

St. John's United Church of Christ

10 A.M. Worship March 5, 2023

Second Sunday of Lent

Prayer in Preparation

Renewing Spirit, present in the waters of baptism, in the gentle breeze, and in the roaring winds, speak to us where we are and expand our vision beyond the immediate scene, that we may be equipped to follow where Christ leads, bearing witness to our faith and serving with joy wherever you send us. Amen.

Welcome and Announcements

*(Please note the * indicates when you should stand.)*

Opening Sentences

WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Prelude

"Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above"

Arr. Campbell

*The Call to Worship

One: From the safety and comfort of home, God called Abram to go from all he knew to embrace a future yet to be revealed.

All: "Go from," God says, and our hesitant hearts place one foot in front of the other to trust God with the unknown.

One: By night, Nicodemus came seeking greater insight into the teachings of God for the journey set before him. Jesus called him out of the shadows and towards a life born anew.

All: "Go towards" God says, and a new life awaits us. We reach towards a God who has not come to condemn the world but to offer a salve that can heal all wounds.

One: We fear the unknown and that which we lack in understanding. "How can this be?" we proclaim with Nicodemus. And yet, God's call is one that urges us to go with our whole self into that unknowing, trusting that God will provide a way.

All: Love calls us forth into lives of transformation, born anew into new paths of faith. Though we do not know where we are going, God has promised to never leave us alone. Let us worship the One who will show us the way.

*Opening Prayer (In Unison)

God of calls and courage, you draw us towards your loving embrace even as we face what seems like impossibility. We experience heartache and grief, injustice and cruelty, fear and anxiety as daily teachers on this path of faith. As you call us to go into an uncertain and unknown future, O God, grant us the courage needed to let go of all that we have known so that we can take hold of the new life you are bringing about even now. Though we may not know where we are going, God, your way is revealed moment by moment, step by step, and breath by breath. In the name of the One who so loves the world we pray. Amen.

Hymn*Ours the Journey"****#458 verses 1 & 3**

In the midst of new dimensions,
I the face of changing ways,
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples
Wandering their separate ways?

Chorus:

God of rainbow, fiery pillar,
leading where the eagles soar,
We your people, ours the journey now and
evermore.

Though we reach the highest heavens,
Holding worlds at our command,
We are yet a desert people
Searching for the promised land.

Chorus**Prayer for the Transformation and New Life unison**

O God, we all too often wish to go our own way, maintain control, and rely on our own strength rather than trust that you will provide. Forgive us in our unwillingness to live by faith and trust you with providing all that we need for the journey. May God's mercy surround our weaknesses with grace for restoring us to hope everlasting. Amen.

Words of Grace and Assurance of God's Love**WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD****For the Child in Us All****Pastor Lisa****Special Music****"Balm in Gilead"****Arr. Whitman****Responsive Reading of Psalm 121 page 760****Sung Response: *My help comes from God, the Maker of earth and sky.***

One: I lift up my eyes to the hills-- from where will my help come?

All: My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

One: He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

All: He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

Sung Response: *My help comes from God, the Maker of earth and sky.*

One: The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.

All: The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

One: The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

All: The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Sung Response: *My help comes from God, the Maker of earth and sky.*

Scripture Reading: John 3:1-17
ONE: This is the Word of God for the People of God.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

Message

*Hymn	"This Is My Father's World"	#59
This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears, all nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres. This is my Father's world; I rest me in the thought Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas; God's hands the wonders wrought. This is my Father's world; The birds their carols raise, The morning light, the flowers bright, Declare their Maker's praise. Our God has made this world And shines in all that's fair; In rustling grass I hear God pass, Who speaks to me everywhere.	Our God has made this world; Oh, let us ne'er forget That though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet. God trust us with this world, to keep it clean and fair. All earth and trees, the skies and seas, God's creatures everywhere.	

Pastoral Prayer

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

Invitation to Give Generously

(Thank you for being so generous in your care of St. John's UCC and its mission, through your participation and giving. Your stewardship makes a difference. You may make your offering several ways including in church, online, by text at 833-502-0657, or mail. We are grateful for your support.)

***Hymn:** "Accept, O God, the Gifts We Bring" #379

Accept, O God, the gifts we bring of spirit and of clay,
Transform them into blessings on those we serve today.
Rekindle deep within us all a passion to fulfil
The ministry disciples have, empower'd to do your will.

***Prayer of Dedication** *(In Unison)*

O God who calls us to go out into the world with generosity, may these gifts call us from our lives of comfort and towards a faith journey that embraces your love, justice, and compassion for a world in need of your healing. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion

One: Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week, Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, and on that same day sat at the table with two disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

All: This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and gather about Christ's table.

One: This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

Prayer

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: As we lift up our hearts,

All: We acknowledge the God who loves us.

