

St. Mark's Presbyterian Church
Fifth Sunday in Lent – March 26, 2023

Responsive Call to Worship – Lenten Liturgy

Just as the Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness,

**the Spirit sends us into places of uncertainty where we
confront our weakness and insecurities.**

Here we are taught to pay attention to those calling out for care.

Jesus knew that God is revealed at unlikely times.

Like him, sometimes we arrive too late, when tragedy has already occurred:

**after the war has torn lives apart, after the earthquake has
crumbled homes, after the drought has killed crops.**

With Lazarus already in a tomb, Jesus cared for the grieving before turning his attention to his dead friend.

**Let us pray for and support the medics as well as the injured,
the aid workers as well as the homeless, the food providers
as well as the hungry.**

Tragedies may show us the worst of humanity, when greed and malice flourish.

**Yet, we celebrate those who respond with love and
compassion, bringing Christ to the places where death has
brought devastation.**

Hymn 659 King of glory, King of peace

**1. King of glory, King of peace, I will love thee,
and, that love may never cease, I will move thee.
Thou hast granted my request, thou hast heard me;
thou didst note my working breast; thou hast spared me.**

**2. Wherefore with my utmost art, I will sing thee,
and the cream of all my heart I will bring thee.
Though my sins against me cried, thou didst clear me,
and alone, when they replied, thou didst hear me.**

**3. Seven whole days, not one in seven, I will praise thee;
in my heart, though not in heaven, I can raise thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort to enrol thee:
e'en eternity's too short to extol thee.**

Hymn 749 Be still, my soul

- 1. Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to thy God to order and provide;
in every change God faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heavenly Friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.**
- 2. Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake
to guide the future wisely, as the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
the voice that ruled them here on earth below.**
- 3. Be still, my soul: when dearest friends depart,
and all is darkened in the vale of tears,
then shalt thou better know God's love, God's heart,
who comes to soothe thy sorrow and thy fears.
Be still, my soul: thy Jesus can repay
from his own fullness all death takes away.**
- 4. Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on
when we shall be forever with the Lord,
when disappointment, grief and fear are gone,
sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past,
all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.**

Prayer of Confession (congregation)

God who knows us through and through, we confess our memories can cause us to struggle with our faith. We remember difficult times and wonder where you were. We remember tragedies and ask how you could let them happen. We remember our own mistakes and wonder how you could love us. Forgive us when our memories turn us away from you. Remind us that your love never lets us go and that its power holds us and heals us in every desperate moment.

The Lord's Prayer (Debts/Debtors)

**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, the power, and the glory. For ever
and ever. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon *(minister)*

Hymn 384 **O Breath of life, come sweeping through us**

**1. O Breath of life, come sweeping through us,
revive your church with life and power;**

**O Breath of Life, come, cleanse, renew us,
and fit your church to meet this hour.**

**2. O Wind of God, come bend us, break us,
till humbly we confess our need;
then in your tenderness remake us,
revive, restore, for this we plead.**

**3. O Breath of love, come breathe within us,
renewing thought and will and heart;
come, Love of Christ, afresh to win us,
revive your church in every part.**

**4. O tongues of fire, come rest upon us,
so we may speak your word aright;
kindle the flame of love among us;
equip your church to spread the light.**

Responsive Reading Psalm 130 p. 578 NT & Psalms

From the depths of despair, O Lord,
I call for your help.

Hear my cry, O Lord.

Pay attention to my prayer.

Lord, if you kept a record of our sins,
who, O Lord, could ever survive?

**But you offer forgiveness,
that we might learn to fear you.**

I am counting on the Lord;

yes, I am counting on him.
I have put my hope in his word.

long for the Lord

**more than sentries long for the dawn,
yes, more than sentries long for the dawn.**

O Israel, hope in the Lord;
for with the Lord there is unfailing love.
His redemption overflows.

**He himself will redeem Israel
from every kind of sin.**

New Living Translation (NLT)

Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation

Scripture Lessons:

Ezekiel 37:1-14 p. p. 707 pew Bible

Romans 8:6-11 p. 267 NT & Psalms

John 11:1-45 p. 180 NT & Psalms

Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon Life and death

Prayers of the People (*minister*)

Hymn 368 Let Christian faith and hope dispel

**1. Let Christian faith and hope dispel
the fears of guilt and woe;
the Lord Almighty is our friend,
and who can prove a foe?**

**2. The Saviour died, but rose again
triumphant from the grave,
and pleads our cause at God's right hand,
omnipotent to save.**

**3. Who then can e'er divide us more
from Jesus' saving love,
or break the sacred chain that binds
the earth to heaven above?**

**4. Let troubles rise and terrors frown,
and days of darkness fall;
through Christ all dangers we'll defy,
and more than conquer all.**

5. Nor death, nor life, nor earth, nor hell,
nor time's destroying sway
can e'er erase us from his heart,
or make his love decay.

6. Each future period that will bless
as it has blessed the past;
Christ loved us from the first of time;
Christ loves us to the last.

Offering & Offertory

***Doxology 830 Praise God from whom all blessings flow**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
praise him all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

Prayer of Dedication (congregation)

**We place our gifts into your hands, O God. With the power
of your Holy Spirit make them seeds of new life, springing
up with hope and healing for weary souls. In Jesus' name we
pray. Amen.**

Hymn 257 The strife is o'er, the battle won

**1. The strife is o'er, the battle done;
the victory of life is won;
the song of triumph has begun.
Hallelujah!**

**2. Death's mightiest powers have done their worst,
but Christ their legions has dispersed:
let shouts of praise and joy outburst:
Hallelujah!**

**3. The three sad days have quickly sped;
Christ rises glorious from the dead:
all glory to our risen Head!
Hallelujah!**

**4. Lord, from your wounds God's blessings spring:
free us, we pray, from death's dread sting
that we may live, and ever sing:
Hallelujah!**

Choral Blessing

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.

God will be with you each hour of every day.

God will be there, watching from above.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

Benediction

Three-fold Amen

Piano Postlude