

Order of Worship February 28, 2021
The Second Sunday in Lent

Words of Welcome

Hello beloved people of God. Again the sun has risen and we have risen. And whether or not we have done the work of crawling out of bed and getting dressed, at the very least we have done the work of turning on our device (or slipped out to pick up the service from the mail box), logged into the email and opened this file. In all this we open our self to something larger than the words and thoughts going on inside of us. May the taking in of these words open our hearts to the Maker and Keeper who is the source of life and is with us through all the stuff in life; that the Spirit will enliven us to life in greater fullness. Welcome to these church words.

May the lighting of a candle be a reminder of God's living presence within and all around.

Lighting of Christ Candle

One: We light this light

All: in the name of the God who creates life

In the name of Saviour who loves life

In the name of the Spirit who is the fire of life.

For probably most of us, the words of this first hymn are not familiar. Singing the words to the familiar tune, Bless be the tie that binds, enlarges their capacity to touch us. Let us worship God with the singing of these words.

Hymn: # 296 The clay-stained hands of love

1. The clay-stained hands of love created human form.
Praise love that made us from the earth, the love with clay-stained hands.
2. The healing hands of love gave speech and sight and strength.
Praise love that came to touch and heal, the love with healing hands.
3. The wounded hands of love showed life had conquered death.
Praise love that came in servant form, the love with wounded hands.
4. The hidden hands of love are building up the church.
Praise love that works with living stone, the love with hidden hands.
5. We sing our praise, O Love, for your life-giving hands.
O Maker, Saviour, Spirit, God, we sing our praise to you. Amen.

Call to Worship

Let us worship the God who created all things
and yet hears the cry of the afflicted and hungry.

We proclaim the glory of God

whose greatness is revealed in suffering and death.

Our hearts yearn for the God who names us Beloved,
and invites us to follow in the way of Christ.

Prayer of Approach and Adoration

Maker, Saviour, Spirit, Gracious Triune God,

We revel in your greatness

We revel in your kind benevolence towards us:

 you speak the word of life and restore our souls;

 by your goodness and mercy we are saved

When the way forward is unclear, you shed light.

When we are troubled, you give peace.

When times are difficult, you stir courage and hope.

You hear the cry of the afflicted

 the ailing spirit and the hungry body

 the hurting heart and the yearning for rightness.

You hear the cry of the despairing soul;

 the longing for hope and reconciliation and peace.

In this moment of silence, we listen for the cry within our own heart – perhaps it is a cry for help or relief or to know God or companionship or joy or...

Hear the cry of our heart O God, and hear us as we pray earnestly, together as one...

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever Amen.

Ministry of Music: Your Lovingkindness

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?mc_cid=471198aae6&mc_eid=96e2b6b40f&v=WKg_cWWZKOY&feature=youtu.be)

[mc_cid=471198aae6&mc_eid=96e2b6b40f&v=WKg_cWWZKOY&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?mc_cid=471198aae6&mc_eid=96e2b6b40f&v=WKg_cWWZKOY&feature=youtu.be)

Community Looking Back ~ Looking Ahead

Again welcome to these words. You are welcome to take what is useful and leave the rest behind – I will not be offended! In the journey of faith each one of us is in our own place; what speaks to one may not speak to another, what is life-giving for some, may not be for others. Hang on to what is helpful and let it be bread for the soul.

I wonder where else you have been finding life this past week. What moments remain with you? When did laughter and joy bubble up or tears of sorrow fill the eyes? When did the words, “thank you” come to your lips or, “I’m sorry,” or “I forgive”? Did the beauty of nature (ie the shining whiteness of the full moon) catch your breath or a

goodness warm your heart - the kindness of another expressed in a word or deed received, or the kindness extended to another, or the wonder of little children?

Pause for a moment and remember again and if it is possible, share a story with someone.

Lenten Learning Week 1

In a conversation with our own Dr. J I learned he has been reading books and books on pandemics. Who would be a better person to consult with than Dr. J when it comes to learning about our present situation! I am grateful he has been willing to jot down some of the broad strokes of what he has come to know. Over the next few weeks you are invited to listen in on our conversation.

Week 1.

Kathy: This has been a terrible pandemic for people to endure. Do you see anything good coming out of it?

Dr. J: As we have heard so often, it is an ill wind that “blows no one some good.” It is hard to believe this when so many have suffered, so many have died, and so many are suffering from fear, despair and hopelessness. Yet looking back to our history in the world many things have resulted from adversity.

Kathy: So how far back do plagues and pestilence go back?

