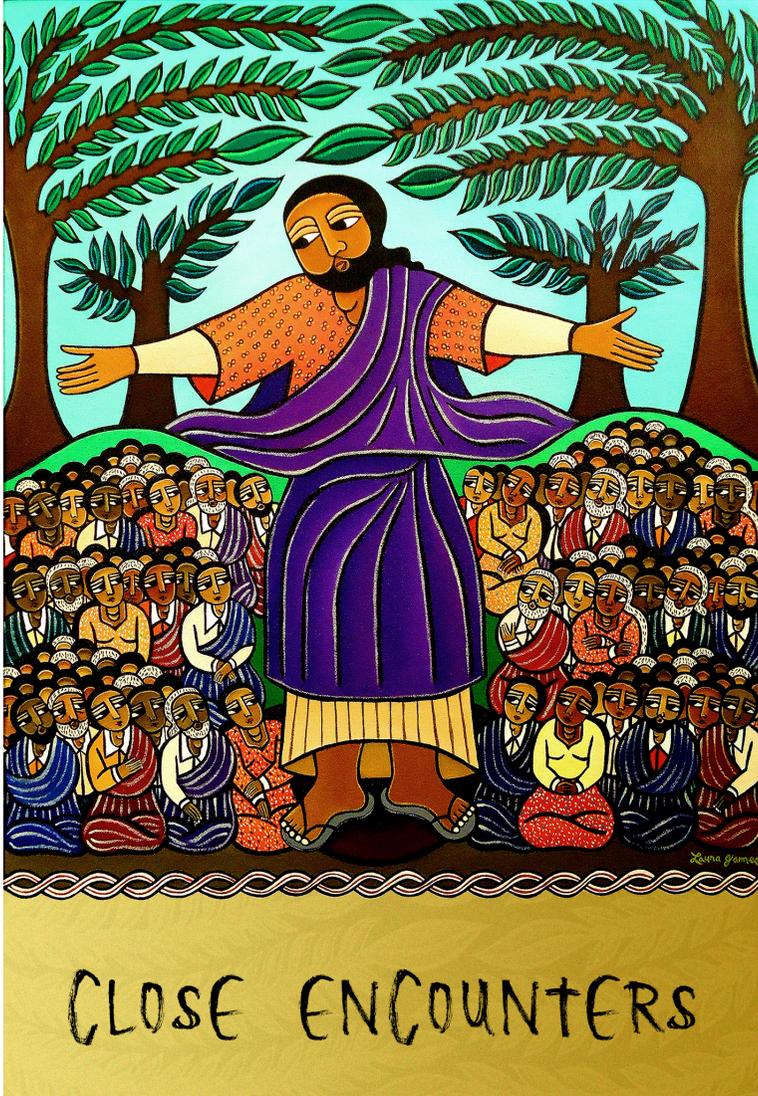


The Riverside Church

in the City of New York



MARCH 22, 2020
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

WELCOME TO THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH

Interdenominational · Interracial · International · Open · Affirming · Welcoming

WORSHIP is at the center of the life of The Riverside Church.
As you prepare yourself for Worship, we invite you to reflect quietly on these words:

“What it looks like and what it is may be two very different things.”

- Dr. Raquel Lettsome

THE LITURGICAL YEAR

The Riverside Church follows the liturgical calendar to mark the seasons of our life together. We are currently in the season of Lent, a period of forty days leading to Easter marked by repentance and reflection on everything in our lives that separates us from God. The liturgical color of Lent is purple as signified by the paraments, wall hanging, and clergy stoles (excepting communion Sundays when clergy wear white stoles).

Throughout the season of Lent we will be focusing on **Close Encounters**, exploring the ways that people encounter God in the lectionary texts and the ways we continue to have closer encounters with Christ in our world today.

Bulletin Cover Image: *Sermon on the Mount*, 2010 ©Laura James
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IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST VISIT:

Complete a Welcome Card and place it in the offering plate as it passes.

A free church tour is offered each Sunday after Worship. Meet in the 1st balcony, no reservation necessary. Tours also take place Wednesday-Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., as church schedule permits, leaving from the Welcome Center / Gift Shop. Reservations recommended. Visit trcnyc.org/visit.

Assistive hearing devices and large print bulletins are available upon request from an usher.

GATHERING

We gather as a community and prepare our hearts to worship God

PRELUDE

LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

Rev. Michael Livingston & Rev. Jim Keat

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Livingston

One: Guide us on our Lenten journey, O God;

**All: give us the courage to venture into the challenging places
of heart and spirit.**

One: Support us on our Lenten journey, O God;

**All: strengthen us that we might learn and grow as disciples of Jesus
Christ.**

One: Join us with others on our Lenten journey, O God;

**All: in faithful solidarity, we will name the forces of oppression and
work together for equality and justice for everyone.**

One: Be with us at the end of our Lenten journey, O God;

**All: that at the foot of the cross we might look up and understand
the gift of your love.**

OPENING HYMN 280

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!
Through many dangers, toils and snares,

I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

INVOCATION

Rev. Lynn Casteel Harper

LISTENING

We listen for the word of God through song, Scripture, and preaching

A MOMENT FOR LENT

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The minister offers words of confession, to which the congregation responds as follows:

One: Lord have mercy.

All: Christ have mercy.

RESPONSIVE PSALM 23¹

Joseph Gelineau



My shep-herd is the Lord, no-thing in-deed shall I want.

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Matthew Krenz, cantor

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Rev. Bruce Lamb

One: The peace of the Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

HYMN 324

Open My Eyes That I May See²

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.

