

Third Sunday of Lent and Communion

March 3, 2024



First Congregational Church of Fresno
United Church of Christ
2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.
Fresno, CA 93704

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
Pastor

Third Sunday of Lent
March 3, 2024

Our Gathering

(*Congregation may stand | Responses: Liturgist/**Congregation/all**)

Prelude
Welcome

Hymn-Sing

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

Centering Psalm 19:1-4, 7-9

Peter Wall, cantor

(The Congregation sings the *Response with the Choir*)

Response

Unison G D/F# E7 Am D7 G

Antiphon: Jean Slates Hawk, 1994

O God, you are my rock and my re-deem - er.

The musical notation is for a unison response in G major, 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The bass line consists of: G3 (half), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C4 (half), B3-A3 (beamed eighth notes), G3 (half), F#3 (quarter), E3 (half). Chords are indicated above the staff: G (above G4), D/F# (above A4), E7 (above B4), Am (above C5), D7 (above B4-A4), and G (above G4). The lyrics are written below the staff, with hyphens under 're-deem' and 'er'.

The heavens are telling the glory of God,
and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;
yet their voice goes out through all the earth and
their words to the end of the world.

Sung Response: O God, you are my rock and my redeemer.

The law of God is perfect, reviving the soul;
the decrees of God are sure, making wise the simple;
the precepts of God are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes;
the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever;
the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

Sung Response: O God, you are my rock and my redeemer.

***Call to Worship**

Gayle Thornton, liturgist

Into the house of God we are called to enter,

To worship and receive the gift of grace.

As we step towards this sacred space,

We acknowledge all that can distract or exploit.

God calls upon us to cleanse our houses of all that does not find its source
in God's love.

***Together we give ourselves in worship and right relations with our neighbor. Let us
worship God.***

***Hymn**

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

#277, pew hymnal

Prayer of Confession

Gayle Thornton

***O God of temples and tables turned over, we enter this sacred space of worship seeking
your transformation and healing. Make us ready for the kind of turned upside down
world you are seeking to build among us. We have come to this place of worship to be
changed, so turn over our tables and make us whole. When we have wandered from
your ways, help us to turn towards you. Not because of what we can gain from you, but
because your love is a gift unearned and unwavering. Grant us your grace, in the name
of Christ. Amen.***

Words of Grace

Choral Anthem

"Celtic Communion" arr. Hayes

Chancel Choir
Nancy Mack, flute

Time for Discovery [children are invited to the chancel steps]

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

**Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still;
let this be our song — no one stands alone,
standing side by side. Draw the circle wide.**

Gordon Light, ©1994 Common Cup Company
OneLicense.net License #A-711732

The Lord's Prayer

***Our Creator, 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,
the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.*

*- When invited, all in the sanctuary may come forward with
your strip of cloth to place on the cross-*

Holy Communion

*Hymn of Preparation	“I Come with Joy”	#349, pew hymnal
----------------------	-------------------	------------------

Invitation to the Table
The Sharing
Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Hymn	“If You But Trust in God to Guide You”	#410, pew hymnal
-------	--	------------------

Scripture	Mark 8:31-38	Gayle Thornton
-----------	--------------	----------------

Liturgist: God be in our listening. God be in our understanding.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

Scripture	Exodus 20:1-17	Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
-----------	----------------	-----------------------------

Then God spoke all these words,

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

“You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

“You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work - you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.

“Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

“You shall not murder.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female slave, ox, donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Pastor: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God within us,
and for the Word of God among us.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

Sung Call to Prayer

Lord, listen to your children praying:

Lord send your Spirit in this place.

Lord, listen to your children praying:

Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

1973, Hope, Publishing CO., All rights reserved.
OneLicense.net License #A-711732

Prayers of the Church

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

Invitation to Generosity

Gayle Thornton

Offertory

“Chorale Improvisation on NEUMARK” - arr. Manz

Scott Horton, organ



Here at the Big Red Church, everyone counts, and every gift counts!

