

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.

May we together experience the presence of God

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude

Welcome

Announcements/Joys & Concerns

Do you know what it is like to be chosen? Our texts today is about being chosen by God. Most of us don't think that we were chosen, certainly not to be king like David. But surely, we chose the jobs that we do and the hobbies that we pursue and the service that we perform, didn't we? But God chose too. And not just in the past tense, God is still choosing.

Too often we think of being chosen by God as something for other people, for special ones like saints or clergy or mission workers or something. So, let's explore the idea of vocation. Vocation means to call. A vocation is a calling in the purest sense of the word.

What is your calling?

Perhaps your vocation is the job that you do to make a living. That sometimes happens. Often, however, we have a job to make money and support our family, but our calling is something else. Maybe some volunteer work in the community or the church. Maybe something done behind the scenes, writing or mentoring, visiting the sick or caring for the church facility. God calls us to all sorts of tasks and opportunities.

As we listen to the gospel text, however, let us discover that sometimes God calls us not to a specific task or job, but to be a living witness.

So, as we worship today, we pray for God to reveal to us our vocation, and at the same time, we pray for opportunities to share what we have already come to understand as our mission and ministry. Let us sing praise to the God who calls and the God who works within us to be sent out to declare the goodness and the ongoing presence of God in our living and our working.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome pilgrims on the way to the cross.

We are learning to follow Jesus.

On this Lenten journey, where do we find God's presence among us?

One thing we know: God calls us to witness extraordinary love in ordinary moments.

On this Lenten journey, how does God's presence work among us?

One thing we know: God uses the messy and mundane to heal and restore us to one another.

On this Lenten journey, what does God's presence do in our midst?

One thing we know: God opens us to recognize presence, sustenance, and abundance where the world perceives isolation and lack.

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 of miracles and mighty deeds, we acknowledge your healing and comforting presence in our lives. We confess that we have been [drawn in] by materialism and driven by consumerism. Open our [hearts] to a new way of being. Send your anointing and grant us fresh insight for spiritual breakthroughs. Shine the light of your truth into our relationships and grant us victory over every secret and shame. We thank you in advance for healings and renewals in our lives. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE UMH #128 “He Leadeth Me, Oh Blessed Thought”**

Author: Joseph H. Gilmore (1862)

Publication Date: 1989

Composer: William B. Bradbury (1864)

**1. He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.**

Refrain:

**He leadeth me, he leadeth me,
by his own hand he leadeth me;
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.**

**2. Sometimes mid scenes of deepest
gloom,
sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
by waters still, o'er troubled sea,**

**still 'tis his hand that leadeth me.
[Refrain]**

**3. Lord, I would place my hand in thine,
nor ever murmur nor repine;
content, whatever lot I see,
since 'tis my God that leadeth me.
[Refrain]**

**4. And when my task on earth is done,
when by thy grace the victory's won,
e'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
since God through Jordan leadeth me.
[Refrain]**

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading..... John 9:1-41
New Revised Standard Version

A Man Born Blind Receives Sight

9 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. 4 We[a] must work the works of him who sent me[b] while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of

the world." 6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, 7 saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am he." 10 But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." 12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight 19 and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" 20 His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, 21 but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." 22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus[c] to be the Messiah[d] would be put out of the synagogue. 23 Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." 25 He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." 26 They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 27 He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" 28 Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." 30 The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. 32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." 34 They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Spiritual Blindness

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"[e] 36 He answered, "And who is he, sir?[f] Tell me, so that I may believe in him." 37 Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." 38 He said, "Lord,[g] I believe." And he worshiped him. 39 Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who

do see may become blind." 40 Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" 41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

Children's Sermon

FAITH HYMN UMH #454 "Open My Eyes, That I May See"

Author: Clara H. Scott (1895)

Publication Date: 1989

Topic: Sanctifying and Perfecting Grace: Prayer, Trust, Hope; Commitment; Hope (3 more...)

**1. Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

**2. Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

**3. Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!**

"Message"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Gracious God, we pray for our neighbors down the street and around the world who need food, water, clothing, and shelter.

Our Shepherd, you supply our need; most holy is your name.

Gracious God, we pray for our neighbors who are in distress, whose bodies and minds need your peaceful and loving presence.

Our Shepherd, you supply our need; most holy is your name.

Gracious God, we pray for our neighbors whose lives have been upended by disaster and who are in desperate need of provision and care.

Our Shepherd, you supply our need; most holy is your name.

Gracious God, we pray for our siblings who make up the Christian family across the world, that we would be your witnesses and workers for the flourishing of all creation.

Our Shepherd, you supply our need; most holy is your name.

Gracious God, we pray that goodness and mercy would follow us all of our days that we might be sharers of goodness and mercy everywhere we go.

Our Shepherd, you supply our need; most holy is your name

let us unite in prayer this day, Our Father...

Offertory (UM Hymnal 95) Doxology

(Wykoff only)

Offertory Prayer

Generous God, you tenderly care for each person you have created. Guide us so that we will not regard others according to outward appearances but seek to find your love in their hearts. We dedicate our offerings and ourselves to contribute to the work of your kingdom on earth until Christ returns in glory. Amen. (1 Samuel 16:1-13)

Departing Hymn UMH #629 "Go Now In Peace"

Author: Natalie Sleeth (1976)

Publication Date: 1989

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**Go now in peace, go now in peace,
May the love of God surround you
Everywhere, everywhere
You may go.**

Benediction

As you leave this time of worship, may God's presence follow you, heal you, and empower you to witness and to witness to the goodness and love of God everywhere you go. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**