

*The chancel flowers are given to the glory of God in loving memory of Helen Fitzgerald, sister of Tim Robison, by her family.*

**Welcome & Announcements**

Dr. Steve Schibsted

**Prelude***Improvisation***\*Church Bell** (\*The congregation is invited to stand)**\*Call to Worship**

Liturgist: One step on the path,

**People: We are returning home.**

Liturgist: Drawing closer to God,

**People: We are coming back home.**

Liturgist: Seeing the errors we've made,

**People: We are turning toward home.**

Liturgist: Knowing more about ourselves,

**People: We are making our way home.**

Liturgist: Trusting in God's embrace,

**People: We are coming home, this season of Lent and beyond.****\*Hymn** (*see next page*)

This my Father's world

*Terra beata***\*Prayer of Confession**

Ben Mittan

God of the depths, searcher of hearts, you know the tumult of our lives. We endure a busyness that bruises those nearest, a loneliness that claws at the soul, a fearfulness that leads to distrust and cynicism. You know our longing for a more centered life. We seek time for reflection in prayer; unhurried times with friends and family; renewing rest and exercise; growing moments to deepen our faith. God of our days and our wishes, lead us in this holy time of Lent so we can let go of what pulls us from your path. Give us the courage to persist in prayer, excel in kindness and walk gently on the earth. Heal the wounds we carry. Forgive the errors we commit. And, lead us to new life. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

**Words of Assurance****Reception of New Members and Baptism of Elin Hansen**

Jocelyne Birren, Katherine Bini, Laura and Mike Taylor, Elin Hansen and Rose Mary Richmond

**Congregational Response**

We welcome you with joy into the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior. We extend to you the hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of Piedmont Community Church.

**Words of Christian Greeting****Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer**

Dr. Don Ashburn

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 for ever. Amen.

## Anthem

*Come home*  
**Michael Orlinsky, tenor**  
**Stephen Main, piano**

Craig Courtney  
(born 1948)

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me; see, on the portals he's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me. *Come home, come home; you who are weary, come home.*

Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading, pleading for you and for me? Why should we linger and heed not his mercies, mercies for you and for me? *Come home, come home; you who are weary, come home.*

O for the wonderful love he has promised, promised for you and for me! Though we have fallen, he sees us and pardons, healing for you and for me. *Come home, come home; you who are weary, come home.*

—Will Thompson (1880)

## Scripture Reading

**John 15:1-17**

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.”

## Sermon

**STAYING CLOSE TO GOD**  
Rev. Dr. Steve Schibsted  
*The Importance of Staying Home*

## Offertory

*If ye love me*  
**Chancel Choir**

Philip Stopford  
(born 1977)

If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth.  
—John 14:15-17

## \*Doxology

(Hymnal, p. 572)

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Ben Mittan

Gracious God, in response to your great love for us, we joyfully and gratefully offer the fruits of our labor and our lives in these gifts. Bless and multiply them, we pray, that the transformative power of your love will be a reality in our neighborhood and community. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## \*Hymn (see back page)

Though eyes may never see your face

*Land of rest*

## \*Commission and Benediction

Dr. Schibsted

## Organ Voluntary

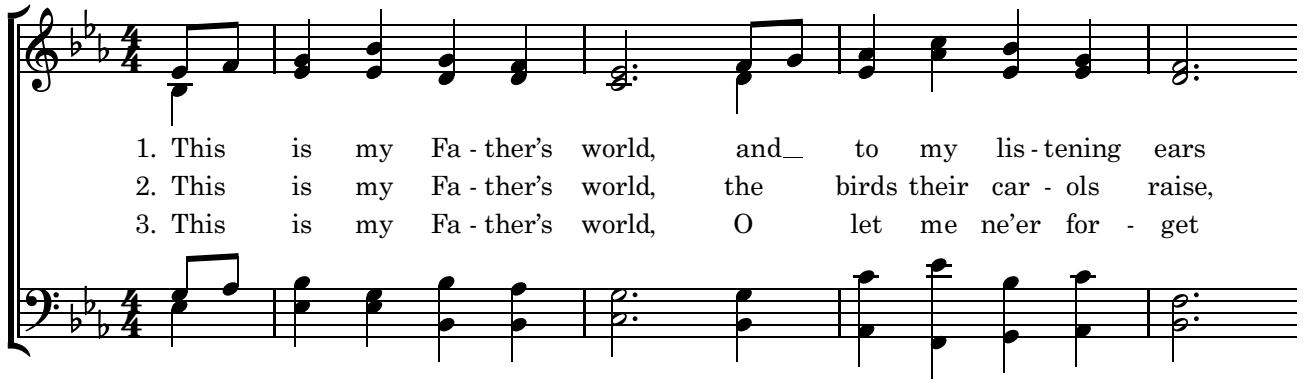
*Improvisation*



Piedmont Church is equipped with the Loop Hearing System. Headsets are available in the Narthex. Ask an Usher for assistance.

