

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ABERDEEN

February 19, 2023 at 10 am

*"I will bless you . . . and you will be a blessing to others.
All the families on earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:2-3)*

PRELUDE

WELCOME

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HYMN #488: "THE GOD OF ABRAHAM PRAISE"

The God of Abraham praise,
Who reigns enthroned above;
The ancient of eternal days,
The God of Love!
The Lord, the great I Am,
By earth and heaven confessed,
We bow before Your holy name,
Forever blest.

You have eternal life
Implanted in the soul;
Your love shall be our strength and stay,
While ages roll.
We praise You, living God!
We praise Your holy name;
The first, the last, beyond all thought,
And still the same!

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PASSING THE PEACE, PRAYERS FOR THE CONGREGATION AND WORLD, AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

Praise the Lord!

**Our soul praises you, O Lord.
We will sing praises to you as long as we live.**

We will not put our trust in our government or in influential people,
for when they die, their influence and power are gone.

**We are blessed because we hope and trust in you,
O God who created the world and everything in it.**

You were a faithful God to our spiritual fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
and you remain unchanging and faithful to us in this century
and on to the end of time.

**You uphold those of us
who are weighed down with the cares of this world,
and you feed those who are hungry with the bread of life.**

You set prisoners free with the assurance that their sins are forgiven
and that you are in control of the events of their lives.

You give sight of understanding to those who are blind in their sin.

**You lift up those who are bowed down,
and you love those who are righteous.**

You watch over us aliens in a sinful world,
and you are a father to the orphaned and a comforter to the widowed.

**You do not allow the plans of the wicked
to flourish or to come to completion.**

You will reign forever and for all generations.

Praise the Lord!

Based on Psalm 146

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“BEHOLD OUR GOD”

Who has held the oceans in His hands?
Who has numbered every grain of sand?
Kings and nations tremble at His voice;
All creation rises to rejoice:

Behold our God seated on His throne

Come let us adore Him

Behold our King nothing can compare

Come let us adore Him

Who has given counsel to the Lord?
Who can question any of His words?
Who can teach the One who knows all things?
Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds? [REFRAIN]

Who has felt the nails upon His hands,
Bearing all the guilt of sinful man?
God eternal humbled to the grave;
Jesus Savior risen now to reign. [REFRAIN]

“Behold Our God” by Jonathan Baird, Meghan Baird, Ryan Baird and Stephen Altrogge.

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON (unison)

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
we are your covenant people—one church, drawn from all nations.
Our citizenship is in heaven.

Yet we confess, O Lord, that we sometimes lose sight
of your kingdom and its ways.
We confess that we sometimes live more as citizens of our own land
than as citizens of your kingdom.
By your truth you call all peoples to account.
Forgive us for losing our distinctiveness.

Focus us on the cross and on the salvation you give through him
who is the Lord and King and Judge of us all,
Jesus, the Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

After corporate prayer we will have a few moments of silence for personal confession.

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"TO ABRAHAM AND SARAH" (To the tune of "Lead On, O King Eternal")

To Abraham and Sarah the call of God was clear:
'Go forth and I will show you a country rich and fair.
You need not fear the journey for I have pledged my word:
that you shall be my people and I will be your God.'

From Abraham and Sarah arose a pilgrim race,
dependent for their journey on God's abundant grace.
and in their heart was written by God this saving word:
that you shall be my people and I will be your God.

We of this generation on whom God's hand is laid,
can journey to the future secure and un-afraid!
rejoicing in God's goodness and trusting in this word:
that you shall be my people and I will be your God.

*"To Abraham and Sarah" by Judith Fetter.
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THE READING AND PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE

Sermon: *"Abraham: Blessed to Be a Blessing"*

Genesis 11:27–12:9

This is the account of Terah's family. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot.²⁸ But Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, the land of his birth, while his father, Terah, was still living.²⁹ Meanwhile, Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. (Milcah and her sister Iscah were daughters of Nahor's brother Haran.)³⁰ But Sarai was unable to become pregnant and had no children.

