



March 6, 2022

Prelude

Wonderful Words of Life

Gathering

The liturgical season of Lent developed over the centuries as a time of deepened reflection. Originally a period of preparation for baptisms on Easter Eve, it later became a time for all Christians to take stock of their lives and examine how the connection to their faith was progressing—or not—and to recommit to a life of goodness. This year we will indeed open up and take stock. But rather than feel guilty (a popular Lenten pastime) about what we haven't accomplished in our lives and faith, we will spend some time questioning how our culture's obsession with achievement and perfection actually keeps us from the true depths of life and faith. This Lent, we'll take some time to turn ladder-climbing into garden-tending, nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives.

Choir

Music Refrain:

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.

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

You are welcome to send prayer requests to Pastor Sarah. Spend a few moments connecting with God and lifting up your prayers.

A Time of Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (unison)—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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Choir

Prayer for Peace

We Hear God's Word

Luke 4:1-13 (NRSV)

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Thoughts about an Imperfect Life and Faith

"Ordinary lives can be holy."

Choir

For All My Days

We Gather at the Table



Set Your Place at the Table—Communion was first celebrated in the homes of those in the early church. Friends and family would gather together to pray, singing songs, and break bread. We carry on that tradition today. Whatever you have on hand to celebrate communion will work just fine, because this ancient ritual is not about what we use for this meal or where we partake of it. Instead, it is about the act of remembrance. So, gather around the table, prepare your place, and remember that Christ is in our midst.

Our Invitation—Like Simon Peter, there are those moments when we are struck down by our shorting comings and the ways we have strayed from God’s path. We are bound by doubt that leaves us stagnate, unable to act. Yet in Christ, we find words of grace and mercy that heal our souls, that empower and embolden us once again to live faithfully. Here are Christ’s table, the bounty overflows and there is always enough to go around.

The Words of Institution— 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, we remember...we offer ourselves...we proclaim God’s love...

Our Confession— It is right, and a good and joyful thing, anytime and everywhere to give thanks to you. You created this world full of so much beauty and sorrow and called it Good. And called it Enough. Although we feel lost at times, you are ever present. We doubt, resist, turn away, and rage, insistent on our own power to pull us through, and yet sure that we are to blame, making life seem like a confusing paradox. But you are patient. You are here to meet us—reside with us in strange and alienating times, always faithful, always present in this Body gathered around your table, in this Body gathered here in this sacred space.

Assurance of Grace—Together we proclaim the praise-filled truth of your glory along with all the saints: Jesus Christ came into this world and proclaimed freedom for the bound, justice for the oppressed, grace for the lost, love for the prodigal. Through the life and ministry of Jesus, we can imagine and live into a community where all who struggle are taken into loving arms and those who struggle to love are invited into greater compassion.

Blessing Our Meal— Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine. Make them be for us sustenance for our days, love for simple and ordinary lives, fuel for justice in this world. By your Spirit open us to each other. Open us to the world, making us one in you, through Christ, in the power of your amazing grace!

We Share the Bread and the Cup – As you eat the bread, remember, “This is the body of Christ broken for you.” Take and eat. As you drink the cup, remember, “This is the blood of Christ shed for you and the forgiveness of sins.” Take and drink.

We Give Thanks—Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior’s presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ’s body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.=

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation—As a simple, small act of faith, we bring to God, this day, our gifts—gifts of our gratitude and gifts of our lives, knowing that through this small act, God can do great things.

March Benevolence—Jesus invited us to do to the least of these as we would do for him. To feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty is the same as giving food and drink to our Savior. This month we seek to feed our hungry neighbors, those who face food insecurity and need a little support to care for their families. Every week God’s Bounty Food Pantry lives out Christ’s call for us to serve our neighbors.

You can mail your offerings to our office or give online at

www.zionuccindy.net/donate

Doxology

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.

We Give Thanks— 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.

Hymn

Open My Eyes, That I May See, #480

A Blessing for a Joyfully Mediocre Journey

“Blessed are you who realize there is simply not enough—time, money, resources. Blessed are you who are tired of pretending that raw effort is the secret to perfection. It’s not. And you know that now. Blessed are you who need a gentle reminder that even now, even today, God is here, and somehow, that is good enough.”

Benediction

And now, may the God who loves all of creation, especially the ordinary parts, and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life, and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways, go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.

Postlude

Just a Closer Walk with Thee

Worship Notes:

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- “Good Enough” theme song by Marsha Charles, Marcia McFee, Chuck Bell. Used with permission of Worship Design Studio.
- “A Blessing for a Joyfully Mediocre Journey” from *Good Enough: 40’ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection* by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Used with permission. Purchase the book at www.katebowler.com/goodenough.