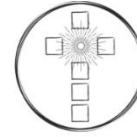




WHAT ARE YOU UP TO? Lent 2024



Serve & Enrich
Zion United Church
of Christ

The 2nd Sunday of Lent

Prelude

My Savior is Waiting

Gathering— Jesus was very clear that following him might not be a smooth ride. He was bound to choose the just way, not the easy way, through life. To take up the cross was to lose one's life — to let go of certain expectations of safety and acceptance in order to stand for the Gospel message of love. How are we to take up the causes of Jesus — justice, righteousness, and mercy in our day?

Lenten Chorus: "You Raise Me Up"

**When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary
When troubles come and my heart burdened be
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence
Until You come and sit awhile with me**

**You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas
I am strong, when I am on Your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be**

Prayer—Motivating and Invigorating God, you challenge us to walk a difficult path. Show us, as Jesus did, that letting go of our own security and comfort is the only way to create space for your justice to move over the earth. In this moment of quiet, we lift up to you those things we'd like to give up for good...for the sake of The Good.

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.

Bell Choir

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Exploring God's Word for All Ages

Lessons from Up

Hymn

Lord, I Lift Your Name On High, 88 (2x)

We Hear God's Word—*Mark 8:31-38*

Vivian Thomas

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Meditation

Take Up

Hymn

Near the Cross, 479

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation— In a world that offers a vision of never enough, we share in God's abundant provision for all. While we could gain the world but lose our soul, it is from within our soul that we share in a generous spirit of giving.+

An Uplifting Gift—Hot Air Balloon Messages: You're invited throughout the season of Lent, to share uplifting messages with our church family by writing them on the hot air balloons that you'll find on the side table. The messages could be scriptures you've found inspiring, quotes that nurture your spirit, or just a simple message like "you are not alone." We'll add those messages to our sky each week.

"Kindness begins with the understanding that we all struggle."—Charles Glassman

“Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other’s eyes for an instant?” –Henry David Thoreau

February Benevolence—Our Church’s Wider Mission

****Doxology**

We Give Thanks— Spirit of Life, we offer these gifts not as reluctant sacrifices but as wholehearted tokens of gratitude for all you are doing in this community and in our lives. May our offerings help further God’s goodness and mercy, here and everywhere. Amen.

Hymn

The Old Rugged Cross, 260

Benediction— And so now pick up where you left off on the path that God has set before you, leaving behind your certainty and the need for everything to be “just so,” trusting your decision to follow the One who taught us the way of love, knowing that you have all you need to be up to something.

When someone asks you, “What are you up to?” you can respond, “**With God’s help, I’m up to something good!**”

Let the people say, Amen! **Amen!**

Postlude

Reverie Religieuse