

WORSHIP ORDER - St. John's UCC
Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 10, 2024

PRELUDE

"Have Mercy Upon Me, O God"

Johann Sebastian Bach

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING THE PEACE

Pastor: May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ

be with you all.


People: *And also with you.*

Pastor: Let us rise and greet one another with words of peace and remain standing for our song of centering.

We greet one another with signs and words of peace.

*SONG OF CENTERING

"Restore in Us, O God (vs. 1)



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -
4 Three-per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that

new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

LENTEN CALL TO WORSHIP

Reader One: In this season of Lent we reflect on our journey of faith with Christ, remembering that the people wandered in the desert for forty years, and that though Jesus himself was tempted in the wilderness, he often went to a deserted place to pray. God knows the trials and temptations we face in our lives can be like crossing through a wilderness, and yet sometimes it is only once we have passed through those difficult times that we have been able to experience how only God helped us through.

Reader Two: We light this candle on this fourth Sunday of Lent, remembering God's faithfulness and that God is the one who leads us on the pathways through the desert and wilderness, and turns the desert into pools of water.

(Light the fourth candle)

Reader OneLet us pray: As the days lengthen, dear God, may we remember that it is you who brings us safely through the wilderness, and that it is you who brings life to deserted places. In the name of Christ, with whom we journey towards the cross, we pray. Amen.

SONG OF GATHERING

"God Loved the World"

NCH#208

1 God loved the world, and lov - ing gave
 2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith,
 3 If you are sick, if death is near,
 4 Be of good cheer, for God in Christ

a won - drous gift, the lost to save,
 who was made flesh and suf - fered death;
 this truth your trou - bled heart can cheer;
 for - gives the flock, by sin en - ticed,

That all who would in Christ be - lieve
 All who con - fide in Christ a - lone
 Christ Je - sus saves us all from death;
 And jus - ti - fied by Je - sus' blood,

should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive,
 are built on this chief cor - ner - stone,
 that is the firm - est ground of faith,
 your bap - tism grants the high - est good.

The Liturgist invites the congregation to be seated.

First Reading

Read by Liturgist

Ephesians 2:1-10

You were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ-- by grace you have been saved-- and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God-- not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

HANDBELL CHOIR

"Ah, Holy Jesus"

Arranged by Joel Gary

INVITATION TO COMMUNION - Rev. Nathan Dannison

Invitation to Confession - Rev. Dannison

SILENCE IS OBSERVED

ALL: Merciful Lord, we confess that with us there is an abundance of sin, but in you there is the fullness of righteousness and abundance of mercy. We are spiritually poor, but you are rich and in Jesus Christ came to be merciful to the poor. Strengthen our faith and trust in you. We are empty vessels that need to be filled. We are weak in faith, strengthen us. We are cold in love, warm us, and make our hearts fervent for you that our love may go out to one another and to our neighbors. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Words of Assurance

One: In the name of Jesus Christ who brings peace and hope, your sins are forgiven. Rejoice! You are loved! AMEN.

INVITATION TO CHRIST'S TABLE

Blessing of the Elements

Pastor: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them up to God!

One: Let us give thanks to God Most High!

Many: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: Let us pray....

Words of Institution

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

This Sunday, Communion will be served by intinction. Please come forward down the center aisle, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup and receive both as you return to your seat. If you are unable to come forward, you will be served at your seat. There are gluten free crackers available on each plate.

COMMUNION HYMN

"Eat this Bread"

The image displays a musical score for a hymn titled "Eat this Bread". It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system of music has the following lyrics: "Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and nev - er be hun - gry. OR Je - sus Christ, bread of life, those who come to you will not hun - ger." The second system of music has the following lyrics: "Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst." Je - sus Christ, ris - en Lord, those who trust in you will not thirst.

CHILDREN'S BLESSING

John 3:14-21

Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

Sermon: “To Serve a Loving God”

Rev. Nathan Dannison

The Liturgist invites the congregation to rise in body or spirit and sing the next hymn

*SONG OF RESPONSE

“As Moses Raised the Serpent Up”

NCH#605

1 As Mo - ses raised the ser - pent up, God's
2 For God so loved the world that God, all
3 That Child was sent in - to the world not

Child is lift - ed high; And all who in that
hu - man life to free, Gave to the world God's
to con - demn but save; Now through Christ's name all

Child be - lieve shall nev - er, nev - er die.
Child that all might live e - ter - nal - ly.
are re - deemed—what won - drous love God gave.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *Pastor*

Pastor: ...We pray to you, our mother, using the words he gave us,
Saying together,

People: **Our Father, in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours now and forever.
Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING *Pastor*

Ushers will come forward to receive the offering.

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOR

OFFERTORY

Lenten Doxology

Praise the Source, who gives us life. Praise to Christ, who shares our strife.

Praise the Spir - it, who sus - tains, bear - ing us through grief and pain.

To the ho - ly Trin - i - ty glo - ry, praise and hon - or be. A - men.

*CHARGE *Liturgist*

Liturgist: Go out into the world
and trust in the faithfulness of God.
Speak truth. Embody compassion.
Live simply. Love recklessly.
Transform the world through the power of hope.

People: *We go in peace to love and serve God
in the name of Jesus Christ.*

*SONG OF PARTING
“Amazing Grace”

NCH#547

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 4 My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to

now am found, was blind but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

*BENEDICTION *Pastor*

POSTLUDE:
 "Litanies"

Jehan Alain

