

St. Mark's Presbyterian Church
Fourth Sunday in Lent – March 30, 2025

Responsive Call to Worship – Lenten Liturgy



Fourth Sunday in Lent

Written by the Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls

One: Like the prodigal son, we sometimes waste
our lives

All: running toward arrogant and unthinking excess.

One: Like the older brother, we sometimes lose
our way

All: resenting the blessings others receive.

One: But to all, Christ offers grace—a new creation
and a reconciled world,

**All: so let us be glad and rejoice in the steadfast
love of the Lord.**



THE DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

Hymn 17 How blest are they whose trespass

**1. How blest are they whose trespass
has freely been forgiven,
whose sins are wholly covered
before the sight of heaven,
blest to whom the Lord God**

**does not impute their sin,
who have a guileless spirit,
whose heart is true within.**

**2. While I kept guilty silence,
my strength was spent with grief:
your hand was heavy on me,
my soul found no relief,
but when I owned my trespass
and did not hide my sin,
then you forgave my guilt, Lord,
restored my life within.**

**3. So let the godly seek you
in times when you are near;
no whelming floods shall reach them,
or cause their hearts to fear;
O Lord, you are my refuge,
you are my hiding place,
and you surround me always
with songs of saving grace.**

**4. 'I graciously will teach you
the way that you should go,
and, with my eye upon you,
help you my counsel know.
Then do not be unruly
or slow to understand;
be not perverse, but willing
to heed my wise command.'**

**5. The sorrows of the wicked
increase from year to year,
but those who trust the Lord God
know love instead of fear.
Then in the Lord be joyful;
in song lift up your voice;
be glad in God, you righteous:
rejoice. O saints, rejoice!**

Prayer of Praise (*minister*)

Hymn 366 Jesus thou joy of loving hearts

- 1. Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts,
thou fount, thou light for all to see:
from the best bliss that earth imparts
we turn unfilled again to thee.**
- 2. Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
thou savest those that on thee call;
to those who seek thee thou art good;
to those who find thee, all in all.**
- 3. We taste thee, O thou living bread,
and long to feast upon thee still;
we drink of thee, the fountain head,
and thirst our souls from thee to fill.**
- 4. For thee our restless spirits yearn
where'er our changeful lot is cast,
glad when thy gracious smile we see,
blest when our faith can hold thee fast.**
- 5. O Jesus, always with us stay,
make all our moments calm and bright;
chase the dark night of sin away;
shed o'er the world thy holy light.**

Prayer of Confession (*congregation*)

God of love and mercy, when we pause for a moment in your presence, the daily details of our lives press in on us. We recall things left undone; opportunities ignored. We remember careless words spoken, disappointments that trouble our souls. In silence we offer to you our misspent moments and missed opportunities.

- silent confession -

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 347 There were ninety and nine

**1. There were ninety and nine that safely lay
in the shelter of the fold,
but one was out on the hills away,
far off from the gates of gold,
away on the mountains wild and bare,
away from the tender Shepherd's care,
away from the tender Shepherd's care.**

**2. "Lord, thou hast here thy ninety and nine:
are they not enough for thee?"
But the Shepherd made answer, "This of mine
has wandered away from me,
and although the road be rough and steep,
I go to the desert to find my sheep;
I go to the desert to find my sheep."**

**3. But none of the ransomed ever knew
how deep were the waters crossed,
nor how dark was the night the Lord passed through,
ere he found his sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert he heard its cry,
sick and helpless and ready to die,
sick and helpless and ready to die.**

**4. And all through the mountains, thunder riven,
and up from the rocky steep,
there rose a cry to the gate of heaven,
"Rejoice, I have found my sheep."
And the angels echoed around the throne,
"Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own;
rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own."**

Responsive Reading Psalm 32 p. 481 NT & Psalms

¹Oh, what joy for those
whose disobedience is forgiven,

whose sin is put out of sight!

²Yes, what joy for those

**whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt,
whose lives are lived in complete honesty!**

³When I refused to confess my sin,
my body wasted away,
and I groaned all day long.

⁴Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me.

My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.

⁵Finally, I confessed all my sins to you
and stopped trying to hide my guilt.

I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord."
And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. Interlude

**⁶Therefore, let all the godly pray to you while there is still
time,**

**that they may not drown in the floodwaters of
judgment.**

⁷For you are my hiding place;
you protect me from trouble.

You surround me with songs of victory.

**⁸The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for
your life.**

I will advise you and watch over you.

⁹Do not be like a senseless horse or mule
that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

**¹⁰Many sorrows come to the wicked,
but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord.**

**¹¹So rejoice in the Lord and be glad, all you who obey him!
Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!**

New Living Translation (NLT)

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

Scripture Lessons

Joshua 5:9-12 p. 172 pew Bible

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 p. 312 NT & Psalms

Luke 15:1-32 p. 135 NT & Psalms

Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon Lost things

Prayers of the People (*minister*)

Hymn 672 Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult

- 1. Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
of our life's wild restless sea;
day by day his voice still calls us
saying, "Christian, follow me."**
- 2. As of old Saint Andrew heard it
by the Galilean lake,
turned from home and work and kindred,
leaving all for Jesus' sake.**
- 3. Jesus calls us from the worship
of the vain world's golden store,
from each idol that would keep us,
saying, "Christian, love me more."**
- 4. In our joys and in our sorrows,
days of toil and hours of ease,
Jesus calls, in cares and pleasures,
"Christian, love me more than these."**
- 5. Jesus calls us: by your mercies,
Saviour, may we hear your call,
give our hearts in glad obedience,
serve and love you best of all.**

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 these gifts into your hands, O God. Bless them
with your transforming grace so that they may become
seeds springing up with new life in the world you love.
Fill our hearts with that same grace so we can bring
hope to weary and worried lives in Jesus' name. Amen.**

Hymn 640 Softly and tenderly

1. Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
calling for you and for me:
patiently Jesus is waiting and watching,
watching for you and for me.

Refrain:

“Come home, (come home,) come home, (come home),
ye who are weary, come home”;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, O sinner, “Come home!”

2. Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,
mercies for you and for me?

Refrain:

“Come home, (come home,) come home, (come home),
ye who are weary, come home”;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, O sinner, “Come home!”

3. Oh for the wonderful love he has promised,
promised for you and for me;
though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,
pardon for you and for me.

Refrain:

“Come home, (come home,) come home, (come home),
ye who are weary, come home”;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
calling, O sinner, “Come home!”

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