

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 11, 2018
8:15a 10:30a

Welcome to Trinity United Church of Christ. We seek to offer a warm greeting to our visitors, whether you are visiting the area or seeking a church family. To assist you as you worship, we have large print bulletins and hearing assistance devices available. Please see an usher for assistance. We would be happy for you to sign the guest book in the gathering area while you are with us this morning. Whoever you are, wherever you are in life's journey, we are glad that you have come, and pray that you will be blessed by your worship experience. Come and see what God is doing!

denotes the congregation standing as you are able; congregational responses in **bold print*

Someone writing in The Upper Room a few years ago told of a Sunday School experience when the teacher, who was a music teacher at a school, drew a profusion of black dots on a white sheet of paper. None of the pupils could make anything out of them. Then the teacher drew a few connecting lines, put in a few rests, and a clef at the beginning. It was then that the black dots took the form of a music score. On sounding the notes, the students found themselves humming The Doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow..." In this time of worship we seek to connect our life's disconnected dots. Daily living is made up of a little of this and a little of that, small events and brief moment that occur now and then along the way. And often it is difficult for us to see that these have any meaning or, if so, what the meaning is. In worship we seek a God's-eye view of what we are; we seek to see ourselves as we are seen by God. This is to see our life in perspective and entire – not as a meaningless scattering of dots on a black page, but as a musical score that sings, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow..." Then each new day of living, each common task, becomes simply another note in this one majestic song.

PRELUDE – "As Moses Raised the Serpent Up" - *Traditional*

TIME OF SHARING

PREPARING OUR HEARTS AND MINDS FOR WORSHIP

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We are grateful for new beginnings—
for new light following darkness, for new hope following despair,
for new faith following doubt, for new peace following tension,
for new confidence following uncertainty, for new love following rejection.

* PRAYER OF INVOCATION

**God of infinite patience, we call on you once more,
knowing that you have every reason to question our coming together.**

We have worshiped without expectation.

**We have gathered without diligent preparation,
as if meeting you laid no requirements on us.**

**Amid the complexities of our lives,
we have forgotten to set aside times to be still before you.
Sometimes we feel as if we are bitten by snakes all week long,
so we assemble here for some relief and healing.**

O God, will you meet us as we are?

*GATHERING HYMN # 605 – “As Moses Raised the Serpent Up”

TIME OF CONFESSION

Our time of penitence before God gives us the opportunity to rid ourselves of the weights we carry,
the lingering sense that we have not lived up to our full potential, that we have cheated others,
that we are disoriented and mired down in troubles of our own making.

Let our individual confessions be gathered up in the confessions of the church.

We are well aware, all knowing God,

that the inner resources of our souls are to you as an open book.

You know the secrets that are hidden from others and even hidden from ourselves.

You see both the deed and the motive.

You know both the action and the thought.

You are able to separate what we say from what we mean.

Pardon us, we pray, and cleanse us from the inside out.

Now let us silently reflect on the personal struggles and fears that keep us from being fully free.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God loved the world so much that Jesus Christ was sent to show us the way to eternal life.

We are not condemned, but offered saving grace.

Come to the light.

Let its warmth melt away our resistance to God's truth.
We are re-created in Jesus Christ that we may do the good
that God intends and make that goodness our way of life.

* RESPONSE # 188 "Give Me a Clean Heart"

Give me a clean heart so I may serve you.

God, fix my heart so that I may be used by you.

For I am not worthy of all these blessings.

Give me a clean heart and I'll follow you.

* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Shall tribulation or distress,

or persecution or famine,

or nakedness or peril of sword?

**No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Christ, who loves us.
We are sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present,
nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation
will be able to separate us from the love of Christ Jesus our Lord.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

ANTHEM

"Were You There?"

Arr. Brian L. Hanson

Senior Choir

Lucy Greene, Cello

THE WORD OF GOD

Numbers 21:4-9 Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

HYMN # 208 – "God Loved the World"

QUIET PREPARATION

SERMON

* THE PRAYER FOR THE MORNING AND OUR LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

For we ask it in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying:

**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.**

**And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever. Amen**

PRAYER RESPONSE "Jesus, Remember Me" (*sing twice*)

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

THE GIVING OF OURSELVES AND OUR OFFERINGS

Paul said of the Christians of Macedonia,

"they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means,
begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints."

To our visitors - - the finances of the church are the responsibility of our church members.

As our guests, we ask visitors to simply pass the offering plate to the person sitting next to you in the pew.

Please sign the Registration Booklet at the end of each pew, then pass it to the next person. Thank you!

OFFERTORY – "Help Us Accept Each Other" – *C. Callahan*

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE #785 - "We Give You"

We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;

All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

**Following the example of that early church in Macedonia,
we voluntarily and happily give these tithes and offerings for the sake of others.**

***CLOSING HYMN # 388 – “Help Us Accept Each Other”**

***COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon,

where there is doubt, faith,

where there is despair, hope,

where there is darkness, light,

where there is sadness, joy.

O, divine Master,

grant that I may not so much

seek to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love;

for it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

*** POSTLUDE – “God Loved the World” – R. Hobby**

“Jesus Remember Me”

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