

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP
FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT
SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
BLACK HISTORY MONTH
BLANKET MONTH
FEBRUARY 21, 2021**

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE

A PRAYER OF PREPARATION

We are grateful, Creator, for sacred water that flows in our bodies and through the earth. Water is a powerful force that both creates and destroys, sustains and erodes, deposits and washes away. In this time together may we seek ways to restore good relations, and remember all the ways your gift of water is life. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

SENTENCES OF ADORATION

OPENING HYMN: IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST I GLORY

193

1 In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time;
all the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.

2 When the woes of life o'ertake me, hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
never shall the cross forsake me. Lo! it glows with peace and joy.

3 When the sun of bliss is beaming light and love upon my way,
from the cross the radiance streaming adds more luster to the day.

4 Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, by the cross are sanctified;
peace is there that knows no measure, joys that through all time abide.

5 In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time;
all the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Pastor: Through healing waters, through troubled waters, through still waters
through dangerous waters, through welcoming waters,

Unison: God is with us.

People: Come, let us worship.

REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:

Most merciful God, whose Son Jesus Christ was tempted in every way, yet without sin, we confess before you that we have sinned; we have hungered after that which does not satisfy; we have compromised with evil; we have doubted your power to protect us. Forgive our lack of faith; have mercy on

our weakness. Restore in us such love and trust that we may walk in your ways and delight in doing your will.

ASSURANCE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:

Old Testament: Genesis 9:8 – 17

Epistle: I Peter 3:18 – 22

Gospel: Mark 1:9 - 15

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SPECIAL MUSIC: *I KNOW I*

Darin Jellison

SERMON: *Promises, Promises*

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL AND WORK

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

**I believe in God the Creator,
who made me and all things,
who set me on my path in this world.**

**I believe in God the Savior,
who is one with the Creator,
who rescued me and all creation
from the depredations of our violations
against God and creation.**

**This man, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ,
walked a path through this world,
taking on human form having been born of a woman
through the power of the Holy Spirit.
He lived and worked in this world among people just like me.
He walked God's path to death on a cross,
and rose from the dead to open our pathway to eternal life.**

**I believe in God the Holy Spirit, my counselor and guide,
who is one with the Creator and the Christ,
who through the body and blood of Jesus
brings me into communion with all people, past, present and future;
who calls me to walk a sacred way of life through this world,
caring for creation and the people I meet on the way,
loving them, helping them, welcoming them without prejudice,
being God's hands and feet in the world.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: To you, O God, we pray. In you, O God, we trust. For you, O God, we wait. Lead us, so that we may always follow in your way. Teach us so that we may remain steadfast and faithful. Remind us of our covenant, so that we may be a covenantal people, striving to care for all of creation as you care for us. Where there is brokenness and discord in your creation...

name parts of creation that are in unrest – environmental and social.

Where there is death and dying...

*name people, places and species that have died or are dying,
including endangered species.*

Where there is isolation, exile, and forced migration...

name people, places, and species being displaced.

Pastor: Please send reminders of your love and, where possible, help us to be your messengers.

Pause for private intercessions

Gracious God, as you have promised, may it come to pass.
We pray in Christ's name and offer the prayer He offered;

Unison: Eternal Spirit,

Earth – maker, Pain – bearer, Life – giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be,

Father and Mother of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!

**The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the
World!**

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom

Sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptations and testing, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

**For your reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen**

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

SPECIAL MUSIC: REDEEMED – Big Daddy Weave

Darin Jellison

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Unison: Creator God, in all that we do, all that we say, and all that we give, may we live out your covenant to care for all creation. Amen.

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY IN THE TRADITION OF THE MEAL

HYMN: *COME, GATHER IN THIS SPECIAL PLACE*

335

1 Come, gather in this special place; the table here is long and wide;
For all who heed communion's call, there's room for thousands side by side.

2 The grapes have yielded essence pure, a drink to quench the gravest thirst;
The cup is passed from hand to hand, and each will sense despair reversed.

3 The bread is freshly baked today, a fragrant feast of grain supplied;
And even crumbs that dust our palms will leave souls fully satisfied.

4 Come, gather in this special place; the table here is long and wide;
For all who heed communion's call, there's room for thousands side by side.

Invitation

Discernment

Pastor: Loving and caring God, you have searched us out and known us,
all that we are is open to you.

Pause

Look not upon our shortcomings but upon our faith. Break down all
barriers which we erect against your love. Cover us with the blanket
of your peace. And let your justice reach to the ends of the earth

Unison: So that we come glad to this celebration.

Pastor: When our prayers are as dry as a concrete block, and our spirits like
desert grass

Unison: Drench us with a downpour of mercy!

Pastor: When we take things for granted and gratitude goes to sleep

Unison: Put a new song on our tongues.

Pastor: When life's abrasive pressures fray us, loosening our hold on life
around us

**Unison: Tell us again about the changing colors of the seasons, and
songbirds, and a God who loves and seeks after us.**

Silence

**Unison: O God, bring new life, where we are worn and tired; new love,
where we have turned hard hearted; forgiveness, where we have
wounded, and the joy and freedom of your holy spirit, where we
are the prisoners of our selves.**

Silence

The Peace

Thanksgiving

Pastor: In time beyond our dreaming Creativity God hovered over the water, and was revealed in fire and storm and precious law. Likewise humanity in this creative likeness, evolved on this earth, along with earth's minerals and waters, flowers and fruits, living creatures of grace and beauty!

Unison: We offer this our thanks and praise.

Pastor: In the forty days of Lent, we also remember the love made manifest in the birth, life, and death of Jesus of Nazareth. In his healing acts and radical teachings, we recall the words he spoke to call forth love, care and respect for one another. We are grateful for this assurance of love amidst human betrayal, care amidst hatred, respect amidst oppression. And so, with Elizabeth who prophesied a birth, Martha who longed for the Christ, and James and John who sought to follow in the Way, we continue our praise.

Bread and Wine

Communion

After Communion

GO IN GOD'S NAME

CLOSING HYMN: *JESUS, KEEP ME NEAR THE CROSS*

197

1 Jesus, keep me near the cross, There a precious fountain;
Free to all, a healing stream, Flows from Calvary's mountain.

Refrain:

In the cross, in the cross Be my glory ever,
Till my ransomed soul shall find Rest beyond the river.

2 Near the cross, a trembling soul, Love and mercy found me;
There the Bright and Morning Star Shed His beams around me. [Refrain]

3 Near the cross! O lamb of God, Bring its scenes before me;
Help me live from day to day With its shadow o'er me. [Refrain]

4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait, Hoping, trusting ever;
Till I reach the golden strand, Just beyond the river. [Refrain]

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Special thanks to **Darin Jellison** for sharing special music,
to **Matthew Wehr** for filling in for **Dennis Duda**,
and to **Wes Koser** and **Matt Long** for filming the service.*