Dr. J: In fact plagues of viruses and bacteria have been with us from the beginning. These organisms have preceded us by six billion years, long before humans appeared on the earth. Viruses and bacteria were the basics of ‘life’ on this planet.

Just as modern science has discovered bacteria plays a vital role in the human health - did you know there are 2-6 pounds of bacteria in a 200 pound adult - it also seems highly likely with advances in research techniques (the virus microorganism is much smaller than bacteria) the full impact of viruses in the healthy human body will also be discovered. At this stage, the role of viruses in human health is nowhere near as clear as their role in disease.

Through their persistence and ability to change, bacteria and viruses have survived for almost four billion years, mutating and proliferating even before the continents divided and mountain ridges were formed. Epidemics - *a disease (bacterial or viral infections) that affects a large number of people within a community, population, or region*) and pandemics (*an epidemic that is global in nature*) have been with us from the beginning of human history. More people have died as a result of them than all human wars, starvation, and climate change. These facts cannot be denied. And still they continue to threatened us.

Conversation to be continued next week...

Song: # 498 Sing them over again to me vs 1 & 2

1. Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life;
let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life;
words of life and beauty, teach me faith and duty.

Refrain: Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life,
beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

2. Christ, the blessed one, gives to all, wonderful words of life;
[beloved], list to the loving call, wonderful words of life;
all so feely given, wooing us to heaven. refrain

As we come to a time of reading and hearing an interpretation of Scripture, let us seek the help of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray.

Prayer of Illumination: Psalm 25:5

**Lead us in your truth, O God, and teach us,
for you are the God of our salvation.
For you we wait. Amen.**

Responsive Reading: Psalm 22:23-26

You who fear the LORD, praise God!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify God;
stand in awe all you offspring of Israel!

**24 For you Lord, did not despise or disdain
the affliction of the afflicted;
you did not hide your face from me,
but heard me when I cried to you.**

25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear you.

**26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the Lord shall praise the LORD.
May your hearts live forever!**

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

After Ishmael is born to Abram, God appears again, affirming the sign of the covenant. When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your

offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you...

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

The next verse (that is not included in the lectionary reading) goes like this:

¹⁷Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"

Imagine this elderly man falling over with laughter!! In Genesis 18 Sarah laughed too. The Gospel reading set for today however is no laughing matter for the disciples as Jesus openly talks about his suffering and death for the first time.

Gospel Reading: Mark 8:31-33

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Sermon: Matters of life and death.

Barely does Jesus hear the voice from heaven say, "You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased," when he is driven by the Spirit into the wilderness where he stayed for 40 days – hence the 40 days in the season of Lent. There he is tempted by Satan, he is with wild beasts and the angels wait on him. Jesus does not come out of those 40 days the same as when he went in. He comes out of the wilderness single minded, focused in his message of proclaiming "The Kingdom of God has come near! Repent and believe in this good news!" This is what he is about.

Almost three years later, we catch up with Jesus and his band of disciples. They are heading to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, an area to the north of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is out in front, leading the way as rabbis did in that time and place. We are given privy to the conversation as they travel along. "Who do people say that I am?" he asks his disciples. "John the Baptist," one replies; "Elijah," another offers, "one of the prophet," another joins in. It is apparent Jesus has been freed of family connections; there is no mention of him being known as the son of Joseph, or a Nazarene. And then

Jesus gets more specific. “But who do you say that I am?” Who is he to his disciples? How do they identify him? Boldly, without hesitation we hear Peter speak up, “You are the Messiah.” There was no doubt in Peter’s mind. He’d seen and heard Jesus in action and he is convinced Jesus has all the makings of the leader for which they were waiting. “Don’t tell anyone,” Jesus commanded. “Okay, boss!” And they continue following Jesus on the dusty pathway. At least they are on the way – not only the road, but on the way to knowing Jesus as set apart, someone to be revered.

We, in this 21st century, do not know what it is to be exiled – to live under foreign rule. In our western culture we know of democracy, not that it is without problems, but we cannot really comprehend the depths of the longing of the Jewish people for the arrival of the Promised Messiah; a Messiah that would regain for them the splendour and magnificence of King David; a Messiah that would be a true Shepherd to the people. No longer would they agonize over how, as the chosen people who truly believed in the One True God, they could be under the heel of a nation who believed in a multitude of useless gods. How they longed for Messiah to come and set them free from the oppressive Roman Empire, as if that alone would make all things well.