- ⇒ *There are two donation boxes and giving envelopes for your gifts in the Narthex (the area where an usher handed you an Order of Worship).*
- ⇒ *You can also give through the Givelify App by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera.*
- ⇒ *BigRedChurch.org/giving/ has more instructions, links, and information about giving to the church. Thank you for supporting and joining in the ministry of this church.*

* Doxology and Dedication

*We give You but Your own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Yours alone, we give it gratefully. Amen.*

***Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving**

*Closing Hymn

“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” #403, pew hymnal

*Benediction

*Blessing Song

“Go Now in Peace”

**Go now in peace, never be afraid;
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true;
know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world will see
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen. Amen. Amen.**

1988, Harold Flammer Music. All rights reserved.
OneLicense.net License # A-711732

Postlude

"Psalm 19 - The Heavens Declare" - B. Marcello Scott Horton, organ

It is our tradition to be seated for the Postlude.



Flash Mob Hallelujah Chorus on Easter

Have you ever wanted to sing the “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah?

We will be singing this masterpiece as the postlude on Easter Sunday! On Easter, all you will have to do is make your way up to the Chancel area, up with the choir during the singing of “Go Now in Peace,” and we’ll be all set to sing our collective “Hallelujah” to the Risen Lord!

Every Sunday, we will have a single run-through practice, from March 3 following worship until Easter.

Music and practice CDs will be provided.

*Warning - smiles and feelings of joy are side effects.

Please see/contact Scott Horton to get involved or if you have any questions

This Week at Big Red

TODAY AT 3PM



Monday, March 4

- ♦ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Tuesday, March 5

Wednesday, March 6

- ♦ 8:00am: Bible Study - Zoom
- ♦ 5:00pm: Lenten Soup Supper and Discussion - Fellowship Hall
- ♦ 6:00pm: Handbell rehearsal - Music Room
- ♦ 7:00pm: Chancel Choir rehearsal – Sanctuary

Thursday, March 7

Friday, March 8

Saturday, March 9

- ♦ 8:00am: Saturday Lenten Study - “The Depths of Renewal”
Huckleberry’s - Fresno

Sunday, March 10

- ♦ 9:00am: Exploration Hour - Roots and Branches - Fireside Room
- ♦ 10:00am: Worship - Sanctuary
- ♦ 11:00am: Coffee Hour - Fellowship Hall

Holy Week starts Monday, March 25, 2024



Galloway Memorial Organ Evensong

Scott Horton

organist

Sunday, March 3, 2024

3:00 p.m.

Admission Free - Freewill Offering to Benefit
the Casavant Organ Fund

First Congregational Church of Fresno
2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.
(559) 227-8489



We believe God wants to liberate those in bondage. If you are a victim of domestic violence we encourage you to find safety. 559.233.HELP
Help@MMCenter.org

First Congregational Church of Fresno

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd., Fresno, CA 93704 | (559) 227-8489

Bigredchurch.org

Pastor

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
simon@bigredchurch.org

Music Director/Organist

Scott Horton

Caretaker/ Event Coordinator

Pat Morales

Accountant

Penny Leas Peterson

Office Administrator

Kymberly Lindsey
Office@bigredchurch.org

Technicians

Karisa Garza
Brad Jenkins

Assisting in Today's Service

Organist: Scott Horton

Liturgist: Gayle Thornton

Ushers: Cliff Dodd

Acolytes: Hudson and Addison

Technician: Brad Jenkins

FCCF Open and Affirming Statement

We believe that all people are sacred creations of a loving God. We affirm the diversity that exists among us.

We strive to answer the call of Christ by extending his love, compassion and acceptance to everyone. In this spirit, we open our family of faith to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age and gender.

As Christians, we experience God's reconciling love. In response we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation.

