

The Riverside Church

in the City of New York



SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 2010

Fourth Sunday in Lent

RIVERSIDE AT WORSHIP

Fourth Sunday in Lent • 10:45 A.M.

CARILLON

Sarabande

Francis Poulenc, arr. J. B. Arterton

HANDBELLS

In Joseph's Lovely Garden

arr. Betty Garee

Amazing Grace

arr. Cathy Moglebust

Meditation on "Beautiful Savior"

arr. Cathy Moglebust

*The Riverside Ringers
Bonnie Laub, director*

LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

Rev. Robert B. Coleman

HYMN IN PROCESSION 393

Take Up Your Cross

Duke Street

Please stand as you are able

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Arnold I. Thomas

Leader: Let us lift up the name of the Lord;

***People:* And rejoice, for God hears our prayers!**

Leader: Praise the One who brings healing to our pain;

***People:* And causes joy to follow the long night of sorrow!**

Leader: We will not be silent. We will not still our tongues!

***People:* O Lord, our God, we will give thanks to you forever!**

INVOCATION

Congregation seated

Rev. J. Lee Hill, Jr.

ANTHEM

I Must Tell Jesus

arr. Mattie L. Robertson

I must tell Jesus all of my trials; I cannot bear these burdens alone. In my distress He kindly will help me; He ever loves and cares for His own. I must tell Jesus! I must tell Jesus! I cannot bear my burdens alone. I must tell Jesus! I must tell Jesus! Jesus can help me, Jesus alone. I must tell Jesus all of my troubles; He is a kind, compassionate friend. If I but ask Him, He will deliver; Make of my troubles quickly an end.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Hill

***All:* O God, Mother and Father to us all, who in love has made us and through love has kept us, and who by love would make us perfect; we humbly confess that we have not loved you with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and that we have not loved one another as Christ has loved us. Our selfishness has hindered your life within us. We have not lived by faith. We have resisted your Spirit. We have neglected your inspirations. Forgive what we have been; help us amend what we are; and by your Spirit direct what we shall be; that you may come into the full glory of your creation, in us and in all; as in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Hill

Leader: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether; the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel;

***People:* In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

RESPONSIVE PSALM

Psalm 32:1-11

Psalm 32

RESPONSE Ps. 32:11
Gary Alan Smith



Be glad in the Lord and re-joice;
shout for joy, you up-right in heart.

Music © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

**Be glad in the Lord and rejoice;
shout for joy, you upright in heart.**

Jessica Marsten, cantor

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Arnold I. Thomas

Leader: The Lord be with you.

***People:* And with your spirit.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

***People:* We lift them up unto the Lord.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*You are invited to say the Lord's Prayer in the version
or language that is most familiar to you.*

CHORAL AMEN

OFFERING

Dr. Thomas

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Timor et tremor

Francis Poulenc

Great fear and trembling have taken hold on me; Now darkness descends on me, heavy darkness overwhelms me; Be merciful to me, my God, be merciful to me. For my soul has trusted in Thee, trusted in Thy mercy. Hear my prayer, O God, consider my supplication; For Thou hast been my strength and my refuge, Thou art my sure defense. Hear, O God, I call upon Thee; Let me never be confounded.

(from Quatre motets pour un temps de penitence)

AT THE PRESENTATION: THE DOXOLOGY

Congregation rising row by row as ushers pass

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Coleman

HYMN 440

In Christ There Is No East or West

McKee

Please stand as you are able

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING Dr. Emily Anderson

Congregation seated

Joshua 5:9-12

(page 197 in the Old Testament section of the pew Bible)

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God.

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING

Mr. Clarence Anderson

Luke 15:11-32

(page 78 in the New Testament section of the pew Bible)

Leader: The Word of God for the People of God.

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev. Dr. James O. Stallings

"Yes, you can go home again!"

HYMN 434

Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples

Kingsfold

Please stand as you are able

BENEDICTION

Dr. Stallings

*The congregation is seated and invited to a time
of quiet reflection during the Postlude.*

POSTLUDE

Prelude on "Bryn Calfaria"

Ralph Vaughan Williams

"Large Print" Bulletins are available from the ushers.

Please join us for Fellowship Hour! As you leave the Nave, take the stairs on your left down one level. Take a right, and an immediate left into the Cloister Lounge. You may also take the elevators in the Narthex to the "C" Level.

Our thanks to this morning's worship leaders and readers. Dr. Emily Anderson and Clarence Anderson, Church Treasurer.

Daily Lenten devotions can be found on:

www.journeytothecross.com

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

The parable of the Prodigal Son, found in the 15th chapter of Luke's Gospel, is probably one of the most popular stories of the Bible, partly because it deals with common concerns of parent-child relations. Clearly the author (to the delight of parents) wishes the reader to identify the father as the God-like figure, and his two sons as fallible humans in their different ways of relating to God. However, there are other characters and dimensions of this story that leaves one curious about what impression of God and the realm of God the storyteller is truly trying to convey.

A growing number of biblical scholars are inclined to believe that Luke's rendering of the parable is probably not as Christ intended; and instead of telling the story in a way that the hearer was obviously aware who represented what, Jesus may have told the tale and then asked, "Where is God in this story?" Can one clearly conclude that God resides in the character of a father who holds slaves and conveys no clear message of affection to either of his sons until the close of the story?

Where is God in this parable? Possibly, to some extent, in the acknowledgement of love shared finally between the father and his sons; possibly, to some extent, in the banquet feast that celebrated the prodigal's return. The answer will always be "to some extent," since all parties in this parable are wayward prodigals in relation to the other, awaiting a word or gesture of love and forgiveness that dissolves divisions between parents and children, masters and slaves placing them all on an equal playing field as God's beloved and redeemed children who were once dead and are now alive.

Where is God in this parable? And where are you?

Reverend Dr. Arnold Isidore Thomas
Minister, for Education, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH

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Rev. Robert B. Coleman, Chief Program Minister
Rev. J. Lee Hill, Jr., Minister with Children, Youth and Young Adults
Rev. Dr. Joan Kavanaugh, Director, Pastoral Counseling Center
Rev. Linda Tarry-Chard, Minister with Membership, Care and Parish Life
Rev. Dr. Arnold Isidore Thomas, Minister with Education
Rev. Chrissy Tatum, Interim Worship Coordinator
Mr. Christopher Johnson, Director of Music and Organist
Mr. Dionisio A. Lind, Carillonneur · Mr. Robert Pearson, Organ Curator
Rev. Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr., Senior Minister Emeritus

The Riverside Church is a member of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. and the United Church of Christ and cooperates with the Council of Churches in the City of New York, and with the New York State, National, and World Council of Churches.

Cover image: The Labyrinth, located in the Chancel