With their fearless leader out front, Peter is ready to be on the cutting edge of this new kingdom. And then Jesus slows up and turns to face them. One look at his face and the disciples could tell he had something important to say. If it were not so, why would it be placed smack dab, right in the middle of Mark’s gospel. Jesus starts talking about needing to go to Jerusalem and suffering at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the scribes; how he would be killed. Peter, true to his nature, steps up to take charge. What kind of talk was this coming from the Messiah who would put things in right order? We need a pep rally here, not a hope crusher. Peter wanted to hear plans for overthrowing the Roman Empire and securing independence for the little beleaguered Jewish nation. He wants to hear about rising to the top of the heap where the chosen people of God ought to be. He simply cannot imagine that the Messiah will suffer, let alone be killed. The part about rising in three days goes right over his head. This announcement of Jesus simply did not compute with his way of thinking.

With all due respect, Peter takes Jesus aside and rebukes him. Can you see Peter taking Jesus by the elbow and leading him off to the side of the road and in hushed mumbled tones hear, Peter scolding Jesus. “Never Lord, stop talking like that – this will never happen to you.” From Jesus’ response, it is almost as if for just a second, Jesus was tempted to take Peter up on the offer, to take the easy way out, to avoid suffering and pain and death. “If it is possible may this cup be passed from me,” Jesus would pray in the Garden of Gethsemane, “Yet not as I will, but as you will.” Wheeling around and facing Peter, with the disciples in view, Jesus lays into the tempter. “Get behind me, Satan,” he scolds, “You are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

Well-loved and respected preacher Fred Craddock tells the story of how he and his wife Nettie finally got around to making a will. They were in their forties, maybe fifties and they tried to tell their children. The kids walked away, “We don’t want to hear it.” It was their custom when they traveled a distance and on the same plane, they reminded the kids where the lock box was that it has a note inside it saying, “Sorry.” In planning a trip to Ireland, he called his son John. John was not home but his wife Dee answered the phone. “Dee, Nettie and I will be leaving shortly now for Dublin, and I just wanted to remind you where the box was and the key.”

“I don’t want to listen to this,” Dee replied, “Y’ll have a good time. I’m hanging up now.”¹ You know how they feel, Fred concludes. Who wants to hear about death and dying?

The elderly couple informed their son they have bought a burial plot back home along side Grandma and Grandpa. “Do you want to go see where it is?” “No, there would be none of that, was the response. It is a human thing to avoid that kind of talk. And who wants to be in the presence of suffering? Canadian singer, song writer and story teller Steve Bell tells the story of being at the bedside of his father who is dying with cancer and suffering a great deal. Steve wants to know if everything that can be done has been done to alleviate his father’s suffering. His dad says to him, “Steve, go away and make your peace with powerlessness and it will go a lot better for you.” This sounds like a setting your mind on divine things.

On another occasion, he is questions why his Dad should have to experience such pain and suffering when he was such a great man, a deep and faithful Christian; he should be going out in a blaze of glory, spared the suffering. Again, his Dad speaks divinely. “Steve, I am not scandalized by suffering. Around this bed, all the things I’ve wanted most in life has happened in spades: people touching me who have never touched me, kissing me, speaking love that have never said it before. Who wouldn’t wish this on their best friend?”² Wow.

It is a human thing to want to avoid, at all costs, suffering and death. Our contemporary western culture encourages it. Cosmetics, fashion, leisure, sex, entertainment, real estate, sports cars, weight loss, focus on outer beauty – all these to avoid the truth of our mortality. Rugged individualism and freedom is idolized at the expense of others.³ One does not have to look any further than the protests against wearing masks and the refusal of being vaccinated in this pandemic time as a violation against personal freedom. Widespread vaccination for the coronavirus diminishes the spread of the virus and cuts down on infection rates as well as the ability for the virus to mutate. To be vaccinated is

¹ *Craddock Stories*, 2001 edited by Mike Graves and Richard F. Ward

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hY-Kqw63aBg>

³ Gains and Loses: Essay by Debie Thomas on journeywithjesus.net

not just about looking after the self, it is to be considerate of those around us. We are brothers and sisters in this together and only together will the

It is a human thing to not want to hear talk of suffering and death. It is a divine thing to accept the truth that suffering and death are a part of our reality, and the more we can accept and lean into it, the more life will be fully lived. Believe it or not, to come close and accept the suffering within and the suffering of others, is the way to life.

Do not be afraid.

Amen.

RESPOND TO THE WORD

Silent Reflection

Take a few minutes to just breathe... in and out, in and out...

Second Sunday in Lent - PWS&D resource

We are not the first to make the journey to Jerusalem; many have gone before us and many will come after us. From near and far, God's people gathered to celebrate God's goodness on the holy mountain.

**P: We are pilgrims on a journey.
We are travelers on the road.**

L: Jesus often went to Jerusalem as a child to celebrate Passover. Now he has set his face toward Jerusalem again, knowing this time will be different.

