

AN EVER-WIDENING CIRCLE OF GRACE



Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church

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www.rclpc.org

AGAIN & AGAIN GOD LOVES FIRST



John Dillon, Pastor
4th Sunday in Lent
March 14, 2021 | 10:00

Worship Leaders Today
Message and Prayers: Pastor John Dillon
Music Leaders: Sherri Dees, Anthony Jay Houston,
Members of the Adult Choir
Liturgist: Paula Viner

WE GATHER IN GRACE

INTROIT: "I CALL TO YOU, LORD JESUS CHRIST!" BWV 639 J.S. Bach

**I call to You, Lord Jesus Christ!
I beg, hear my complaint!
Grant me grace at this time;
let me not despair!
The pure faith, Lord, I wish
that You would give me: to live to You,
help my neighbor,
and to keep Your Word faithfully.**

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Before we were born,

All: before we took our first breath,

Pastor: before the week started,

All: before the year started,

Pastor: before we said, "I love you,"

All: before we said, "I'm sorry,"

Pastor: before we figured out who we really are,

All: before we figured out who we want to be,

Pastor: before it all—

All: God loved us.

Pastor: Unconditionally and freely,

All: fully and honestly—

Pastor: God loved us.

All: Again and again, this is where our story begins.

Pastor: Let us worship God.

WOMB OF LIFE AND SOURCE OF BEING (*verses 1 and 2*)

GTG 3

**Womb of life and source of being,
home of every restless heart,
in your arms the worlds awakened;
you have loved us from the start.
We, your children, gather 'round you,
at the table you prepare.
Sharing stories, tears, and laughter,
we are nurtured by your care.**

**Word in flesh, our brother Jesus,
born to bring us second birth,
you have come to stand beside us,
knowing weakness, knowing earth.
Priest who shares our human struggles,
Life of Life and Death of Death,
risen Christ, come stand among us,
send the Spirit by your breath.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Pastor: God of love, we forget the beginning of the story—
that we were made from love, to be love, to give love.
Instead of rooting our narrative in the goodness refrain of
creation, we skip ahead and find our worth at the fall,
with Cain and Abel, lost in the wilderness.

**All: We forget that first there was you, and you are love.
We forget that out of that love you created us.
We forget that from the very first day, you loved first.
We forget, because a love like that
doesn't make sense to us.
Forgive our low self-esteem.
Forgive our resistance to love ourselves.
Forgive our hesitation to trust that even we could be
made good. And forgive our tendency to pass that
doubt on—from generation to generation.
Write a new beginning for us
that roots our confidence in your unrelenting love.
With hope we pray, again and again. Amen!**

KYRIE ELEISON, CHRISTE ELEISON

STF

One: Kyrie eleison (*Lord have mercy*)

All: Kyrie eleison

One: Christe eleison (*Christ have mercy*)

All: Christe eleison

One: Kyrie eleison (*Lord have mercy*)

All: Kyrie eleison

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND PEACE

Pastor: Family of faith, if you hear nothing else today, hear this:
God is here. God sees you. God knows you.
God meets you at the edge of every new beginning,
and God calls you beloved.

**All: We are washed by the water. We are called beloved.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

Pastor: Forgiven and washed clean, let us share the
Peace of Christ. Peace be with you!

All: And also with you.

SUNG RESPONSE: GOD IS FORGIVENESS

Taize

**God is forgiveness,
Dare to forgive and
God will be with you
God is forgiveness,
Love and do not fear.**

WE GROW IN GRACE

WEE WORSHIP

ANTHEM: ESTO LES DIGO

Kinley Lange

Where two or three are gathered in My name, there will I be also.

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22 and John 3:16-21

MESSAGE

“God Doesn’t Quit”

Rev. John Dillon

SUNG RESPONSE: (SIZO) BAMBALELA

JL Bell

(You must) never give up.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Pastor: Let us together affirm our faith.

**All: We believe God is love— unconditional, constant love.
We believe this love exists for all, choosing each and every one
of us, day after day, again and again and again. We believe
that God’s love is like a river. Rivers cannot help but flow
toward the sea; God’s love cannot help but move toward us.
We are swimming in it. We believe that God loved first.**

We believe that God breathed life into dust. We believe that God said, “This is good,” and because we believe that God loved first, we strive to build lives that reflect God’s love. May we begin again here. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

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, forever. Amen.

OFFERING: THE LOVE OF THE LORD

Douglas Wagner

*Commissioned in celebration of the 150th anniversary of
Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church*

choir:

For the love of the Lord endures forever, yes, the Lord is good.

For the love of the Lord endures forever, yes, the Lord is good.

For the steadfast love of the Lord is good, and God’s faithfulness to all.

For the steadfast love of the Lord endures always.

Mighty and great are the works of the Lord.

Wonderful God’s deeds to the people.

Trust now in God, inhabitants of earth,

And teach your children well, to put their trust in God.

For the love of the Lord endures forever, yes, the Lord is good.

For the love of the Lord endures forever, yes, the Lord is good.

For the steadfast love of the Lord is good, and God’s faithfulness to all.

For the steadfast love of the Lord endures always.

all sing:

The King of love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never;

I nothing lack if I am his, and he is mine forever.

And so through all the length of days, your goodness faileth never;

Good Shepherd, may I sing your praise within your house forever.

choir:

The love, my Lord, forever!

Your gifts to RCLPC matter now more than ever! Our expenses continue, and since we won't be passing offering plates each Sunday, your online or mailed giving is essential. If you are able to give online, we ask that you do so now through our [online giving program](#). We are checking the mail, if you prefer to mail in your check. However you are able to give, your generosity in this time makes a big difference!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

WE GO IN GRACE

THERE'S A WIDENESS IN GOD'S MERCY

GTG 435

**There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea.**

**There's a kindness in God's justice,
which is more than liberty.**

**There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heaven.**

**There is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgment given.**

**For the love of God is broader
than the measures of the mind.**

**And the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.**

**If our love were but more faithful,
we would gladly trust God's Word,
and our lives reflect thanksgiving
for the goodness of our Lord.**

SENDING

SUNG RESPONSE: NEVER GIVE UP/BAMBALELA

JL Bell

*We gather in grace, we grow in grace, we go in grace...
The journey continues in an ever-widening circle of grace.*