We welcome all people to participate fully in our church's life and ministry. We celebrate the variety of talents and perspectives which flow into our spiritual community, continuing to enrich us in ways we could not have predicted or envisioned.

Descant

4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!

1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, God the Al - might - y!
 2 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Saints a - dore you tru - ly,
 3 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Though we know but dim - ly,
 4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, God the Al - might - y!

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!

Ear - ly in the morn - ing we praise your maj - es - ty.
 Cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
 Though the eyes of hum - an - kind your glo - ry may not see,
 All your works shall praise your name in earth and sky and sea.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!

Ho - ly, ho - ly ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!
 Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim bow be - fore you on - ly,
 You a - lone are ho - ly, you a - lone are wor - thy,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!

God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty.

God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 From the be - gin - ning, God e - ter - nal - ly.
 Per - fect in power, in love and pur - i - ty.
 God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

I Come with Joy

Brian Wren, 1968; rev. 1982, 1994

Unison

1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and
 2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to find, as all are
 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion
 4 And thus we meet, and bet - ter know the Pres - ence, ev - er
 5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound, in friend - ship we will

free, The life of Je - sus to re - call, in
 fed, The new com - mu - ni - ty of love in
 ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and
 near, And join our hearts and sing with joy that
 stay, And go with joy to love the world and

love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.
 Christ's com - mu - nion bread, in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.
 strang - ers now are friends, and strang - ers now are friends.
 Christ is ris - en here, that Christ is ris - en here.
 live the way we pray, and live the way we pray.

One of Brian Wren's most widely published texts, this hymn was originally written to "sum up a series of sermons on the meaning of communion. It tries to use simple words to suggest important theological themes."

Tune: DOVE OF PEACE 8.6.8.6.6.
 Southern Harmony, 1835
 Arr. Austin Lovelace, 1977

If You But Trust in God to Guide You

410

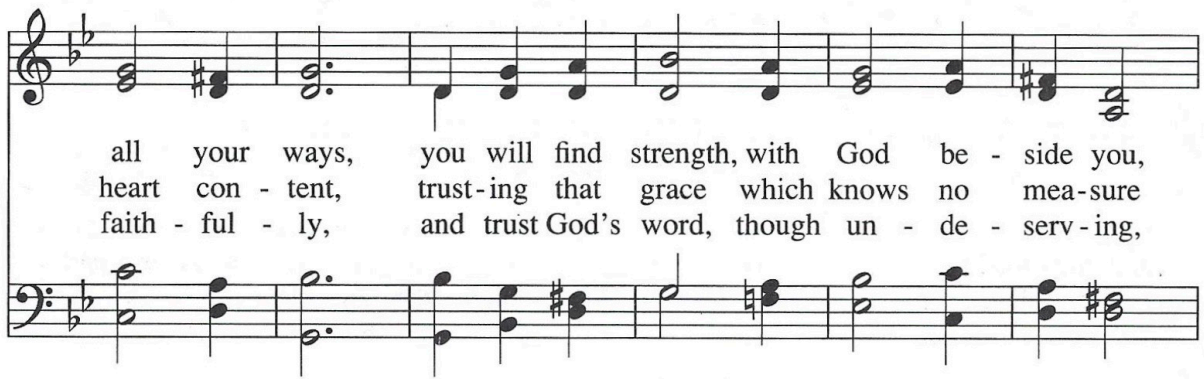
Georg Neumark, 1641

Transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; alt.