One: As we give thanks to the Lord our God,

All: We thank and praise God for unending grace.

One: It is right that we should offer thanks and praise to you, Creator God, through Christ Jesus our Lord, who comes to harvest the souls of the seeds that have been sown through faith by the Spirit. The earth blossoms, the harvest ripens, and all of humankind rejoices as the Lord reaps the bounty. Therefore, we join as your church on earth with the hosts of heaven in praising your holy name.

RESPONSE: "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord" #51

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!

Heav'n and earth are full of Thee!

Heav'n and earth are praising Thee, O God most high!

Words of Institution

One: In the night in which our Lord Jesus was betrayed. . . .

As often as we eat this bread and drink of this cup, we are proclaiming our Lord's death until he comes again.

All: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again!

One: Send now your Holy Spirit that all who share in this bread and cup may be reconciled to you, Almighty Lord, through belief in your Son, Jesus Christ, and his sacrifice for them.

All: Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

One: Join our prayers with your servants of every time and place, uniting them with the ceaseless petitions of Jesus, our great high priest, until he comes for the final harvest.

All: Through the God who loved us, the God who died for us, and the God who rose again, we, who are united in the Holy Spirit, give honor and glory to you, Almighty Father, now and forever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (*In Unison*)

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 debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing the Bread and Cup

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

We thank you God because you have invited us to this table. Here we are strengthened for the task ahead of us: the loving of the world. Here we receive all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith. Help us love one another and your creation more. Keep us aware of our sins and of your grace in forgiveness. Make our lives a form of praise for your love shown to us through Jesus Christ. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

* Hymn	"O For a World"	#683 1, 2, 5
O for a world where everyone Respects each other's ways, Where love is lived and all is done With justice and with praise. O for a world where goods are shared And misery relieved, Where truth is spoken, children spared, Equality achieved.	O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace, Where time and tears will be no more, And all but love will cease.	

Benediction

Postlude

"I Will Praise Him!"

Harris

Arr. Campbell

Preaching: **Pastor Lisa Hart**
Director of Music Ministry: **Ruth Notch**
Song leaders: **Kathy and Mike Scherr**
Violinist: **Chris Sasse**
Liturgist: **Todd Armstrong**
Usher Team: **Larry Sontag**
Technology Team: **Steve Hawkinson**
Fellowship & Lockup: **Jan Boehm**

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Announcements

03/12/23 Service
Liturgist: **Carolyn Golfin**
Usher Team: **Jim Pisoni**
Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
Fellowship & Lockup: **Lynn Potts**

3/19/23 Service
Liturgist: **Jane Lindberg**
Usher Team: **Larry Sontag**
Technology: **Steve Hawkinson**
Fellowship & Lockup: **Lynn Potts**

Global Ministries requests that we pray with Jordan this week.

A Look Ahead

March [Lydia's House](#) Collection
3/4/23 4-7 PM Habitat Fundraiser Samuel UCC
3/5/23 Communion Sunday 2nd Sunday in Lent
3/5/23 ECC Spring [Plant Sale](#)
3/7/23 11 AM Spiritual Autobiography [Class](#)
3/11/23 6:00 PM Bingo Fellowship Hall
3/12/23 12 AM Daylight Saving Time starts
3/12/23 Third Sunday in Lent
3/5/23 ECC Spring [Plant Sale](#)
3/17/23 All day St. Patrick's Day
3/19/23 Fourth Sunday in Lent
3/19/23 10:00 AM One Great Hour of Sharing
3/19/23 11:15 AM [New Member Class](#)
3/19/23 Easter Lily Order Due
3/26/23 Fifth Sunday in Lent
3/26/23 9:15 AM [Loaves](#) & Fishes
3/26/23 10:00 AM Speaker Amanda Schmitt, Director Camp MoVal.

Please check your **News Notes/Website** for specific information around **upcoming activities**

We pray for **Shirley Carmack, Zona Cetera, Betty Gschwind, Arland Stemme, A.J. Switzer**
and **Paul VanDriest, Katie Wilsdorf.** Please let us know your prayer concerns.



March 11 at 6:30 in St. John's UCC fellowship hall.

Doors open at 6 pm.

\$5 Admission is suggested for adults. Children are free. The monies collected over prize costs will be donated to Lydia's house. In addition to admission, please bring a donation for Lydia's house. BYOB and bring your snacks. Popcorn, lemonade, iced tea and coffee provided. Any questions call Carol Tindira at 314-494-3293

Worship Services

9:00 a.m. - Fellowship in Fellowship Hall

10:00 a.m. – Sunday School

10:00 a.m. – Worship

In-Person, Facebook Live, or Virtual

St. John's United Church of Christ

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