



WHAT ARE YOU UP TO? Lent 2024



Serve & Enrich
Zion United Church
of Christ

The 4th Sunday of Lent

Prelude

A Prayer

Gathering—John 3:16 is probably one of the most infamous and oft-quoted scriptures in the Bible. What follows that verse is important for our Lenten journey. God did not send Jesus to condemn the world, but to offer it saving light. As believers in that light, we are called to be those who will continue to light up the world through our lives so that the world might see the hope it yearns for.

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—Illuminating God, we gather together today to call one another in from the shadows and bask in the light of your mercy. 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.

Choir

All We Like Sheep

Exploring God’s Word for All Ages

Lessons from Up

****Hymn**

There Is a Redeemer, 117

We Hear God's Word—John 3:14-21 (NRSV)

Collin Bennington

And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that God gave God’s only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

Meditation

Light Up

Hymn

O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus, 398

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation—Today we rejoice in a God who comes to redeem the world through a pouring out of Divine Love. Our rejoicing is offered with the generosity of our energy, our spiritual gifts, and our treasure. We are invited as God’s beloved children to express our rejoicing this day through the giving of our gifts in love. May it be so.+

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.

“I can’t stop believing love makes the world go ‘round and ‘round.” –Carole King

“Hope is being able to see there is light despite all of the darkness.” –
Desmond Tutu

“There is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re
brave enough to be it.”—Amanda Gorman

March Benevolence—One Great Hour of Sharing

****Doxology**

We Give Thanks—Thank you, God, for loving us to the very ends of the
earth and back. Your willingness to say yes to coming in the flesh to redeem
our world through love and no to the powers of oppression has led us to give
of ourselves generously this day. Take these gifts and multiply them across
this world that you love so extravagantly. Amen.+

Hymn

O, How I Love Jesus, 109

Benediction— And so now take your light out into the world, knowing that a single
flame will overcome even the deepest shadows that you face, and that in the longest
nights of uncertainty and doubt, 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

Coronation March