



**Order of Worship
March 5, 2023**

**First Sunday in Lent
Communion Sunday**

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Welcome

Prelude

Room at the Cross

Stanhill

The prelude signals the beginning of our sacred time together. During the prelude, you are invited to prepare your heart for worship by focusing your attention upon God.

***Call to Worship**

God's Word is the Bible.

When we doubt, we can turn to God's Word.

When fears take hold of us, we can turn to God's Word.

In times of joy, we turn to God's Word.

Jesus is God's Word manifested in the flesh.

Thanks be to God for the saving Word!

***Unison Prayer**

Meghan Walker

The Words and The Word –

How might we read your precious book we call the Bible? As a roadmap, a manual, a trail of breadcrumbs? As a love letter, a symphony, an invitation to a dance? As we open The Book, just what awaits us? In our worship, open our hearts, our spirits, and our mind to hear The Word today. Amen.

***Hymn**

Wonderful Words of Life

UMH 600

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Passing the Peace of Christ

Meghan Walker

Post-game handshakes are a time-honored tradition. Little League baseball players, traveling soccer teams, and NCAA athletes never miss this ritual of sportsmanship. By a simple hand gesture, athletes declare that they are at peace regardless of the game's outcome.

In similar fashion, in our church we pass the peace of Christ with the simple words, "The peace of the Lord be with you." By doing this, we acknowledge that Christ, our Peace, has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross. We respond to this great love by declaring we are at peace with one another, regardless of what's come before. Please turn to those around you and offer Christ's peace with your Christian sisters and brothers by speaking these words, "The peace of the Lord be with you."

Reception of New Member

Cindy Boyer

Litany of Remembrance

Pastor Debra

Come to the feast and remember. Remember the Child and the Man. For even as the star was shining brightly, the shadow of a cross was already falling over the earth.

Lord, we remember.

Remember the sharp straw at His birth and the piercing of nails at his death.

Lord, we remember.

Remember the manger, a feeding trough that held the Bread of Life. Recall His broken body on the cross.

Lord, we remember.

Remember the joyful visitors who welcomed His birth. Recall the angry crowds who demanded His death.

Lord, we remember.

Remember the Prince of Peace in the stable. Recall the wounded Lamb of God on a hillside

Lord, we remember.

Remember the Child of Bethlehem and so too the Man of Sorrows on Golgotha. Recall the birth and death of the Lord. Eat, drink, and remember.

Lord, we remember.

Ministry of Music

Remember

Choir

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Prayer for Understanding

All Praying

Meghan Walker

Holy God, reveal your presence to us this day as we journey this path with your Son. Through all of life's trials and tribulations your Word sustains us for the journey ahead. Send your Spirit upon us that we might listen, discern, and take heart. Be near us this day and may your Word with us stay and dwell with us forevermore.

Scripture Reading

Hebrews 4:12-16

Meghan Walker

12 ... God's word is living, active, and sharper than any two-edged sword. It penetrates to the point that it separates the soul from the spirit and the joints from the marrow. It's able to judge the heart's thoughts and intentions. 13 No creature is hidden from it, but rather everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of the one to whom we have to give an answer.

14 Also, let's hold on to the confession since we have a great high priest who passed through the heavens, who is Jesus, God's Son; 15 because we don't have a high priest who can't sympathize with our weaknesses but instead one who was tempted in every way that we are, except without sin.

16 Finally, let's draw near to the throne of favor with confidence so that we can receive mercy and find grace when we need help.

Response to Hearing the Word of God

All Singing

The B-I-B-L-E,
Yes that's the book for me;
I stand alone on the Word of God,
The B-I-B-L-E.

The B-I-B-L-E
I'll take it along with me,
I'll read and pray,
and then obey,
the B-I-B-L-E.

Sermon

Is the Bible Reliable?

Pastor Debra

Offertory Invitation

Meghan Walker

The Bible talks a lot about how we use our money, our time, our energy. Jesus, the Word made flesh, is clear: "No one can serve two masters. You cannot serve God and wealth" (Matthew 6:24 CEB). You are invited to give as you are able today, not from a place of fear or shame, but from a desire to serve God with all that you do and all that you have.

Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

Prayer

Humperdinck

**Doxology*

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Prayer of Dedication*

All Praying

Meghan Walker

Lord of all that is, thank you for your Word - your words in Scripture and the living Word, Jesus. Keep us accountable to your Word, that our offering might be a blessing to the world he came to save. Amen.