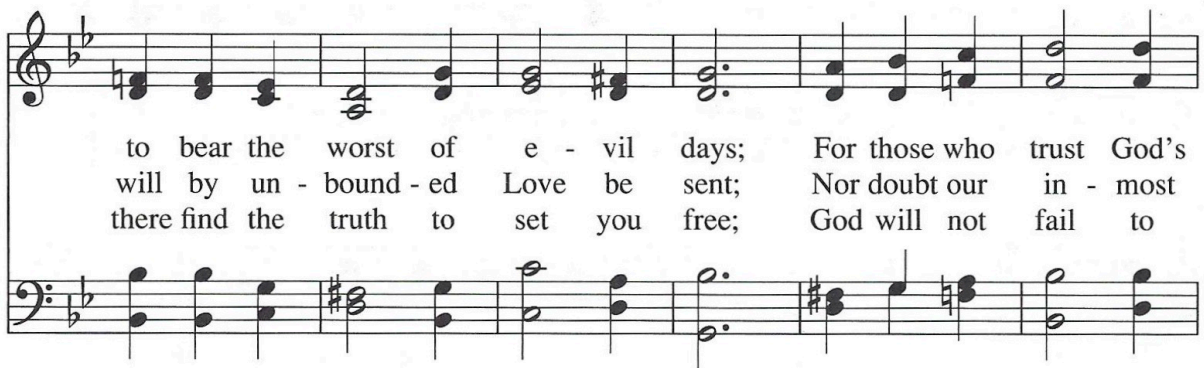
Ps. 55:22



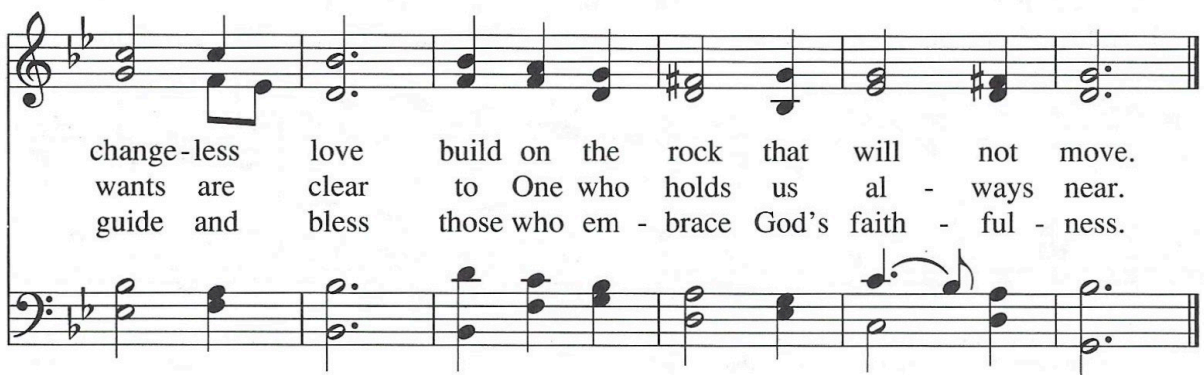
1 If you but trust in God to guide you, with hope-ful heart through
2 On - ly be still, and wait God's plea - sure in cheer-ful hope, with
3 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways un - swerv-ing; of - fer your ser - vice



all your ways, you will find strength, with God be - side you,
heart con - tent, trust-ing that grace which knows no mea - sure
faith - ful - ly, and trust God's word, though un - de - serv-ing,



to bear the worst of e - vil days; For those who trust God's
will by un - bound - ed Love be sent; Nor doubt our in - most
there find the truth to set you free; God will not fail to



change-less love build on the rock that will not move.
wants are clear to One who holds us al - ways near.
guide and bless those who em - brace God's faith - ful - ness.