³¹ One day Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai (his son Abram's wife), and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's child) and moved away from Ur of the Chaldeans. He was headed for the land of Canaan, but they stopped at Haran and settled there.³² Terah lived for 205 years and died while still in Haran.

¹ The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

* *Please stand if you are able*

⁴ So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵ He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people he had taken into his household at Haran—and headed for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in Canaan, ⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites.

⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ After that, Abram traveled south and set up camp in the hill country, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built another altar and dedicated it to the LORD, and he worshiped the LORD. ⁹ Then Abram continued traveling south by stages toward the Negev.

Genesis 13:1–18

¹ So Abram left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev, along with his wife and Lot and all that they owned. ² (Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.) ³ From the Negev, they continued traveling by stages toward Bethel, and they pitched their tents between Bethel and Ai, where they had camped before. ⁴ This was the same place where Abram had built the altar, and there he worshiped the LORD again.

⁵ Lot, who was traveling with Abram, had also become very wealthy with flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and many tents. ⁶ But the land could not support both Abram and Lot with all their flocks and herds living so close together. ⁷ So disputes broke out between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. (At that time Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land.)

⁸ Finally Abram said to Lot, “Let’s not allow this conflict to come between us or our herdsmen. After all, we are close relatives! ⁹ The whole countryside is open to you. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want the land to the left, then I’ll take the land on the right. If you prefer the land on the right, then I’ll go to the left.”

¹⁰ Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the LORD or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) ¹¹ Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. ¹² So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. ¹³ But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the LORD.

¹⁴ After Lot had gone, the LORD said to Abram, “Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. ¹⁵ I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession. ¹⁶ And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! ¹⁷ Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you.”

¹⁸ So Abram moved his camp to Hebron and settled near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. There he built another altar to the LORD.

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S LOVE WITH OUR OFFERINGS

*The ceramic jars in the offering plates are designated for the Deacons' Fund **and** the World Vision Fund. Our deacons provide care, support, and financial assistance to those in the congregation in need. The World Vision Fund supports a Sponsored Child through World Vision.*

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DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

CONFESSION OF FAITH:

"A Brief Confession of Faith" (lines 29-43)

In sovereign love God created the world good
and makes everyone equally in God's image,
male and female, of every race and people,
to live as one community.

But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.

Ignoring God's commandments.

we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,
accept lies as truth,

exploit neighbor and nature,

and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.

We deserve God's condemnation.

Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.

In everlasting love,

the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people
to bless all families of the earth.

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HYMN #466: ***"O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING" (verses 1-2 and 4)***

O for a thousand tongues to sing

My dear Redeemer's praise,

The glories of my God and King,

The triumphs of God's grace!

Jesus, the name that charms our fears,

That bids our sorrows cease;

'Tis music in the sinner's ears,

'Tis life, and health, and peace.

My gracious Master and my God,

Assist me to proclaim,

To spread through all the earth abroad

The honors of Thy name.

BENEDICTION AND POSTLUDE

* *Please stand if you are able*

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Office Hours: 10 am – 2 pm (Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri)

Caretaker Hours: 9:00 – 1:00 (Mon, Tues, Wed; plus additional intermittent hours)

Tuesday Crew Facility Maintenance: 9 am – 1 pm (Tues)

WEBSITE: ABERDEENPRES.ORG

CALENDAR

- Tuesday, Feb 21** Worship at Channel Point (10:30 am)
 Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group (1:00 pm)
- Wednesday, Feb 22** Soup Supper (6:00 pm)
 Ash Wednesday Service (6:30)
- Sunday, Feb 26** Worship Service (10:00)
 Youth Group (4:30 pm)
- Wednesday, Mar 1** Coffee and Study (1:00 pm)
 Soup and Study (6:00 pm)