

***Second Congregational Church of Attleboro
United Church of Christ
March 22, 2026
Fifth Sunday in Lent***



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Find us on Facebook***

***The Reverend Dr. S. William Sencabaugh — Pastor
William A. MacPherson, PhD — Director of Music
Katrina Lay — Executive Director, Jack and Jill School
Michele Anderson — Administrative Assistant
Jack Baptist — Sexton***

***We are an Open and Affirming Congregation
BULLETIN AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT***

Prelude

Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele, BWV 654
("Adorn yourself, dear soul, with gladness")

J.S. Bach

Welcome & Announcements

***Call to Worship**

Jim Flaxington, Liturgist

Liturgist: Everlasting God, you are the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow,

People: But our lives are but a moment in time, here today and gone tomorrow.

Liturgist: You have promised for all who believe in you, the gift of eternal life

People: But how we live today still affects our lives and the lives of those around us.

Liturgist: Help us to live every day to the fullest, trusting God will guide our way.

People: Prepare us, God, for the life before us, and may all we do bring glory to you!

***Hymn**

"The God of Abraham Praise"

No. 16

***Prayer of Invocation**

Liturgist: Let us pray together.

All: Gracious and Loving God, you are not a God who simply watches from a distance. You are a God who is active in our lives and who wants to live fully here and now as well as throughout eternity. Help us to seize the moment, to live every day to its fullest so that we are prepared not only for all the joys and concerns of this life, but so that we are ready to live with you. Amen.

Response

"Gloria Patri" No. 734

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.**

Anthem

"Just as I Am"

Bob Chilcott

*Throughout the bulletin, when you see an * you are invited to stand if you are able.*

Pastoral Prayer

Prayers of Joys and Concerns of the People

Lord's Prayer

Pastor: Let us pray as Christ our savior has taught us.

All: 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.

Offertory

***Doxology** "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" No. 34

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Hymn** "Sweet, Sweet Spirit" No. 134
(Sing twice)

Scripture Romans 8:6-11 NT p. 149

Sermon "Deep Work" Rev. Dr Will Sencabaugh

***Hymn** "Rise Up, O Saints of God" No. 590

***Benediction**

Response "Savior, Again to Your Dear Name" No. 711, vs. 1

**Savior, again to your dear name we raise
with one accord our parting hymn of praise;
we give you thanks before our worship cease,
and now departing, wait your word of peace.**

Postlude Fugue in C J.S. Bach
(from the Toccata, Adagio and Fugue, BWV 564)

If you are leaving the sanctuary during the postlude, please do so quietly.

Some Notes on “Just as I Am”

—Bill MacPherson

If you are of a certain age (as I am), your likely association with the hymn “Just as I Am” (Hymnal, No. 354) is as the altar call of Billy Graham’s massive evangelistic “crusades” in the last half of the 20th century. This morning’s anthem, by the contemporary British composer Bob Chilcott, is from a different point of view: not the public spectacle of a come-to-Jesus moment, but the inner struggles of the hymn’s author, Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871).

She grew up in a well-off, educated household. One grandfather was an evangelical Anglican minister, as were two of her brothers. She wrote poetry and was an engaging conversationalist with friends in literary circles. But, according to a brief biography by her sister Eleanor, she was struck, seemingly out of the blue, with a severe illness around the age of 30. The nature of the illness is never identified (perhaps unknown in the 1820’s) but seems to have had both physical and mental aspects. My sense is that, in part, she became severely depressed. Whatever bodily ailments affected her, she lived to the age of 82.

In 1821 she was visited by the Swiss evangelist and hymn writer H. A. César Malan, whom Eleanor described as Charlotte’s “spiritual physician.” Having struggled with feelings of unworthiness, Charlotte confided to Malan that she did not know how to “come to Christ.” Malan told her, “Come, just as you are.”

Ten years later she became a complete invalid, spending much time alone in her room. She wrote in a letter to Eleanor, “there are periods and feelings which utterly disable me, and then perfect solitude is heavy.” She yearned to be useful in the busy household, but, at the same time, continued to write. In 1834 she edited *The Invalid’s Hymn-Book*, to which she added more than a hundred hymns, including “Just as I Am,” inspired by Malan’s advice.

Chilcott's anthem begins, not with the rich, rolling chords of the altar-call hymn but with a single soprano melody, almost tentatively. Are we hearing Charlotte Elliott's voice?

