

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

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**We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord**

*Third*



**Prelude – Welcome - Announcements**

**Opening Meditation**

We are now fully on our journey through Lent. Today we will hear from the Gospel of John and John, it seems, is in a hurry to get to Jerusalem. So, even though we aren't ready for this, here we are today hearing about cleansing the temple even before we get to the teaching or healing or storytelling that we love so much. It's almost as if Jesus – according to John – has an agenda, and it begins with worship. No, wait, it begins with the right kind of worship. Not right in form or structure, not right in genre or setting, but right in intention. Right in presence.

All we really need to do is to look at the words that Jesus uses, according to John. "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace" and he says "Destroy this temple."

Now, it is hard to discern what Jesus is talking about. But John tells us readers that he was predicting his own death and Resurrection. He was moving from building to body, from structure to being, from that thing there to this person here.

Maybe that's the key for us as well. We need to find the focus that Worship is about Resurrection. We are being raised up as we gather and sing and pray and commune together around word and sacrament. So, today we need to ask what we do when we gather: "What will raise us up?" What honors God first and lifts the people into God's presence when we come together as the body of Christ? What distractions ought to be avoided. If we are to stand against that which tears down, we need to consider how we are being built up.

Here in the Lenten season, we are looking forward to Christ's resurrection, but we can also look toward being raised with him.

**A Call to Worship**

Lenten travelers, why are you here?

**We gather to do the work of worship.**

Lenten travelers, what happens when we gather to worship?

**We listen and proclaim. We sing and pray. We repent and encourage.**

Lenten travelers, how do we do the work of worship?

**We bring all that we are to be present to God and one another.**

Lenten travelers, what work does God do in worship?

**God raises us up so that we can delight in life together with God and one another.**

Lenten travelers, come, let us worship God together!

**Come, let us worship God together! Amen.**

### **PRAYER FOR THE DAY**

**Holy God, in Jesus Christ you have built for us  
an eternal house, a temple of righteousness,  
a place of gracious plenty for the hungry  
and abundant life for the poor in spirit.**

**Fill us with zeal for the body of Christ.**

**Overturn the tables of corruption and greed  
and upset the imbalance of injustice,  
so that we may worship you in spirit and truth;  
through Jesus Christ, who is risen indeed.**

### **Praise Hymn FWS #2113      "Lamb of God"**

Author: Twila Paris

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CCLI Number: 16787

#### **Verse 1**

**Your only Son no sin to hide  
But You have sent Him from Your side  
To walk upon this guilty sod  
And to become the Lamb of God**

#### **Chorus**

**Oh Lamb of God sweet Lamb of God  
I love the holy Lamb of God  
Oh wash me in His precious blood  
My Jesus Christ the Lamb of God**

#### **Verse 2**

**Your gift of love they crucified  
They laughed and scorned Him as He died  
The humble King they named a fraud  
And sacrificed the Lamb of God**

#### **Verse 3**

**I was so lost I should have died  
But You have brought me to Your side  
To be led by Your staff and rod  
And to be called a lamb of God  
Chorus**

**Gospel Reading..... John 2:13-22 (NRSV)**

**Jesus Cleanses the Temple**

13 The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves and the money changers seated at their tables. 15 Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, with the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 16 He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." 18 The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" 21 But he was speaking of the temple of his body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

This is the Word of God, for the people of God, **Thanks be to God!**

**Faith Hymn UMH #101 "From All That Dwell Below the Skies"**

*Composer (attributed to): John Hatton*  
*Harmonizer: David N. Johnson*  
*Copyright: Harm. © 1964 Augsburg Publishing House*

**1. From all that dwell below the skies,  
let the Creator's praise arise;  
let the Redeemer's name be sung,  
through every land by every tongue.**

**2. Eternal are thy mercies, Lord;  
eternal truth attends thy word.  
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,  
till suns shall rise and set no more.**

**3. Your lofty themes, ye mortals, bring,  
in songs of praise divinely sing;  
the great salvation loud proclaim,  
and shout for joy the Savior's name.**

**4. In every land begin the song;  
to every land the strains belong;  
in cheerful sounds all voices raise,  
and fill the world with loudest praise.**

**Message**

**INVITATION TO THE TABLE (UMH #6)**

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him,  
who earnestly repent of their sin  
and seek to live in peace with one another.  
Therefore, let us confess our sin to God.

## **CONFESSION AND PARDON.**

**Merciful God,  
we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have failed to be an obedient church.  
We have not done your will,  
we have broken your law,  
we have rebelled against your love,  
we have not loved our neighbors,  
and we have not heard the cry of the needy.  
Forgive us, we pray.  
Free us for joyful obedience,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hear the good news:  
Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;  
that proves God's love toward us.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!  
**In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!  
Glory to God! Amen.**

## **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them up to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,  
Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.  
You formed us in your image  
and breathed into us the breath of life.  
When we turned away, and our love failed,  
your love remained steadfast.  
You delivered us from captivity,  
made covenant to be our sovereign God,  
and spoke to us through the prophets.  
And so,  
with your people on earth  
and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:  
And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.  
Your Spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor,  
to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
and to announce that the time had come  
when you would save your people.  
He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.  
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection  
you gave birth to your Church,  
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,  
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.  
At his ascension you exalted him  
to sit and reign with you at your right hand.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,  
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup,  
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,  
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving  
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,  
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,  
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,  
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,  
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God), now and for ever. **Amen.**

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray: **Lord's Prayer**

**BREAKING AND SHARING**

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery  
in which you have given yourself to us.  
Grant that we may go into the world  
in the strength of your Spirit,  
to give ourselves for others,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Sharing of our Joys & Concerns**

### **Pastoral Prayer**

### **Offertory/Doxology**

#### **Offertory Prayer**

*Generous God, all we have comes from you and has been given to us as stewards that we might live and love as your beloved children. As we bring our gifts this morning, we realize what a small portion they are compared to what you have given to us. As we have sought ways to fund church ministry without raising our level of sacrifice, forgive us. If there have been times when we unconsciously favored reaching those with more assets to give and overlooked those who live and struggle with little, forgive us. Guide us in the path of repentance. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. (John 2:13-22)*

## **Departing Hymn UMH 144. "This Is My Father's World"**

*Author: Maltbie D. Babcock (1901)*

*Publication Date: 1989*

**1. This is my Father's world,  
and to my listening ears  
all nature sings, and round me rings  
the music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world:  
I rest me in the thought  
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;  
his hand the wonders wrought.**

**2. This is my Father's world,  
the birds their carols raise,  
the morning light, the lily white,  
declare their maker's praise.  
This is my Father's world:**

**he shines in all that's fair;  
in the rustling grass I hear him pass;  
he speaks to me everywhere.**

**3. This is my Father's world.  
O let me ne'er forget  
that though the wrong seems oft so  
strong,  
God is the ruler yet.  
This is my Father's world:  
why should my heart be sad?  
The Lord is King; let the heavens ring!  
God reigns; let the earth be glad!**

## **BENEDICTION**

Beloved, may Jesus Christ go ahead of you this week, turning over the tables that distract and raising you up to join in the abundant life of the Triune God whose love binds us together as the Body of Christ. Amen.

## **Postlude**