



Meditation Text

Affirmation is a way to make clear that one has listened deeply and sincerely, with reverence. "To affirm" derives from the Latin firmare, "to strengthen."

The writer Gary Zukav recalls a time when students at the local high school in his hometown are attending a special retreat. The freshmen are welcomed. On the second day, they gather in circles of ten or twelve. Each one writes on a small piece of paper a basic value he or she has recognized in another student- something as meaningful as, "I appreciate the way he respects people by listening well."

Sometime later, a graduate of the high school dies in a traffic accident. In his wallet are pieces of paper with words of appreciation, written by new friends in a circle of peers at that special retreat.

Gary Zukav wonders what words would be so meaningful that someone would carry with him unto death. He feels that "only a message from the heart can reach that deep, heal that powerfully, and last that long."

*Gary Zukav asks his readers, "How many messages from your heart have you shared today?" (Zukav, Soul to Soul)
Elias Marechal, Tears of an Innocent God, pages 181-182*

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Chiming the Trinity

Invitation to Worship

Matt Marston

Prelude

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

HOUSTON
arr. Michael Burkhardt

Call to Worship

Randy Brittain

Leader: God's strong voice calls us to worship,

People: calling us to sing and offer praise.

Leader: God's creative voice calls us to worship,

People: calling us to life and light.

Leader: God's loving voice calls us to worship,

People: calling us to love and be loved.

Leader: Listen, for God's voice calls to us now.

Invocation

Hymn

I Sing the Might Power of God

FOREST GREEN

*I sing the mighty pow'r of God, that made the mountains rise,
That spread the flowing seas abroad, and built the lofty skies.*

*I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;
The moon shines full at His command, and all the stars obey.*

*I sing the goodness of the Lord, that filled the earth with food;
He formed the creatures with His Word, and then pronounced them good.*

*Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye,
If I survey the ground I tread, or gaze upon the sky!*

*There's not a plant or flow'r below, but makes Thy glories known;
And clouds arise, and tempests blow, by order from Thy throne;*

*While all that borrows life from Thee Is ever in Thy care,
And everywhere that we can be, Thou, God, art present there.*

Isaac Watts, 1715

*Scripture Lesson

Genesis 1:1-5

Frank Granger

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Testimony in Song

Morning Has Broken
Livvy Baxley, Soprano

BUNESSAN
arr. Ralph Manuel

*Morning has broken like the first morning, blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning! Praise for them springing fresh from the Word!*

*Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven, like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden, sprung in completeness where His feet pass.*

*Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning, God's recreation of the new day!*

Eleanor Farjeon, 1931

Silent Prayers of Confession

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Emily Harbin

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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***Scripture Lesson**

Mark 1:4-11

Connie Ivester

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Children's Moment

Janet Cleland

Sermon

Approving This Message

Matt Marston

Hymn

*Breathe on Me, Breath of God
Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love, and do what Thou wouldst do.*

TRENTHAM

*Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will Thy will, to do and to endure.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am wholly Thine,
Till all this earthly part of me glows with Thy fire divine.*

Edwin Hatch, 1878

Prayer of Stewardship

Andy Hogan, Deacon

Offertory

Shall We Gather at the River

Robert Lowry

Benediction

Matt Marston

***Postlude**

*III. Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
(From An Epiphany Suite)*

Charles Callahan

Flowers

The flowers in the sanctuary this morning are given in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. S. H. (Hoyt & Ruby) Butler Sr. and Mr. & Mrs. H. H. (Henry & Orien Belle) Cobb, Sr. by Tony and Diane Dillard on the occasion of Mrs. Butler's birthday on January 12.