, 22

**Homicide victims from April 4 to April 10**

Tony McLean, 49

Dondre Gilliam, 27

Daquar Harrison, 25

Robert Uzzell, 35

Tavon Moon, 39

Georgio Johnson, 33

James Fullard, 38

Walter Anderson, 28

**Homicide victims from March 28 to April 3**

Robert Bates, 31

Fabian Mendez, 41

Kenyon Jones, 17

Ashley Lambert, 37

Marcus Wilson, 30

**Homicide victims from March 21 to March 27**

Cameron Green, 22

Randolph Jones, 39

Craig Underwood, 35

Devon Little, 30

Nathaniel Brown, 28

Danyae Conyers, 23

Matthew Blevins, 33

Denita Barrett, 21

**Homicide victims from March 14 to March 20**

*Lewis Wright, III, 32*

*Mustafa Bates, 38*

**Homicide victims from March 7 to March 13**

*Aubrey Faulkner, 3*

*Renard Priloeau, 30*

*Terry Williams, 18*

**Homicide victims from Feb. 21 to Feb. 27**

*Stephanie Chandler, 57*

*Melvin Hairston, 33*

**Homicide victims from Feb. 14 to Feb. 20**

*Justin Bucalo, 40*

**Homicide victims from Jan. 31 to Feb. 6**

*Dionte Green, 40*

*Terrell Billie, 25*

*Timothy Orem, 34*

*Marlon Royster, 29*  
**Homicide victims from Jan. 24 to Jan. 30**

*Kenneth Gerstley, 58*  
*Frankye Duckett, 49*  
*Kevin Wallace, 32*  
*Reginald Taylor, 47*  
*Darryl Oliver, 55*  
*Andrew Johnson, 30*  
*Angelo Baldwin, 28*

**Homicide victims from Jan. 18 to Jan. 23**

*Alissa Traylor, 16*  
*Melvin Johnson, 25*  
*Ricky Dixon, 40*  
*Tavaughn Anderson, 46*  
*Rickey Martin, 62*  
*Breonna Rogers, 30*  
*Devonta Williams, 28*

**Homicide victims from Jan. 10 to Jan. 18**

*Devonta Williams, 28*  
*Dante Barksdale, 46*  
*Markeese Stanford, 21*  
*Terrell Scott, 30*  
*Damen Fortson, 22*  
*Marvin Dessaure, 34*  
*Curtis Berry, 20*

**The Presbytery of Baltimore thanks the following participating churches**

**Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church**

**Catonsville Presbyterian Church**

**Cherry Hill Community Presbyterian Church**

**Christ Our Anchor Presbyterian Church**

**Faith Presbyterian Church**

**First Presbyterian Church of Bel Air**

**First Presbyterian Church of Howard County**

**Grace Presbyterian Church**

**Hope Presbyterian Church**



**Knox Presbyterian Church**

**Light Street Presbyterian Church**

**Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church**

**Mt. Paran Presbyterian Church**

**St. John United Presbyterian Church**

**Springfield Presbyterian Church**