Later, complex rhythmic interactions of the vocal lines and tense harmonies illustrate "conflict" and "fightings within and fears without." A quieter section for women's voices expresses Elliott's faith in the promises of "the Lamb of God." Chilcott uses complicated back-and-forth rhythms between the vocal parts to show how Jesus's love has "broken every barrier" to Jesus's acceptance of our imperfect selves.

"Here for a season, then above," Elliott concludes (and Chilcott states simply) — but here, she says, to demonstrate purposefully "the breadth, length, depth and height" of "that free love."

•••••

Just as I am, without one plea but that thy blood
was shed for me, and that thou bid'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though toss'd about with many a conflict,
many a doubt, fightings within and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind, yea, all I need in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome,
pardon, cleanse, relieve, because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am (thy love unknown has broken every barrier down);
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, of that free love the breadth, length,
depth, and height to prove, here for a season, then above,
O Lamb of God, I come.

The Lead Deacon this month is Charlie Oliver assisted by Nancy Tariot.

Meetings and Activities

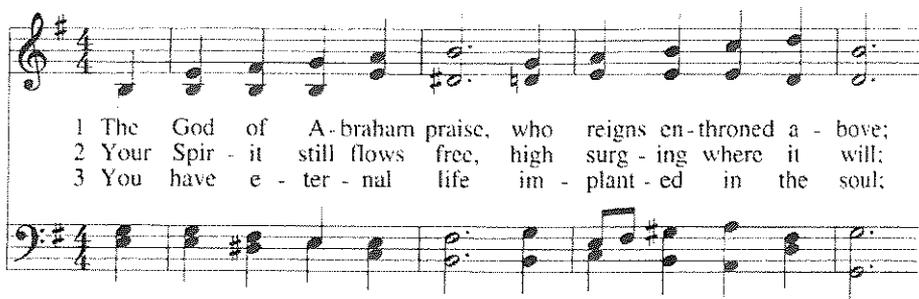
Sunday, 22nd	10:00 am 11:15 am 11:15 am	Worship/Sunday School Church Council Meeting Palm Sunday Processional Practice
Monday, 23 rd		April Voice Deadline
Tuesday, 24 th	6:00 pm	Book Study Group – <i>Climate Church, Climate World</i>
Wednesday, 25 th	6:30 pm 6:30 pm	“The Chosen” Discussion Group Cub Scout Meeting
Thursday, 26 th	6:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Troop 34 Meeting Bell Choir Rehearsal Adult Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, 29 th <i>Palm Sunday</i>	10:00 am	Worship/Sunday School Palm Sunday Processional
Monday, 30 th	3:00 pm	Food Pantry
Tuesday, 31 st	6:00 pm	Book Study Group – <i>Climate Church, Climate World</i>
APRIL		
Wednesday, 1st	6:30 pm 6:30 pm	“The Chosen” Discussion Group Cub Scout Meeting
Thursday, 2 nd <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	6:00 pm 6:00 pm 7:00 pm 7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Service Troop 34 Meeting Bell Choir Rehearsal Adult Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, 5 th <i>Easter</i>	6:00 am 10:00 am	Sunrise Service Easter Worship/Communion

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will be selling crocheted bunnies at Coffee Hour today for \$5. Proceeds will help offset the purchase of yarn for shawls. 

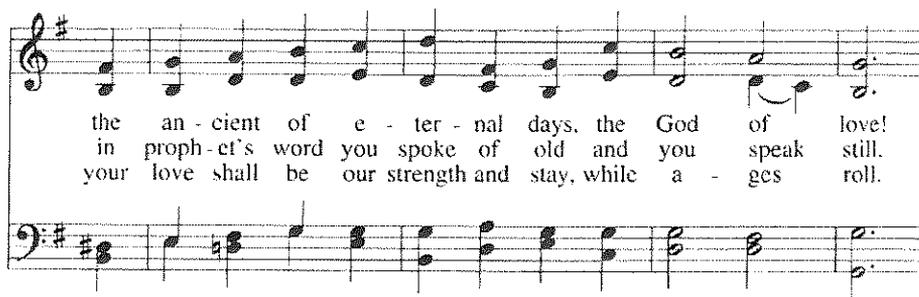
We have great news! Second Congregational Church Food Pantry has been selected again as a nonprofit partner in the Shaw's GIVE BACK WHERE IT COUNTS Reusable Bag Program. The Food Pantry will receive \$1 for each \$3.00 GIVE BACK WHERE IT COUNTS Reusable Bag sold during the month of April 2026 at Shaw's located at 125 Robert Toner Blvd, Attleboro Falls.

