

Emmanuel United Church of Christ

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

We Welcome you on this 5th Sunday in Lent
March 26, 2023 - 9:30 AM

Pastor Jim Cope and Pastor Jan Garinger

Bless the
Lent we
Actually
Have



5th Sunday in Lent – Blessed Are Those Who Mourn

The Gathering

Ringing of the Church Tower Bell

Our Life Together

Prelude

The Solemn Declaration

Choral Introit “Come and Find the Quiet Center” Insert

Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed;
clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes that we can see
all the things that really matter, be at peace and simply be.

Prayer of Invocation

*Call to Worship

Leader: Come, all who are weary.

All: Here, we wait for the Lord.

Leader: Come, all who have turned away from God.

All: Here, we find forgiveness and healing.

Leader: Come, all who look for hope.

All: Here, we embrace God’s steadfast love.

Leader: Come, and fill your hearts with praise and thanksgiving.

All: Let us praise God!

*Opening Hymn “Come, O Fount of Every Blessings ” #459 (NCH)

The Refreshment of Forgiveness

Call to Confession

Our Prayer of Confession

Gentle and holy God, we acknowledge to you, to one another, and to ourselves that we are not what You have called us to be. We have stifled our gifts and wasted our time. We have avoided opportunities to offer kindness, and have been quick to take offense. We have pretended that we could make no contribution to peace and justice in our world and have excused ourselves from risk-taking in our own community. Have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and help us to live our lives differently.

(Silence is kept for personal reflection and prayer)

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: One fact remains that does not change: God has loved you, God loves you now, and God will always love you.

All: This is the good news that brings us new life. Amen

*Choral Response “On Eagles Wings” #775 (NCH)

And God will raise you up on eagle’s wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of God’s hand.

The Gift of the Word

A Time with the Children of all ages

Choral Preparation “Breathe On Me Breath of God” #191 (RED)

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.

The Scripture Readings

Old Testament

Psalm 130

New Testament

Romans 8:6-11

Gospel Reading

John 11:1-45

Sermon

“Oh Bother”

Pastor Garinger

Hymn

“Guide Me O My Great Redeemer”

#18 (NCH)

Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts

Call to Offering

Offertory

***Offertory Response** **“Take My Gifts”** **#562 (NCH)**
Take whatever I can offer, gifts that I have yet to find, Skills that I am slow to sharpen, talents of the hand and mind, things made beautiful for others in the place where I must be: take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me.

***Prayer of Dedication**
Abundant God, receive these offerings that we gladly give. May these gifts bring new life to those who are in need in our community and in the world. In your beloved name, we pray. Amen

The Ministry of Remembrance and Prayer

Prayers of the People
The Lord’s Prayer (using debts and debtors)

The Gathered Go Forth to Serve

***Hymn** **“Blest Are They”** **Insert**
Verses 1 – 3 - 4

***Words of Benediction**

Blessed are we, who feel the wound of fresh loss. Or of a loss... no matter how fresh... that still makes our voices crack all these years later. We who are stuck in the impossibility of it. Frozen in disbelief. How can this be? It wasn’t supposed to be this way. Blessed are we, fumbling around for easy answers or quick truths to try to make this go down easier. We who are dissatisfied with the shallow theology and trite platitudes. Blessed are we, who, instead, demand a blessing. Because we have wrestled with God and are here. Wounded. Broken. Changed. Blessed are we, who keep our relationships and friendships and jobs afloat, and who stock the pantry... because... what choice do we have but to move forward with a life we didn’t choose with a loss we thought we couldn’t live without? One small step. One small act of hope at a time. Amen

***Closing Response** **“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”** **#190 (NCH)**
Beneath the cross of Jesus, I gladly take my stand, the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land; A home within the wilderness a rest upon the way, from the burning of the noon-tide heat, and the burden of the day.

***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.