Refrain:

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes (ears, heart), illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,

Everything false will disappear. (Refrain)

Open my mouth, and let me bear,
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share. (Refrain)

EPISTLE LESSON

Rev. Keat

Ephesians 5:8-14

(pg. 194 in the New Testament)

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

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Dr. Raquel Lettsome

Don't Let the Darkness Fool You

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Livingston

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up unto the Lord.

RESPONDING

*We respond to the hearing of God's word through prayer,
passing the peace, offering and monthly communion*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pray in the language or version of your heart.

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.

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.

INVITATION TO GIVE AND SERVE

Rev. Lamb

OFFERTORY SOLO

There Is A Balm In Gilead

Spiritual

Matthew Krenz, tenor

THE DOXOLOGY

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

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & DEDICATION

Rev. Harper

Today we celebrate the ministry of our Social Services programs, which is continuing to offer comprehensive services for those in economic and social crisis by providing food, clothing, and many other resources year-round, and throughout this global event.

SENDING

We are sent out into the world to love God and our neighbors

CLOSING HYMN 171

The King of Love My Shepherd Is
The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.

St. Columbia

Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul He leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spreadest a table in my sight;
Thy unction grace bestoweth;
And O what transport of delight
From Thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever.

BENEDICTION

Rev. Livingston

POSTLUDE

Liturgical Resources for Today:

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²*Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-717132*



The Reverend. Dr. Raquel S. Lettsome is committed to excellence and loves to assist people who desire to move forward in their lives and ministries. To that end, she has integrated over 20 years of congregational ministry experience, extensive biblical and theological training, Spirit-led discernment, and her love of God and people to create RSL Ministries (www.rslministries.com). Dr. Lettsome birthed RSL Ministries out of deep desire to help people develop deeper

relationships with God, live out their sense of call, and navigate life's challenges.

Dr. Lettsome's approach to ministry is marked by honest compassion, profound clarity, and practical strategies for reaching one's goals. She is known for creating safe and encouraging spaces for people to strengthen their practice of ministry, for individuals (lay, clergy, or questioning) to discern what God is calling or leading them to do (whether great or small, secular or sacred) and work through what may be blocking their progress in these areas without embarrassment or shame. When all is said and done, she finds great joy in helping people experience, follow, and grow in God in their daily lives.

At her core, Dr. Lettsome is a preacher and teacher. Her preaching distinctions include the Distinguished Preachers Series at Riverside Church, NY, the George A. Crawley Women in Ministry Preacher at the Hampton University Ministers' Conference, a conference preacher for the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, the Festival of Homiletics, and Working Preacher's The Craft of Preaching. She is a lecturer for seminary classes, conferences, and denominational meetings. Her presentations combine scholarly depth with an eye toward practical application and are communicated clearly, simply, and understandably. She is also a published author with books and articles written in the fields of homiletics, biblical studies, and womanist biblical interpretation and theology.

Dr. Lettsome earned a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies from Yale University and a Master of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary and is the first African American to earn a Ph.D. in New Testament Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary (2005).

Dr. Lettsome is blessed to share her life with her husband, Rev. Lydell C. Lettsome, M.D., and their 2 children, Tiffany (aka Simone) and Luke (the Amazing).

ABOUT RIVERSIDE

The Riverside Church is an interdenominational, interracial, international, open, welcoming, and affirming church and congregation. The church is a member of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. and the United Church of Christ. Riverside cooperates with the Council of Churches in the City of New York and with the New York State, National, and World Council of Churches. Whoever you are: You are safe here. You are loved here. You are invited into full participation in our life together.

Rev. Michael Livingston, Interim Senior Minister
Rev. Dr. James Forbes, Senior Minister Emeritus

RIVERSIDE EMAIL LIST

Are you receiving our weekly emails? Check your junk folder, add us to your “safe sender list,” or visit trcnyc.org/Email to sign up. We want to make sure that you know all the latest news and events at The Riverside Church!

LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

For announcements of programs and events at The Riverside Church, please pick up the Life of the Community newsletter located in the back of the pew or outside the Welcome Center. Visit trcnyc.org/Events for more information and to download a copy.

WORSHIP ONLINE & ALL WEEK LONG

If you're out of town or in need of more Riverside worship throughout the week, visit trcnyc.org/DigitalDiscipleship to watch the Sunday morning Livestream, videos of the sermon and the choirs, and more. Be sure to watch The Word Made Fresh, our weekly video Bible Study, and catch up on Be Still and Go, our devotional podcast.

CONNECT WITH US.

Rev. Michael Livingston

Interim Senior Minister
mlivingston@trcnyc.org

Pastoral and Program Staff

Christopher Creaghan

Associate Organist
ccreaghan@trcnyc.org

Rev. Lynn Casteel Harper

Minister of Older Adults
lharper@trcnyc.org

Rich Glassey

Executive Director of Operations
rglassey@trcnyc.org

Christopher Johnson

Director of Music and Organist
cjohnson@trcnyc.org

Rev. Jim Keat

Digital Minister
jkeat@trcnyc.org

Rev. Bruce Lamb

Minister of Faith Formation
blamb@trcnyc.org

Farley Lord

Minister of Stewardship & Development
flord@trcnyc.org

Amanda Meisenheimer

Minister of Children & Families
mmeisenheimer@trcnyc.org

Rev. Debra Northern

Minister of Parish Care
dnorthern@trcnyc.org

Carrie Quarqueso

Coordinator for Worship & Arts
cqarqueso@trcnyc.org

Rev. Kevin VanHook

Minister of Justice, Advocacy, & Change
kvanhook@trcnyc.org

CONTACT US:

To contact the church with general questions, call 212-870-6700 or email communications@trcnyc.org.

For full staff directory visit trcnyc.org/directory



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