**P: We are pilgrims on a journey.
We are travelers on the road.**

L: Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem is somber.

He has no illusions about what is to come.

Still, he goes ahead, doing God's will.

**P: We are pilgrims on a journey.
We are travelers on the road.**

L: Let us pray:

All: God of light, we want to follow in Jesus' footsteps, but we have our fears and doubts. We would rather avoid the pain and darkness on our journey. Give us courage and perseverance when the journey is difficult and the grace to help others on the road. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

Song: #740 Make me a channel of your peace

1. Make me a channel of your peace: where there is hatred, let me bring your love; where there is injury, your healing power, and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

2. Make me a channel of your peace: where there's despair in life let me bring hope; where there is darkness, only light, and where there's sadness, ever joy.
3. O Spirit, grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love with all my soul.
4. Make me a channel of your peace: it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, in giving to all that we receive, and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

Amen.

Offering Invitation

Each year Henry and Edith went the county fair it seemed they had the same conversation; Henry would comment about wanting to go for a helicopter ride and Edith would remind him how expensive it was - \$50 bucks is 50 bucks.

So now they are getting close to their 80's and standing there next to the helicopter pad, Tom again said he would like to go for a ride – how many more years did they have anyways. And as usual, Jean started in reminding him 50 bucks is 50 bucks.

Overhearing the conversation the pilot offered to take them up for a ride for free so long as they did not say anything. The elderly couple readily accepted the offer and so up in the air they went. The pilot dipped and dived, did somersaults – but there was not one word spoken. Finally the pilot asked how they could remain silent and that is when Henry confessed he was going to say something when Edith fell out, but 50 bucks is 50 bucks.

On the offering plate, putting our '50 bucks' together make possible the mission and ministry of Knox-Calvin. Let us be intentional in giving this week both in financial ways and in servicing others.

Prayer of Dedication, Thanksgiving and Intercession.

As the beloved of God, treasured and precious, let us offer prayers of dedication, thanksgiving and intercession.

Let us pray.

Gracious God, we give thanks for the many ways you have faithfully provided for all our needs and then much more – plenty to share. May the sharing of our resources enable to coming of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

We give thanks for the ways our lives are held secure in uncertain times by our trust in you. We are grateful for:

moments in these months of pandemic that made us laugh or smile;
 moments when we felt your gifts of courage and patience;
 times when you helped us overcome temptation;
 the people who love us and give us encouragement;

We are grateful that you hear the prayers of our hearts.

Hear us as we name in silence the needs and concerns we carry today:
Pause and listen to the concerns of the heart...

We pray for the well-being of the elderly who once sat among us who are now in places of assistance and care: Fred & Peggy, Mary, Roeli, Isabel, Eldie, Shirley, Irene, and Liz. We pray your graces of healing and strength for Henk and Lois and Nancy.

We pray for people, places and situations deeply in need of your grace, especially as they face the fears and frustrations of coping with COVID-19... *pause*
 We pray for those who struggle to feed, clothe or house themselves and their families, and all those who worry about their economic future... *pause*
 We pray for those who are weak or vulnerable for any reason, and for all who lack dignity and respect in our community... *pause*
 We pray for the earth and its well-being, that areas and species under threat will be cared for... *pause*
 We pray for peace with justice in regions of the world facing turmoil... *pause*
 And we pray for all those offering leadership and service in these times of hope and anxiety, for those planning how to offer vaccines in our community, and for those uncertain about vaccination... *pause*

By the power of your Spirit, O God, work in us and through us. May we bring the light and love of your kingdom into our relationships and our community in all we do and say. We continue in prayer as we sing this sending out song...

Sending Out Hymn: #202 We lay our broken world

1. We lay our broke world in sorrow at your feet,
 haunted by hunger, war and fear, oppressed by power and hate.
2. Here human life seems less than profit, might and pride,
 though to unite us all in you, you lived and loved and died.
3. We bring our broken towns, our neighbours hurt and bruised;
 you show us how old pain and wounds for new life can be used.
4. We bring our broken loves, friends parted, families torn;
 then in your life and death we see that love must be reborn.
5. We bring our broken selves confused and closed and tired;
 then through your gift of healing grace new purpose is inspired.
6. O Spirit, on us breathe with life and strength anew;
 find in us love, and hope, and trust, and lift us up to you. Amen.

Benediction

One: In work or in worship

All: God is with us

One: Gathered or scattered

All: God is with us

One: Now and always

All: God is with us.

May the Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from the other.

Closing Song #731

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends,

Shalom, shalom

God's peace go with you

God's peace go with you

Shalom, shalom.