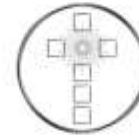




WHAT ARE YOU UP TO? Lent 2024



Serve & Enrich
Zion United Church
of Christ

The 5th Sunday of Lent

Prelude

Morning

Gathering—“When nothing else would help, love lifted me!” says the old Gospel song. To be lifted up is to be drawn into the love of God. Jesus drew all kinds of people to him during his short tenure on earth, drawing no boundaries for who was invited into that love. As his hour to die drew nearer, he spread the message that all things would be enveloped in his love even after he was gone. What uplifting message will we pass on to others?

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—Radically inclusive God, you offer each one of us a life-changing love that leaves no one out. Sometimes our hearts feel so heavy that we struggle to rise up and claim it. 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.

****Hymn**

Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service, 575

Exploring God's Word for All Ages*Lessons from Up***We Hear God's Word—John 12:20-33 (NRSV)***Paula Prange*

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew, then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say: 'Abba, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Abba, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

Meditation*Lift Up***Hymn***Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed, 263***We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving**

Invitation— As yeast rises to create bread, so do the rising of our gifts multiply the love of God in the life of the world. Give of your treasure, whatever it may be, however large or small. And trust God will use it for the building of the kingdom of God that is emerging among us.+

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.

“As the new life sprouts in the early days of spring, we remember that growth comes as we are cracked open.” Author Unknown

“I think that any time of great pain is a time of transformation, a fertile time to plant new seeds.” Debbie Ford

“If there is no struggle, there is no progress.” Frederick Douglass.

March Benevolence—One Great Hour of Sharing

OGHS Video – Greetings from Rev. Shari Prestemon, Acting Associate General Minister and Co-Executive for Global Ministries

****Doxology**

We Give Thanks— Spirit of Encouragement, we ask you to glorify and grow these gifts up from seeds of potential into the fuel needed to raise up our community, lifting the spirits of all to new heights offering life-giving hope where needed most.

Hymn

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus, 344

Benediction—And so now go forth with no limits on love, imagining a mighty Spirit wind beneath your wings that will raise you up to new heights and give you the assurance 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

Triumphal March