

Emmanuel United Church of Christ

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

We Welcome You on this First Sunday in Lent

February 18, 2024 - 9:30 AM

Dr. James Cope, Pastor Janice Garinger, Pastor in Care



Gathering around the Word

Ringing of the Church Tower Bell

Our Life Together

Prelude

The Solemn Declaration

Choral Introit “How Lovely is Your Dwelling Place”
(Solo then Congregation)

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord, my God!

How lovely is your dwelling place, is your dwelling place, O God!

***Hymn** “God Is Truly with Us” #68 (NCH)

***Call to Worship**

Leader: Good people of the church, lift up your eyes and see.

All: Have you not seen? Have you not heard? Our God greets us here.

Leader: Good servants of the Most High, open your ears to hear.

All: Have you not seen? Have you not heard? Our God meets us here.

Leader: Good children of the light, open your hearts and know what it means to delight in God.

All: For we have seen, heard, and known from the beginning to the end... Our God...is.

***Affirmation of Faith**

We are the people of God. We are a sign of the New World. We are the sisters and brothers of Jesus. *We believe in God.* We believe in the goodness of God, the presence of God in human history, and the nearness of God’s love. *We believe in Christ.* We believe that God was and is revealed in human life, that out of human suffering may come rescue and healing, that out of death comes new life. *We believe in the Eternal Spirit,* who moves among God’s people and invites the world into God’s reign. We believe that the world can change, that peace and wholeness can come, and that the New World can arrive. We are the people of God. We are the sign of the New World. We are the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

***Choral Response**

“Gloria Patri”

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.

The Refreshment of Forgiveness

Call to Confession

The Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

Forgive – the silly sins of childhood, the exuberant sins of adolescence, the faded sins of aging;

Forgive – the sins we shout in the streets, the sins we whisper to ourselves;

Forgive – the sins we didn’t give a second thought to, the sins we plot in the middle of the night;

Forgive – the flood of sins which threaten us, the wilderness of sin which we offer to others, the sin which seeks to imprison us: *forgive.*

Forgive us, Good and Gentle God, forgive us and have mercy on us, so we might walk the path of faithfulness with Jesus, to Jerusalem and beyond, so we might know your steadfast love in our lives.

(Silence is kept for personal reflection and prayer)

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: What can sustain us in the days to come, what will nourish us on our Lenten journey? Look, here is all the food we need: God’s love, God’s Word, God’s Hope.

All: Through the wilderness and into the kingdom of life, we are given daily bread for every day of the journey. Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Choral Response**

“Be Now My Vision”

#451(NCH)vs 1

Be now my vision, O god of my heart;

Nothing surpasses the love you impart—

You are my best thought, by day or by night,

Waking or sleeping, your presence my light.

