



A Service for the Worship of God

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 29, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

Gathering Around God's Word

Prelude

Jim Pera

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong

***Call to Worship**

Rev. Laura Nile

*One: In the buds on the trees eager to burst,
in the flowers poking their heads out of the dirt,*

All: we see signs of hope.

*One: In a parent's anxiety over a lost job or a child's worry about getting sick,
in the loneliness of a loved one quarantined in a nursing home,
or a doctor's family worried about her safety,*

All: we find our comfort in God's love.

*One: In a phone call to check on a neighbor,
in a friendly wave to someone across the street,
in the words of encouragement we offer to the empty-hearted,*

All: we discover a sense of peace and possibility. Thanks be to God!

Hymn # 409

"God Is Here"

verses 1 and 4

The Hymn is printed below.

Please sing along to verses 1 and 4.

1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an

of - fer praise and prayer, may we find in
 life - long need of grace; here are ta - ble,
 Shep - herd's flock and fold; here as bread and
 age of change and doubt keep us faith - ful

full - er mea - sure what it is in Christ we share.
 font, and pul - pit; here the cross has cen - tral place.
 wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.
 to the gos - pel; help us work your pur - pose out.

Here, as in the world a - round us, all our
 Here in hon - es - ty of preach - ing, here in
 Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in
 Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we

var - ied skills and arts wait the com - ing
 si - lence, as in speech, here, in new - ness
 wor - ship to ex - plore what it means in
 have to give, re - ceive: we, who can - not

of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

***Prayer of Confession**

in unison

We are set free by your saving grace, Generous God, yet we must confess how we are still bound. Our pride can make us slow to forgive others. Our brokenness can make us slow to forgive ourselves. We hurt people by our actions or our apathy. We cling to our fears, for they are so familiar and comfortable. We seem unable to throw off the grave clothes of our habitual sin. Yet, in every corner of our lives, in every shadow we fear, into the cold embrace of death itself, you come with steadfast love. In Jesus Christ, you set us free, and we are thankful.

(Silence for personal reflection and confession.) Amen.

*Assurance of Forgiveness

*One: Friends, hear the Good News! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
We can put our hope in God, for God offers us love that never fades,
and life that never ends.*

All: Hope, love and grace abide. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Response

Hymn #71, refrain only

**Surely it is God who saves me;
I will trust and not be afraid.
For the Lord is my strong-hold and my sure defense,
and God will be my Savior.**

Hearing God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading

John 11:1-16

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." 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." Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" 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. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them."

After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Anthem

"Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

Ruth Mappes Whatley

Scripture Reading

John 11:17-27

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

Children's Time

Scripture Reading

John 11:28-45

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." And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 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. 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."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 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." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. 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." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 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." Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Sermon

"Unbinding Lazarus"

*Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong****Responding to God's Word******Moment for Meditation*****Hymn # 209**

"My Song Is Love Unknown"

*verses 1 and 5**The Hymn is printed below.**Please sing along to verses 1 and 5.*

My Song Is Love Unknown 209

1 My song is love un - known, my Sav - ior's love to
 2 He came from heav - en's throne sal - va - tion to be -
 3 Some - times we strew his way, and his sweet prais - es
 4 Un - heed - ing, we will have our dear Lord made a -
 5 Here might I stay and sing, no sto - ry so di -

me, love to the love - less shown that they might love - ly
 stow; the world that was his own would not its Sav - ior
 sing, re - sound - ing all the day ho - san - nas to our
 way, a mur - der - er to save, the prince of life to
 vine: nev - er was love, dear King, nev - er was grief like

be. O who am I that for my sake my
 know. But O my Friend, my Friend in - deed, who
 King. Then "Cru - ci - fy!" is all our breath, and
 slay. Yet stead - fast he to suf - fering goes, that
 thine. This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise I

Lord should take frail flesh, and die?
 at my need his life did spend!
 for his death we thirst and cry.
 he his foes from thence might free.
 all my days could glad - ly spend.

***Affirmation of Faith**

(Adapted from A Brief Confession of Faith)

In life and death, we belong to God. We trust in one God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ. Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain, and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the powers of sin and evil, delivering us from death to eternal life.

We trust in the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, and sets us free to accept ourselves, and to love God and neighbor. In gratitude to God we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks, and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, Come Lord Jesus!

Presentation of Offerings

***Presentation Hymn #223**

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross’

verse 4

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

***Hymn # 215**

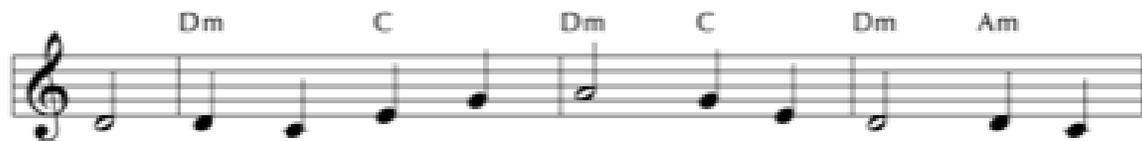
“What Wondrous Love Is This?”

verses 1, 3, and 4

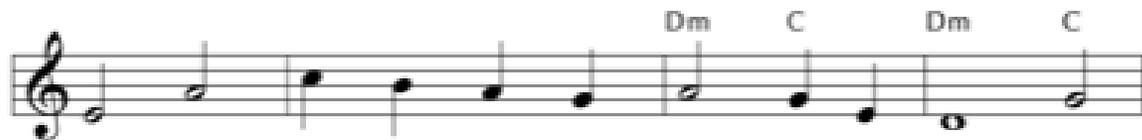
The Hymn is printed below.

Please sing along, omitting verse 2

What Wondrous Love Is This 215



1 What won - drous love is this, O my soul, O my
 2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing
 3 To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will
 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing



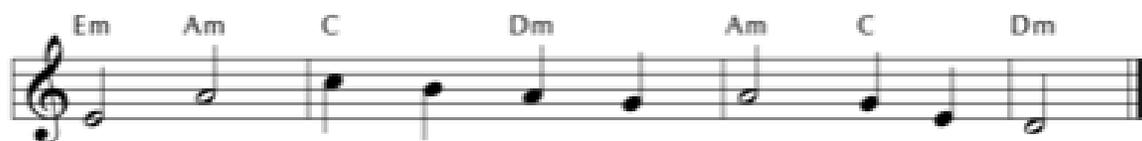
soul, what won - drous love is this, O my soul! What
 down, when I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when
 sing, to God and to the Lamb, I will sing; to
 on; and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and



won - drous love is this that caused the Lord of
 I was sink - ing down be - neath God's righ - teous
 God and to the Lamb who is the great I
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joy - ful



bliss to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul, for my
 frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul, for my
 AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing, I will
 be, and through e - ter - ni - ty, I'll sing on, I'll sing



soul, to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul!
 soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul!
 sing; while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing!
 on; and through e - ter - ni - ty, I'll sing on.

*Benediction

*Postlude