
*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.
May we together experience the presence of God*

+++++

We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude

Welcome

Announcements/Joys & Concerns

Here at the end of the Lenten observance (well, almost the end anyway), we have hints of Resurrection. We have “a foretaste of glory divine,” as the hymnist Fanny Crosby says. As if the Spirit and the lectionary preparers knew that we would need something to help us through the next couple of weeks. As if they knew that without this reminder, we would find it a very hard road as we made our way stumbling behind the Christ who suffers and dies for us.

We start with the Psalm, which begins with a hard question but then ends with hope. It begins with an admission of guilt, or need, or emptiness and then moves toward grace and reconciliation. Without that grace, who could stand? Without that hope, who could stand?

Psalm 130

Waiting for Divine Redemption

A Song of Ascents.

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

2 Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?

4 But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

5 I wait for the Lord; my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

6 my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.
8 It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

“If you should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?” (Psalm 130:3) The psalmist asks an important question and makes a profound assertion. The question, of course, is obvious: “Who could stand?” If God held everything against us, if God kept an account of wrongs and weighed our worth, what hope would we have? And the answer is just as obvious, though unstated: “No one could stand. No one would have a hope.” That’s about as bleak as it could possibly be.

Except that is not where it ends. In fact, it is a springboard into a wonderful possibility. “But,” says the psalmist, “there is forgiveness with you” (v.4). What a beautiful possibility: what a ground of hope and life. The psalm practically runs from there to the end with joy and wonder both. That’s where I’ll put my life; that’s where I will lean; that’s for what I will wait. That – that forgiveness thing. And I’ll be on the lookout for it with more eagerness than those who watch for danger coming over the hills, those who watch for enemies at the breaking of the day.

That’s how we stand, by God’s grace and Christ’s call to move stones and bind bones and within a community that walks with us through whatever comes our way. We can stand. Thanks be to God.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome pilgrims on the way to the cross.

We are learning to follow Jesus.

The journey is long, and the burden of our sins and struggles feels so heavy.

Yet we will hope in God because with God, there is steadfast love.

All around us, we witness neighbors and communities who are lifeless, despairing that they could ever be revived.

Yet God tells us that to come back to life, we must come together.

Year after year of change and struggle have taken their toll—how can anyone bring forth life when we feel so parched and tired?

Yet God meets the lifeless with the breath of life, reviving us again to worship and follow God’s way.

Pilgrims on the way, come let us worship God!

We come to worship God as we learn to live inside out!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, you created us in your own image and loved us regardless of our race and tribe. You said in 1 John 4:20, “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.”

We seek your forgiveness, dear God, because we have lied to our brothers and sisters, saying that we love them when, in fact, we have segregated. Dear Jesus, help us love one another regardless of race or tribe. Teach us to love unconditionally. Teach us to know that through Jesus Christ we are one tribe, one race, and one in

**Christ. May your grace enable us to love one another. In Jesus Christ's name, we pray.
Amen.**

***HYMN OF PRAISE UMH #369 "Blessed Assurance"**

Author: Fanny J. Crosby (1873)

Publication Date: 1989

Composer: Phoebe P. Knapp (1873)

**1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.**

Refrain:

**This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long;
this is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.**

**2. Perfect submission, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love.**

(Refrain)

**3. Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness, lost in his love.**

(Refrain)

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading..... John 11:1-45

New Revised Standard Version

The Death of Lazarus

11 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. 3 So the sisters sent a message to Jesus,[a] "Lord, he whom you love is ill." 4 But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather, it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5 Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, 6 after having heard that Lazarus[b] was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

7 Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." 8 The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" 9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble because they see the light of this world. 10 But those who walk at night stumble because the light is not in them." 11 After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." 12 The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." [c] 13 Jesus,

however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. 14 Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15 For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." 16 Thomas, who was called the Twin,[d] said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Jesus the Resurrection and the Life

17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus[e] had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, 19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. 21 Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.[f] Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah,[g] the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

Jesus Weeps

28 When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." 29 And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet come to the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 31 The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32 When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." 33 When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. 34 He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus began to weep. 36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus Raises Lazarus to Life

38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

The Plot to Kill Jesus

45 Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did believed in him.

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

Children's Sermon

FAITH HYMN UMH #467

"Trust and Obey"

Author: John H. Sammis (1887)

Publication Date: 1989

Composer: Dainiel B. Towner (1887)

**1 When we walk with the Lord
in the light of his word,
what a glory he sheds on our way!
While we do his good will,
he abides with us still,
and with all who will trust and obey.**

Refrain:

**Trust and obey, for there's no other way
to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and
obey.**

**2 Not a burden we bear,
not a sorrow we share,
but our toil he doth richly repay;
not a grief or a loss,
not a frown or a cross,**

**but is blest if we trust and obey.
[Refrain]**

**3 But we never can prove
the delights of his love
until all on the altar we lay;
for the favor he shows,
for the joy he bestows,
are for them who will trust and obey.
[Refrain]**

**4 Then in fellowship sweet
we will sit at his feet,
or we'll walk by his side in the way;
what he says we will do,
where he sends we will go;
never fear, only trust and obey.
[Refrain]**

"Message"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God, our heavenly Father—from whom all families gain purpose, direction and life: When we need bread, you don't give a stone; and when we ask for fish, you don't give a snake; for you are good, you are strong and you are loving. As your children we come to you asking, seeking and knocking and you respond: "Come, child—and open your heart."

Confident in your grace, then, we come as children asking you to hear our prayersas we pray for those who need healing physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually. We ask you to overcome infections, restore broken bones, eradicate cancers, strengthen weakened hearts, take away pain, overcome depression and speed recoveries.

We also pray for strength of mind for sick souls.
Hear our prayers for grieving families: Comfort them.
Hear our prayers for your world, Lord—as tensions run high.

We pray for this nation, Father; please guide our leaders; May we as a nation know what is good, holy and right; and have the courage to do it. And wherever young men and women serve in harm's way—protect and enable them to act justly and with compassion.

Give us spiritual eyes open wide to your vision for us. Deepen our love for you, for each other and for those who have yet to call you "Lord". Meet us on the road and change us as

we learn more of your grace and love in our Lenten journey. In all things, hear our prayer that we might be more like Jesus, in whose name we pray...

Offertory (UM Hymnal 95) Doxology

(Wykoff only)

Offertory Prayer

Almighty and restoring God. As we offer our tithes and offerings, help us to hear the word of hope the prophet shares, not just with our ears but with our hearts. May it call us back to life and service, out of the graves of despair in which we have buried ourselves. In Christ's holy name. Amen. (John 11:1-45)

Departing Hymn UMH #154 "A Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" (verses 1, 3, 6)

Author: Edward Perronet (1779)

Alterer: John Rippon (1787)

Publication Date: 1989

Composer: Oliver Holden (1792)

1. All hail the power of Jesus' name!

**Let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all.**

3. Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget

**the wormwood and the gall,
go spread your trophies at his feet,
and crown him Lord of all.
Go spread your trophies at his feet,
and crown him Lord of all.**

6. O that with yonder sacred throng

**we at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
and crown him Lord of all.
We'll join the everlasting song,
and crown him Lord of all.**

Benediction

May God bless you to be a community that comes to life with and for one another as God's Breath of Life sustains us on our journey. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**