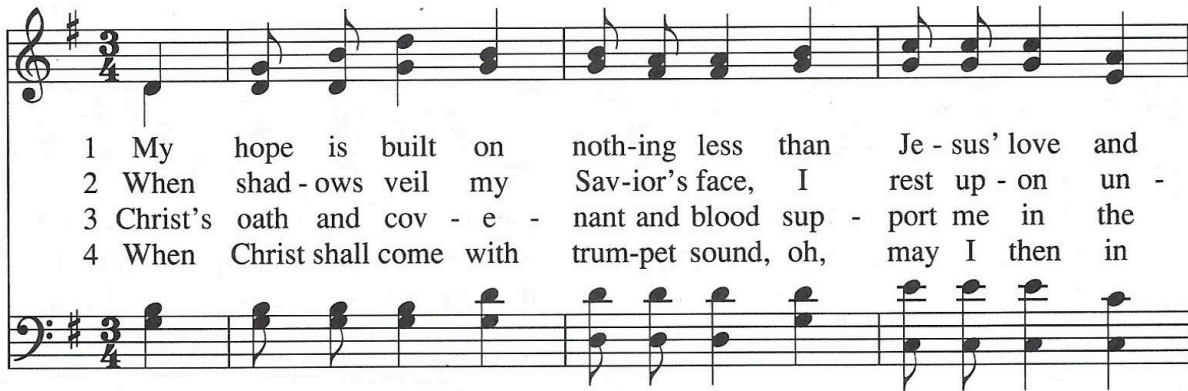
The comforting words of Psalm 55:22 inspired this beautiful hymn by Georg Neumark, who wrote both words and music. Neumark was a German poet who suffered much during the Thirty Years' War.

Tune: NEUMARK 9.8.9.8.8.8.
Georg Neumark, 1657

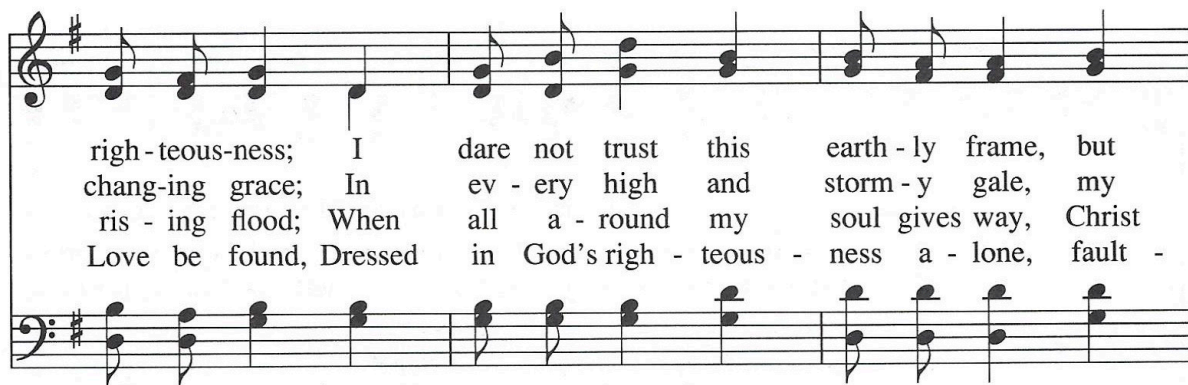
My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Matt. 7:24-27; 1 Cor. 3:11; Heb. 6:19; Rev. 11:15

Edward Mote, c. 1834; alt.



1 My hope is built on noth-ing less than Je - sus' love and
 2 When shad - ows veil my Sav-ior's face, I rest up - on un -
 3 Christ's oath and cov - e - nant and blood sup - port me in the
 4 When Christ shall come with trum-pet sound, oh, may I then in



righ-teous-ness; I dare not trust this earth - ly frame, but
 chang-ing grace; In ev - ery high and storm - y gale, my
 ris - ing flood; When all a - round my soul gives way, Christ
 Love be found, Dressed in God's righ - teous - ness a - lone, fault -



Refrain

whol-ly lean on Je - sus' name.
 an-chor holds with - in the veil. On Christ, the sol - id Rock, I stand;
 then is all my hope and stay.
 less to stand be - fore the throne.



all oth-er ground is sink-ing sand, all oth-er ground is sink-ing sand.

William Bradbury met great success by composing hymn tunes and religious songs in a lively, popular style. He also helped establish music programs in New York public schools, served a church, and co-founded a piano company.

Tune: SOLID ROCK L.M. with refrain
 William B. Bradbury, 1863