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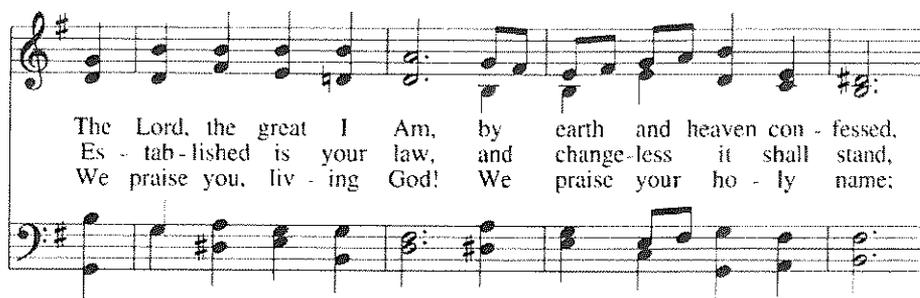
16 The God of Abraham Praise



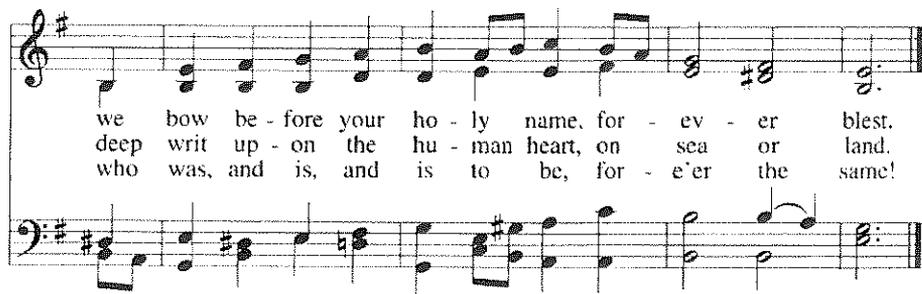
1 The God of A-braham praise, who reigns en-throned a - bove;
2 Your Spir - it still flows free, high surg - ing where it will;
3 You have e - ter - nal life im - plant - ed in the soul;



the an - cient of e - ter - nal days, the God of love!
in proph-et's word you spoke of old and you speak still.
your love shall be our strength and stay, while a - ges roll.



The Lord, the great I Am, by earth and heaven con - fessed,
Es - tab - lished is your law, and change-less it shall stand,
We praise you, liv - ing God! We praise your ho - ly name:



we bow be - fore your ho - ly name, for - ev - er blest.
deep writ up - on the hu - man heart, on sea or land,
who was, and is, and is to be, for - e'er the same!

WORDS: Hebrew *Vigdal*, Daniel ben Judah, ca. 1400;
tr. Newton Mann (1836-1926) and Max Landsberg (1845-1928)
MUSIC: Hebrew melody; adapt. Thomas Olivers (1725-1799) and Meyer Lyon (1751-1797)

LEONI
6.6.8.4.D.

Sweet, Sweet Spirit

There's a sweet, sweet Spir - it in this place, and I

know that it's the Spir - it of the Lord; there are

sweet ex - pres - sions on each face, and I

know they feel the pres - ence of the Lord.

Refrain

Sweet Ho - ly Spir - it, sweet heav-en-ly Dove, stay right here

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Sweet, Sweet Spirit". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "with us, fill-ing us with your love: and for these bless-ings we lift our hearts in praise; with-out a doubt we'll know that we have been re - vived when we shall leave this place."

with us, fill-ing us with your love: and for these bless-ings

we lift our hearts in praise; with-out a doubt we'll know that

we have been re - vived when we shall leave this place.

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Rise Up, O Saints of God!

1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn: Chris
 2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulfs earth's frame: as
 3 Rise up, O saints of God! His king - dom's task em - brace; re -
 4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain: stretc
 5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod: and

rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.
 heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, his word of hope pro - claim.
 dress sin's cru - el con - se - quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.
 forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.
 quick - ened by the Spir - it's power, rise up, O saints of God!

WORDS: Norman O. Furness (1936-)
 MUSIC: William H. Walter (1825-1893)
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FESTAL SONG
 S.A.

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