



ST. MARK
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PC(USA) · BALLWIN, MO

July 5, 2020
10:00 am Virtual Service

ORDER OF WORSHIP

CENTERING PRAYER

This morning, as I rise, O God, I hear the sounds of your world awaking, and I give you thanks for another day. Bless your people this morning, at noon, in the afternoon, and in the evening with mercy and loving-kindness. Show us every hour the way to love each other. Help me to see in any conflicts how to grow in faith through the struggle for peace with my family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and strangers; in Jesus' name. Amen.

PRELUDE

Trumpet Tune

Godowns

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus said:

**You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your mind,
and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.**

On these two commandments hang all of the law and the prophets.

† HYMN

“We All Are One In Mission”

Hymnal #733

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Your holiness, O God, commands that we confess: We have neither loved our neighbors as ourselves nor honored ourselves as your beloved creation. We have judged unjustly, regarded others ungenerously, profited at the losses of those near and distant, borne grudges, desired vengeance, and kept silence in the face of wrongdoing. We long to live in accord with your desire that your way of compassion, kindness, and honesty will govern our hearts and minds, turning us toward lives of peace. Forgive us and lead us. Amen. (Silent Confession)

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

† **SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 10:25-37

SERMON

“Telling Stories”

Rev. MP Panco

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Confession of Belhar 11.3

We believe that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world;

OFFERING

SPECIAL MUSIC

His Eye Is On The Sparrow
Marsha Medley, piano

Hayes

† THE DOXOLOGY

HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation
Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer
Words of Institution
Sharing of the Bread & Cup
Prayer after Communion

† HYMN

"Lord, Make Us More Holy"

Hymnal #313

† CHARGE AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Joyful, Joyful

Smith

†*You are invited to stand, as you are able.*

Liturgist: Ellen Hynes

Pastor: Rev. Dr. J. David Burgess

Associate Pastor: Rev. MP Panco

Parish Associate: Rev. Carol DeVaughan

Dir. of Children's Ministry: Latisha Gilliland

Dir. of Claymont Preschool: Lynne Dauve

Dir. of Music and Organist: Marsha Medley

Musician: Mark Reynoso

Choir Accompanist: Jee Hye Lee

Children's Choir Director: Sarah Vlodek

St. Mark Presbyterian Church

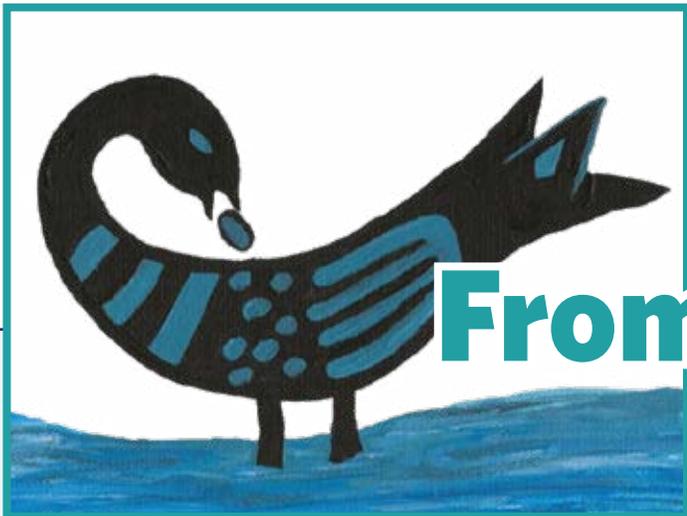
601 Claymont Drive, Ballwin, MO 63011

www.discoverstmark.org

Our website is your online resource for the church calendar, blog, video, and employment opportunities. Please make sure to bookmark it and check in regularly.

WAYS TO GIVE: As we all adjust to this new normal the Finance Committee is making a request of everyone to maintain their level of giving to St. Mark. As a church we have agreed to continue paying all of our full-time staff. This includes our preschool teachers who are still sending out lessons and making connections with their students. In addition, regular bills still arrive and need to be paid. We also want to support our mission partners. To that end it is important that we all commit to making our contributions. They can be mailed to the church or paid online. There will be a link provided at another time on how to set up online giving. Please note that mailed checks will take longer to process than usual. If you wish for your donation to go to a specific area please note that on the check memo line. With all of this said please know at this time we are keeping up with our obligations but we want to be able to continue with all of our efforts. We appreciate your ongoing support of the work of our church.

<https://www.discoverstmark.org/giving/make-an-on-line-donation-to-st-mark/>



From lament to action

by Leslie Scanlon, *Outlook* national reporter

From lamentation to action — the 2020 General Assembly called the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to do the hard work of justice, working to respond to what some referred to as the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice.

Worship. The **worship service June 26** used the power of the digital platform to weave together music, art and voices from around the PC(USA) — including a Zoom choir for one of the closing hymns.

