

*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.
May we together experience the presence of God*

We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude

Welcome

Announcements/Joys & Concerns

We're on a journey. That's how we describe the season of Lent. The Lenten Journey. The very concept implies at least two things: one, that we are moving. This isn't a static, sit-and-contemplate event. We often think of Lent as a time of consideration, self-reflection, and introspection. And certainly, there is an element of that inherent in the design of the season. But movement is built into the pattern of the season. We are walking with Christ. And Christ is on his way somewhere.

That's the second implication of the season: we have a destination. This journey isn't just random wandering in the wilderness, even though it often feels that way. We are on a path; we are moving toward the cross. That's our destination. The culmination of our Lenten journey is not Easter sunrise, as much as we wish it were. No, Easter is something completely different.

Our destination is much more earthy. Much more real. And, unfortunately, more painful. It requires more sacrifice, more surrender. The journey to the cross is a journey laden with struggle, with a wrestling match with our greatest foe: ourselves.

This means that our journey of a thousand miles begins with a single stumble and the understand that we will fall down a lot. That's kind of our story. Any journey that gets us anywhere important is going to include a few stumbles. A stubbed toe, a cracked shin, a bloody nose, a teary moment, an unplanned detour, a lack of resources, a mechanical failure, a ... well, point taken. We will fall down.

And this falling leads us to think Lent is about falling down, about collapsing in tears and remorse and regret and this overwhelming sense of sinfulness. "That's the only way to move forward," we seem to think. But maybe, like the one we follow, our Lenten opportunity is to not to focus on the falling down. But to find security in the arms of the one who stood for us. So, this Lenten season I say we move forward by placing our trust with him all the way to the cross.

Let us take each step by putting our hands in his hand and journey together on the road to the cross. It's a long painful journey, but one worth taking. Walk with me. Walk with him and together we will find our way all the way to the cross.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome pilgrims on the way to the cross.

We are learning to follow Jesus.

For those who feel Christ near,

May we not turn away from the discomfort of the journey ahead.

For those who feel as far from Christ as the desert is from the ocean,

May we find Christ in the wilderness with us.

For all of us who stumble and fall in our silence, indifference, and lack of generosity,

May we reach for the hand of Christ, who raises us up to continue on the journey.

Pilgrims on the way, come let us worship God!

We come to worship God as we learn to live inside out!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**O God, you offer us so much,
forgive us for sharing so little.**

**You have called us to your ways,
forgive us for ignoring your call.**

**You have given us the gift of family,
forgive us for not giving thanks.**

**You have given us countless blessings,
forgive us for taking your love for granted.**

**And now, gracious God, be merciful to us
in our sin and indifference, through Christ,
our Savior. Amen.**

***HYMN OF PRAISE UMH #382 "Have Thine Own Way, Lord"**

Author: Adelaide A. Pollard (1902)

Publication Date: 1989

Tune Information

Name: ADELAIDE

Composer: George C. Stebbins (1907)

1. Have thine own way, Lord!

Have thine own way!

Thou art the potter;

I am the clay.

Mold me and make me

after thy will,

while I am waiting,

yielded and still.

2. Have thine own way, Lord!

Have thine own way!

Search me and try me,

Savior today!

Wash me just now, Lord,

wash me just now,
as in thy presence
humbly I bow.

3. Have thine own way, Lord!
Have thine own way!
Wounded and weary,
help me I pray!
Power, all power,
surely is thine!
Touch me and heal me,
Savior divine!

4. Have thine own way, Lord!
Have thine own way!
Hold o'er my being
absolute sway.
Fill with thy Spirit
till all shall see
Christ only, always,
living in me!

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading..... Matthew 4:1-11
New Revised Standard Version

The Testing of Jesus

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. 2 He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. 3 The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"
8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, 9 and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

11 Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.
The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

Children's Sermon

FAITH HYMN UMH #410 "I Want a Principle Within"

Author: Charles Wesley (1749)

**1 I want a principle within
Of watchful, godly fear,
A sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near.
Help me the first approach to feel
Of pride or wrong desire;
To catch the wandering of my will,
And quench the kindling fire.**

**2 From Thee that I no more may stray,
No more Thy goodness grieve,
Grant me the filial awe, I pray,
The tender conscience give.
Quick as the apple of an eye,
O God, my conscience make!
Awake my soul when sin is nigh,
And keep it still awake.**

**3 Almighty God of truth and love,
To me Thy power impart;
The burden from my soul remove,
The hardness from my heart.
O may the least omission pain
My reawakened soul,
And drive me to that blood again,
Which makes the wounded whole.**

"Message"

A Pastoral Prayer for Lent

Heavenly father, Be with us this morning as we find ourselves moving into the season of Lent.

Help us to see this as a journey to cast away our struggles and our demons, in hopes of receiving you more fully into our lives. We ask that you make this Lent a season where we find our way out of darkness and find our way back to you. Let us be true in the devotions we give to you this season.

Today, we raise the names of our friends, family and neighbors that grieve, we pray that they keep their trust in you strong. Remind them, and remind us, that it was never your promise to have a life without grief or pain. Your promise is that you will stand with us, or for us, when we hurt. Your promise is to heal our hearts when they break. Let us feel your presence again.

This morning we raise our celebrations and joys. Help us to see these moments as Blessings from you. Let these moments of smile and laughter provide the strength we

need when times get tough. Help us to see the joy in every moment, and that laughter which can turn around our days in moment.

We recognize that lent is a time of temptation and personal struggle. Help us as we fight against the urges and the addictions in our lives that threaten to steal the joy from our life.

We pray that the church continues to grow and embraces its role as a life changer and lifesaver to our communities.

Lastly, help us to be the face of Jesus for others.

We raise these prayers to our father, who taught us that only one prayer was necessary, the prayer that says....Our Father,....

Offertory (UM Hymnal 95) Doxology

(Wykoff only)

Offertory Prayer

*As we offer these gifts to you this morning, we pray that you might deliver us from the temptation of building our lives around what belongs to us. Continually lead us to the conviction that what matters is that we belong to you. We pray in the name of our Savior and Redeemer. Amen.
(Matthew 4:1-11)*

Departing Hymn UMH #671 "Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing"

Author (attributed to): John Fawcett (1786)

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**1 Lord, dismiss us with your blessing;
fill our hearts with joy and peace.
Let us each, your love possessing,
triumph in redeeming grace.
O refresh us, O refresh us,
trav'ling through this wilderness.**

**2 Thanks we give and adoration
for the gospel's joyful sound:
may the fruits of your salvation
in our hearts and lives abound!
Ever faithful, ever faithful
to your truth may we be found.**

Benediction

The Scriptures say that we need more than bread for our lives; we must feed on every word of God. Go, feast on the words of the Most High, Creator God. Be overwhelmed by God's goodness and let your life be your praise, until we meet again. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**