# This is my Father's world

*Terra beata*



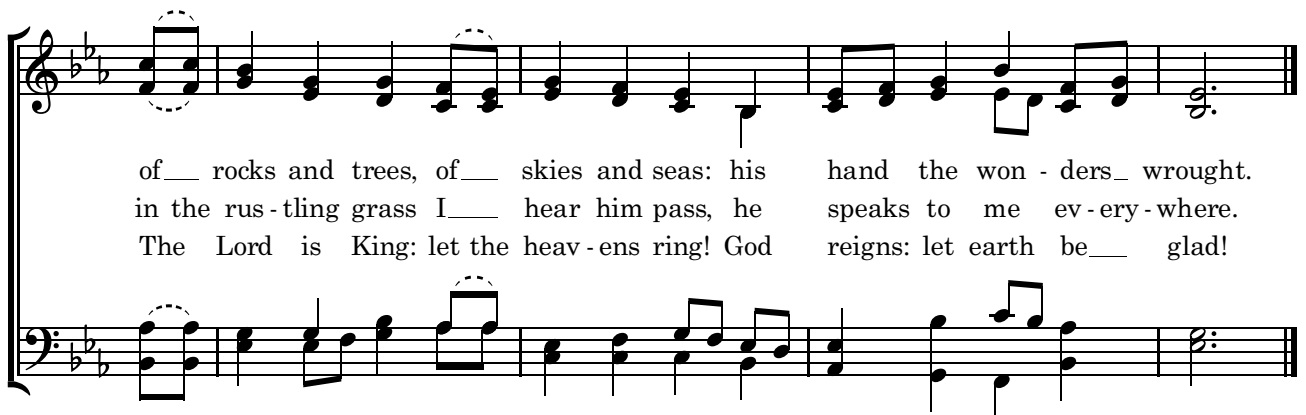
1. This is my Fa - ther's world, and\_ to my lis - tening ears  
2. This is my Fa - ther's world, the birds their car - ols raise,  
3. This is my Fa - ther's world, O let me ne'er for - get



all na - ture sings, and round me rings the mu - sic of the\_ spheres.  
the morn - ing light, the\_ lil - y white, de - clare their Mak - er's\_ praise.  
that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the Rul - er\_ yet.



This is my Fa - ther's world: I\_\_\_ rest me in the thought\_\_\_  
This is my Fa - ther's world: he\_\_\_ shines in all that's fair;\_\_\_  
This is my Fa - ther's world: why should my heart be sad?\_\_\_



of\_\_\_ rocks and trees, of\_\_\_ skies and seas: his hand the won - ders\_ wrought.  
in the rus - tling grass I\_\_\_ hear him pass, he speaks to me ev - ery - where.  
The Lord is King: let the heav - ens ring! God reigns: let earth be\_\_\_ glad!

# Though eyes may never see your face

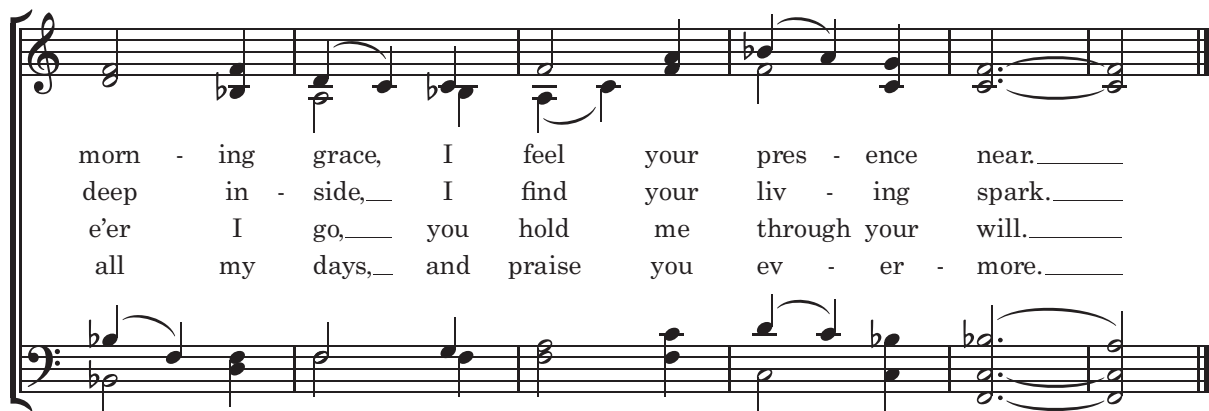
*Land of rest*



1. Though eyes may nev - er see your face, your love is  
2. The world may ask where you a - bide, how faith can  
3. In love's clear call and mer - cy's flow, your voice is  
4. Till faith shall turn to per - fect sight, and earth to



shin - ing clear; in whis - pers of the  
bridge the dark, but in the qui - - et,  
sweet and still; you walk with me where -  
heav'n re - store, I'll love you, Lord, through



morn - ing grace, I feel your pres - ence near.  
deep in - side, I find your liv - ing spark.  
e'er I go, you hold me through your will.  
all my days, and praise you ev - er - more.

Music: American folk melody, harm. Annabel Morris Buchanan (1889-1983)

## 'THE MESSENGER'

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