

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Services Canceled
Online Only
4th Sunday of Lent

Mar 22, 2020

Sunday Morning Prayer

Holy God, ever present with us, we are mindful of these times in which we live. Uncertainty, anxiety, and fear are present among us as we listen to and care for one another in these days. We ask that your peace and healing presence be with us, as we pray for and hold each other in love. We ask your guidance and direction as we live out your command to love one another as we are called to love you. In the name of the one who has called us and prepared us for these challenging days, we pray. Amen.

https://www.ucc.org/news_statement_ucc_national_leadership_speaks_out_about_church_response_to_coronavirus_covid_19_03132020

Prayer List

Cathy B	Donna F	Mike L
Tubby B	Bob G	Peggy P
Mel C	Jean G	COVID-19

Call to Worship

God, sometimes, the days are long, the nights are even longer, and we're so tired.
And then You soothe us and bring us to gentle places.

You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

Sometimes, life is moving too fast, and we can't find a moment to breathe.
And then You surround us with stillness and bring an even rhythm to our breath.

You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

Sometimes, we're parched, and it seems nothing will quench our thirst,
We're famished and we can't find anything to eat.
And then You refresh and fill us.

You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

Sometimes, the valley is dark and the shadows are heavy and we're afraid.
But then we feel Your strength, and we have courage.

You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

There are the times when it seems we're up against the world,

**You show those who push the hardest that You have called us to serve.
You touch us, and we are blessed.**

We will praise You and dwell with you forever, O God.

We will worship You this day and always!

Opening Hymn *"Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)"*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MZgXXUW08Q>

Gathering Prayer

Magnificent God
who sees all that we can see and everything that we cannot,
we gather in awe of your vision that is broad and vast.
Be with us now as we worship you.
Awaken us to your holiness,
inspire us with your creative power,
and peel back our layers of anxiety and fear.
Enliven us to trust fully in your love for us
as we struggle and strive to be who you call us to be,
in Christ's holy name. **Amen.**

Prayer of Confession

O Wise and Gracious God,
we are each a small dot, a pixel,
in the picture of your amazing creation.
You have designed us to work together.
And yet, we continue to separate ourselves,
to live as if our strength lies in our individuality.
We confess to you that we often find it easier to celebrate our solitude,
to thrive on our individual gain,
and to seek ways to lift ourselves above the canvas as more important than others.
We pray that you will impress upon us your definition of "one" as together,
and that we will seek both the ability and the courage
to move away from "one" that is each of us alone.
Forgive us, we pray.

Words of Assurance

We thank you, O God, for your steadfast love and forgiveness.
Guide us, we pray, through the life and love you show us in Jesus the Christ,
in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

Psalm Reading

Psalm 23

A psalm of David.

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
³ he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.
⁴Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
⁶ Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Epistle Reading

Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. ¹⁴ This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

Meditation Hymn

“Trust and Obey”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-g4B-vzNHPw>

The Reading of the Holy Gospel

John 9:1-41 NIV

Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)

TH # 497

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

³ “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

⁶ After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. ⁷ “Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

⁸ His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, “Isn’t this the same man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some claimed that he was.

Others said, “No, he only looks like him.”

But he himself insisted, “I am the man.”

¹⁰ “How then were your eyes opened?” they asked.

¹¹ He replied, “The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.”

¹² “Where is this man?” they asked him.

“I don’t know,” he said.

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. ¹⁴ Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man’s eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵ Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. “He put mud on my eyes,” the man replied, “and I washed, and now I see.”

¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”

But others asked, “How can a sinner perform such signs?” So they were divided.

¹⁷ Then they turned again to the blind man, “What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.”

The man replied, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man’s parents. ¹⁹ “Is this your son?” they asked. “Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?”

²⁰ “We know he is our son,” the parents answered, “and we know he was born blind. ²¹ But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don’t know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ That was why his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. “Give glory to God by telling the truth,” they said. “We know this man is a sinner.”

²⁵ He replied, “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!”

²⁶ Then they asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

²⁷ He answered, “I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?”

²⁸ Then they hurled insults at him and said, “You are this fellow’s disciple! We are disciples of Moses! ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don’t even know where he comes from.”

³⁰ The man answered, “Now that is remarkable! You don’t know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. ³² Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

³⁴ To this they replied, “You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out.

Spiritual Blindness

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

³⁶ “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.”

³⁷ Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.”

³⁸ Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

³⁹ Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.”

⁴⁰ Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?”

⁴¹ Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

This is the Gospel of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gloria Patri

TH # 493

Children’s Message

Our VBS theme we picked out for this year is on Trains. Instead of a message, I thought I would share a free Virtual Tour of the National Toy Train Museum in Strasburg, PA
<http://www.nttmuseum.org/exhibits/layouts/index.shtml>

Today’s Message

The Apostle’s Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hades; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic/christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Sung Response *"Hear Our Prayer, O Lord"* TH # 501

Closing Hymn *"Since Jesus Came Into My Heart"*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZ6e1fBVZ1Y>

Benediction (adapted from Ephesians 5:9-14)

For once you were darkness,
but now in the Lord you are light.
Live as children of light!
Seek that which is good and right and true,
and try to live in a way that pleases God.
Look to the light of God's love shown to us in Jesus.
Do not hide from it or ignore the struggles of the world
but awaken to God's call.
Arise, O sleeper, and Christ will give you light!

In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, one God, now and until the end of eternity. **Amen.**

Three-Fold Amen TH # 558



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God's Vision is Broad and Vast: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday of Lent was written by the Rev. Kim Wood, Acting Associate Conference Minister, Illinois Conference, UCC.



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