Invitation to Holy Communion

Pastor Debra

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession

Pastor Debra

God of Light, we stand naked before you, the secret intentions of our hearts laid bare for you to see. We confess that instead of allowing your Word to actively shape and transform our lives, we manipulate it to suit our own personal agendas. Convict our hearts of our sins, which are rooted in our desire to be masters of our universe, ruling over others, and possession all things. Forgive us of our wayward actions and attitudes, O Lord. Free us from our double-mindedness and our efforts to remain in control, so that your holy Word can lead us into life as true disciples of Christ. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Pastor Debra

Sisters, brothers, hear the Good News! In Jesus, we have a great high priest who knows our weaknesses. It is in his righteousness that we boldly stand before the throne of God. My we receive his healing mercy and grace.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR LENT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You brought all things into being and called them good.
From the dust of the earth you formed us into your image
and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.
When rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights,
you bore up the ark on the waters, saved Noah and his family,
and made covenant with every living creature on earth.

When you led your people to Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights,
you gave us your commandments and made us your covenant people.
When your people forsook your covenant,
your prophet Elijah fasted for forty days and forty nights;
and on your holy mountain, he heard your still small voice.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
When you gave him to save us from our sin,
your Spirit led him into the wilderness,
where he fasted forty days and forty nights to prepare for his ministry.
When he suffered and died on a cross for our sin, you raised him to life,
presented him alive to the apostles during forty days,
and exalted him at your right hand.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.
Now, when we your people prepare for the yearly feast of Easter,
you lead us to repentance for sin and the cleansing of our hearts,
that during these forty days of Lent we may be gifted and graced
to reaffirm the covenant you made with us through Christ.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke
the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for
you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and
said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you
and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance
of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in
praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever. Amen.

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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Giving of the Bread and Cup

Communion Hymn

Since Jesus Came Into My Heart

FWS 2140

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Prayer after Communion

Meghan Walker

We thank you, God, for breaking into our world with your light and shining into our lives and our experiences. We thank you, God, for this meal of thanksgiving and the stories of love, grace, and hope that it tells. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

Closing Hymn

Thy Word Is a Lamp

UMH 601

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Benediction

Pastor Debra

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. Go in peace. Amen.

Sung Benediction

The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve

*We go to be the hands of Christ,
to scatter joy like seed and,
all our days, to cherish life,
to do the loving deed.*

Postlude

St. Kevin

Sullivan

Wonderful Words of Life

*Sing them over again to me,
wonderful words of life;
let me more of their beauty see,
wonderful words of life;
words of life and beauty
teach me faith and duty.*

Refrain:

***Beautiful words, wonderful words,
wonderful words of life.
Beautiful words, wonderful words,
wonderful words of life.***

*Christ, the blessed one, gives to all
wonderful words of life;
sinner, list to the loving call,
wonderful words of life;
all so freely given,
wooing us to heaven.*

(Refrain)

*Sweetly echo the gospel call,
wonderful words of life;
offer pardon and peace to all,
wonderful words of life;
Jesus, only Savior,
sanctify forever.*

(Refrain)

Since Jesus Came Into My Heart

*What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought
since Jesus came into my heart!
I have light in my soul for which long I had sought,
since Jesus came into my heart!*

Refrain:

***Since Jesus came into my heart,
since Jesus came into my heart,***

***floods of joy o'er my soul like the sea billows roll,
since Jesus came into my heart.***

*I have ceased from my wandering and going astray,
since Jesus came into my heart!
And my sins, which were many, are all washed away,
since Jesus came into my heart! [Refrain]*

*I'm possessed of a hope that is steadfast and sure,
since Jesus came into my heart!
And no dark clouds of doubt now my pathway obscure,
since Jesus came into my heart! [Refrain]*

*There's a light in the valley of death now for me,
since Jesus came into my heart!
And the gates of the City beyond I can see,
since Jesus came into my heart! [Refrain]*

*I shall go there to dwell in that City, I know
since Jesus came into my heart!
And I'm happy, so happy, as onward I go,
since Jesus came into my heart! [Refrain]*

Thy Word Is a Lamp

***Refrain:
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my path.***

*When I feel afraid,
Think I've lost my way,
Still you're there right beside me,*

*And nothing will I fear
As long as you are near.
Please be near me to the end. (Refrain)*

*Now I will not forget your love for me and yet
My heart forever is wandering.
Jesus, be my guide and lead me to your side, and
I will love you to the end. (Refrain)*