

Order of Worship

2nd Sunday in Lent
March 16, 2025



Gathering and Welcome *Be Thou My Vision*

Prelude *Grace Greater Than All Our Sin* – arr. Melody Bober
Jessye Whitis, pianist

***Call to worship** (Psalm 27:1)

The Lord is my light and my salvation;

Whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;

Of whom shall I be afraid?

Come, seek God in this time of worship.

***Opening Hymn # 250** *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

***Call to confession**

When we cry to God in prayer and confession, God hears. Let us approach God's throne of grace with confidence and faith.

***Prayer of confession**

Eternal God, as enemies circle and fear grows large, the distance between us feels like absence and we come to believe you are hidden and concealed. Forgive our doubt. Forgive our lack of spiritual seeking. Forgive us when we make our faith all about what you might do for us rather than how we might serve you and work at right relationship with you. Amen.

Assurance of pardon

God does not forsake us in times of trial. Our God is a gracious God, abounding in steadfast love. Know that in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven and be at peace. **Amen.**

Choral Anthem *Like a River In My Soul* – arr. Tim Osiek

Jessye Whitis, director

Prayer for illumination

Merciful God, open us to your Word and your way. Help us to seek you, your truth, and the message you intend for us today. Amen.

Scripture readings Philippians 3: 17 – 4: 1; Luke 13: 1 - 9

Sermon *The Fantastic Number Three* Rev. Kathy Vineyard, H.R.

***Affirmation of faith** (from a Brief Statement of Faith)

**We trust in God,
whom Jesus called Abba, Father.
In sovereign love God created the world good
and makes everyone equally in God's image,
male and female, of every race and people,
to live as one community.
But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator.
Ignoring God's commandments,
we violate the image of God in others and ourselves,
accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature,
and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care.
We deserve God's condemnation.
Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation.
In everlasting love,
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people
to bless all families of the earth.
Hearing their cry,
God delivered the children of Israel
from the house of bondage.
Loving us still,
God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.
Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child,
like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home,
God is faithful still.**

Hymn # 12 *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Call for the offering

God calls us to lives of grateful generosity. Let us praise the giver of all good gifts through our offering today.

Offertory *My Faith Has Found a Resting Place* – arr. Cindy Berry
Jessye Whitis, pianist

Doxology #606 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Prayer of dedication

God of grace, you provide for us in amazing ways. May our offerings provide for others and be used to further Christ's ministry and mission. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

God our creator, you made us for community and communion. You call us to the path of love and justice. You entrust us with gifts and talents and a planet that resources and provides. Yet, we live in a world torn by greed and violence. So, we pray for peace. Our nation, communities, and homes are tense with conflict and division. So, we pray for mutual respect and an ear for understanding. Our souls are stressed, stretched thin by responsibilities, exhausted by conflict, disappointed to not be heard or seen or understood. So, we pray for sabbath, for rest and refreshment, for friends and neighbors who can and will understand. God of comfort, stand with us in these distressing times so we may recall your promise that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall separate us from your love through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Compassionate God, you bear the pain of the world. Bless those who are sick, suffering and struggling. May we turn to you for help and healing, instead of the shallow comforts and superficial sources the world is so keen to sell us. Be the rock to which we cling, strengthening and steadying us when we are at risk of falling. Open us to your presence, especially when we are distracted, and you feel hard to find.

Eternal God, as we work and wait for your renewed creation, hear these prayers of your people. Now, we lift up the prayer Christ taught us by praying together, "**Our Father ...**"

Hymn of Sending # 157 *I Danced in the Morning

Charge and benediction (Psalm 27:14)

Wait for the Lord. Be strong.
Let your heart take courage.

May the grace, hope, peace and love of God our Creator,
Redeemer and Sustainer be with you now and always. Amen.

Postlude *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* Jessye Whitis, pianist

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott.