



Emmanuel United Church of Christ

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

We Welcome You on this

Third Sunday of Lent

Service of the Word - March 20, 2022

9:30 AM

The Gathering

Ringing of the Church Tower Bell

Our Life Together

The Solemn Declaration

Prelude

Call to Worship

Sung Response

“Insert

What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, void of sorrow?

Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays, mistakes we made?

Sometimes we get what we get,

life disappoints us and yet,

God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough. [repeat]

Calling on God (In an Attitude of Prayer)

A Time with the Children

***Opening Hymn**

“The Gifts of God are Free”

Tune #312 (NCH)

The gifts of God are free — the water, milk and wine;

The feast of God's community is set — for all to dine.

O God, we tend to see a world of limits here;

We share your gifts reluctantly and hoard them out of fear.

And yet you give your grace like food from heaven above;

Your church becomes a welcome place, a banquet of your love.

There's joy, and joy to spare; there's bread that satisfies;

You call us now to seek and share your love that changes lives.

Call to Confession

Leader: In our Gospel scripture today, we will hear about the unproductive fig tree. Oh, the shame of being unproductive! Cut it down! Make room for a more dedicated and hard-working fig tree! Who among us is living up to our fullest potential? The productivity experts these days can diagnose what's wrong and sell us the antidote in 3 amazing sessions for a low-low price that is guaranteed to turn our lives around. But the gardener offers an alternative medicine—nurture it slowly, letting it

soak in the manure all around until it can get the good stuff out of it. Lying fallow and getting fertilized with laughter and tears at the crappy stuff of life can help heal what ails us. Is this not sometimes productive enough? What productivity expectations are holding you captive? Let us take a moment of silent reflection...

Silent Reflection

Leader: Hear this compassionate word from Isaiah: “Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

Know that already, God is offering us love enough

no matter how much we attain or achieve.

We are invited to release oppressive expectations of ourselves and others

so that we might recognize true worth afforded to all.

And know, that despite our sometimes faltering steps,

in the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Glory to God! Amen.

***Choral Response**

“Gloria Patri”

#759 (NCH)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Hymn of Preparation

“Spirit of the Living God”

#283(NCH)

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me; Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

First Reading

Isaiah 55: 1-9

Gospel Reading

Luke 13: 1-9

Sermon

“Slow Medicine”

Jim Cope

Responding to the Word

Prayers of the People

The Prayer of Jesus (debts and debtors)

Choral Response

“Let the Words of My Mouth”

#770 (NCH)

Call to Offering
Offertory

***Offertory Response** **“Doxology”** **#780 (NCH)**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Jesus Christ, our burdens know,
Praise Spirit through whom our hearts grow,
Praise Three-in-One, from here below.**

***Prayer of Dedication**

**Generous God,
in light of your extravagant blessings—
no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives—
we offer our gifts and ourselves,
and know that you transform what we plant
into the produce of love.
Amen.**

Bearing the Word into the World

***Hymn of Mission** **“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”** **#485 (NCH)**

***A Blessing for Slowing Down (Unison)**

*“...blessed are we who stop—okay, maybe not stop entirely,
who are we kidding—but who slow down.
We who discover rest and new life and renewal
when we step off the treadmill (or at least turn it down).
We who remember that the world keeps spinning without us. And thank God
for that. We who remember we are loved, loved, loved. Just being us.”*

***Benediction**

***Choral Response** **“And God Will Raise You Up”** **#775 (NCH)**

*Postlude

*Indicates that all who are able. Please stand. **Bold** print indicates unison reading.

Notice Someone Missing? *If so, give them a call and let them know they are missed.*