

**Stirring the Spirit**  
**Order of Worship for the New York City Regional Conference**  
**The Covenant Network of Presbyterians**  
**Saturday, May 11, 2013**

**Prelude**

Dr. Walter Hilse, Organist

**Opening Sentences**

1 John 4:16, 1 Corinthians 13

God is love, and those who abide in love, abide in God,  
**and God abides in them.**

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

**And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.**

If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

**Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.**

It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.

**It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.**

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

**For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.**

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.

**For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.**

And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three;  
**and the greatest of these is love.**

**Hymn**

**God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending**

**#422**

**Prayer for Illumination**

Rev. Scott Rennie

**Scripture Lessons**

**Isaiah 56:1-8**  
**Matthew 7:7-12**

**Silent Reflection**

**Litany on the Gift of Marriage**

Rev. Tricia Dykers Koenig

We gather in the presence of God to give thanks for the gift of marriage,  
**to give thanks for love, and for the capacity to make and keep covenants.**

When we witness persons committing themselves to one another, we surround them with our prayers, and ask God's blessing upon them, so that they may be strengthened for their life

together and nurtured in their love for God.

**God honors commitment, selflessness, tenderness and kindness, the qualities of love wherever they are manifested.**

God created us male, female, transgender and intersex, and gave us marriage so that devoted partners may help and comfort each other, living faithfully together in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, throughout all their days.

**We pledge our support to all who marry seeking the well-being of one another, their family, and the community.**

God gave us marriage for the full expression of love between two persons, body and spirit. In marriage a couple belong to each other, and with affection and tenderness freely give themselves to each other.

**We pledge to work for the day when all who honor their partners in love are honored with respect and equality.**

God gave us marriage for the well-being of human society, for the ordering of family life, and for the birth and nurture of children.

**We pledge to support loving families of all descriptions, so that all children of God will be nurtured to thrive.**

God gave us marriage as a holy mystery in which two persons are joined together, and become one, just as Christ is one with the church.

**We recognize in the marriage of Christ and church a metaphor celebrating the joy of intimate union, regardless of gender.**

In marriage, husbands and wives are called to a new way of life, created, ordered, and blessed by God. This way of life must not be entered into carelessly, or from selfish motives, but responsibly, and prayerfully.

**For all who choose the solemn and joyful responsibilities of marriage, we invoke God's blessing on their sacred commitments. For all who are not partnered, we also seek joy and fullness of life.**

*Silently or aloud, in thanksgiving and intercession, all are invited to name couples and individuals for whom we seek God's blessing.*

We rejoice that marriage is given by God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

**Therefore, let marriage be held in honor by all. And let all persons be honored in whatever state they find themselves, by choice or by chance. Amen.**

**Offering**

Rev. Brian Ellison

**Offertory**

**Response**

**Let All Things Now Living**

**#554**

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Hymn**

**O For a World**

**#386**

**Charge**

**Colossians 3:12-17**

**Benediction**