Wearing stoles that were a gift from the Committee on Local Arrangements in Baltimore, made by Jeff Wunrow Designs and featuring a Black fist raised in a symbol of power, Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri and Cindy Kohlmann, the co-moderators of the 2018 General Assembly, called the commissioners to journey in faith from lamentation to confession to hope to action.

“Surrounded as we are by the sounds of respirators and the cries of the grieving and the raised voices of protesters, help us, oh Lord, to hear your voice, and give us the courage to hear that voice,” Kohlmann said.

God provides abundantly “far more than we could have asked for or imagined,” Cintrón-Olivieri said, drawing on a passage from Ephesians. And she recited a poem from Antonio Machado, **“Caminante, no hay camino”** — telling the commissioners “you make the path by walking” and giving them responsibility to find the way forward as they walk in faith.

Virtual GA. Because of COVID-19, this became the PC(USA)’s first virtual General Assembly, meeting via Zoom — with technology that had more hiccups than hard bumps (“Can you hear me?” was the first thing many commissioners said). That format also meant the assembly considered “core and critical” business — referring many other reports to the next assembly in 2022. Some business that did make it through: offering the church’s presence and advocacy for **those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic** and support for the **work of the Native American Coordinating Council and for repairing Native American church properties.**

Co-moderators. Because the opening plenary on June 19 ran late – in part with commissioners **debating what business to defer to 2022,** and in a **dispute over whether San Francisco Theological Seminary remains as a PC(USA) seminary** – the assembly added an extra plenary session June 20 in order to elect co-moderators.

The decision didn’t take long, as the **assembly elected Elona Street-Stewart, an Indigenous ruling elder, and Gregory Bentley, a Black minister,** on the first ballot – with 304 commissioners voting for them, three times as many votes as for the next-closest team. Street-Stewart is synod executive of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and, as a member of the Delaware Nanticoke tribe, an assembly’s first Native American co-moderator. Bentley is pastor of Fellowship Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama.

Their election was emotional, as Oscar J. McCloud prayed during their installation that their paths had been watered with the tears and blood of their ancestors. Bentley pronounced himself to be “hippopotamus happy and dinosaur delighted.”

Bentley and Street-Stewart have **chosen as their symbol the Sankofa bird**: standing in the Mississippi River, representing flying forward while looking backward, a hope, Bentley said, of bringing “the best of our cultures to make the church better.”

Racism. On June 26 the assembly **approved a resolution** called “Responding to the Sin of Racism and a Call to Action” — declaring that Black lives matter; confessing that the church has been complicit in perpetuating injustice; and pledging to “confront and dismantle systemic racism” in the church and in society. That resolution was a substitute for another option that commissioners determined was not strong enough — as Milo Browne, a young adult advisory delegate from the Presbytery of Scioto Valley put it: “It is inexcusable for us to stand in silence as people are being killed.”

Stated clerk. The assembly re-elected J. Herbert Nelson, 61, to a **second four-year term** as the PC(USA)’s stated clerk — the denomination’s chief ecclesial officer and its voice in the public square. Nelson was the only candidate — no one else applied — and was installed with a prayer from his wife, Gail Porter Nelson, also a PC(USA) pastor.

Nelson expressed thanks, saying “I’m still a pastor” at heart — and said “there is a Savior who reminds us you can go to the poor, to the broken, to the widows, and make a difference,” to get out of the church building. “I don’t ever remember Jesus having a church house. Every one he went into, he got thrown out of.”

San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Bentley and Street-Stewart avoided a floor fight

on this dispute by announcing June 27 that they would bring representatives from the seminary and the Committee on the Office of Theological Education together shortly after the assembly concludes to **try to resolve the issue**, using a mediator if necessary.

Budget. The assembly approved a **unified PC(USA) budget** of \$80.1 million for 2021 and \$83.4 million for 2022 built on the assumption that COVID-19 will cause income to decline by roughly 25% this year and next. The assembly also approved a **General Assembly per capita rate of \$8.98 per member** for 2021 and 2022 — three cents higher than the \$8.95 per member rate for 2019 and 2020.

Repentance and action. The assembly concluded **with controversy and repentance**. The controversy: a failed attempt to introduce a statement on the ways “that Black women and girls are disproportionately affected by the systems of white supremacy and misogynoir in communities, the church and society at large.” A vote to suspend the rules to allow that motion to be heard needed 326 votes (2/3 of the enrolled commissioners), but got only 306, with 144 voting against, despite a social media push for the PC(USA) to #TrustBlackWomen.

Asked to address these concerns with prayer, Nelson started with silence, then prayed for Black girls whose “bodies and their minds and their spirits would be broken down in so many ways,” and for their mothers who “fall on their knees and pray for their daughters and cry for them.”

The assembly then spent 8 minutes and 46 seconds in silent corporate lament — the time that Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin knelt pressing on the neck of George Floyd.

“Guide our feet,” Street-Stewart prayed, asking God to lead Presbyterians as they find their paths, to “live out the church’s Great Ends into the street.”