

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

March 6, 2022

Racine UMC & Sumner Center UMC

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



“An Opportune Time” Worship Series

Gathered Up in Jesus Week 1

We are on the threshold of the season of Lent – an opportune time to talk about temptation. We are at the very beginning where we stop and think, “Do we really want to do this or not?” And if we do, what does that mean for our lives for the next six weeks? Can we still function in normal society even though we’ve gotten this Lent journey thing going?

We will begin this first Sunday with a traditional reading from Luke 4:1-13. The temptation is in the wilderness – a great starting place, don’t you think? We will get a glimpse into the nature of evil. We will come to understand the person of Jesus and the nature of Christ, and we get a taste of the power of temptation.

So, we begin our journey with Christ in the wilderness because that is where we live. The Spirit led him out (and Mark’s version said the Spirit drove him out) so that he could experience what we experience. He was, as the letter to the Hebrews reminds us, “tempted in every way as we are.” He was out there hungry and hurting because we are hungry and hurting. And he was tempted by the thought of shortcuts because we are tempted by that very thing.

This is what Jesus teaches us with his experience in the desert: half a mind is not enough. Jesus invites us to live fully engaged, to think through the implications of our actions as well as our intentions. He encourages us to meet the challenges of this world wrapped in the Word, confident in our relationship with God, certain in the presence of the Spirit with us always.

As we gather today, let us do so with our own temptations in our thoughts and our want for repentance on our breath.

CALL TO WORSHIP

(Inspired by Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13)

Written by Thom Shuman, and posted on Lectionary Liturgies,

<https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/search?q=Luke+4%3A1-13>

Jesus began his ministry to the world,
led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

**As we begin our Lenten journey,
let us be led by the Spirit,
even into the uncomfortable places.**

In those forty days, and in that place,
Jesus was faced with hunger, doubt
and temptation.

**As we seek to follow Jesus,
we would be led,
even into the uncomfortable choices.**

Jesus left the wilderness,
faithful and obedient to God,
rejoicing in the One in whom he trusted.

**As we continue on our path to faithfulness,
we will be led by our Christ,
rejoicing in the Lord our God**

OPENING PRAYER

**Jesus, you have known us from the beginning of time,
you have known us in the depths of our dreams and in the darkness of our shame,
you know us as your beloved.**

**Help us to own that core identity more and more in this season of repentance and
mercy.**

**Give us the rock-solid assurance of your unwavering faith in us
as we seek the same in you. Amen**

Praise Hymn #410 "I Want a Principle Within"

Author: Charles Wesley (1749)

Tune: GERALD (Spohr)

**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.**

We Hear God's Word

**Gospel Reading..... Luke 13:31-35
New Revised Standard Version**

The Temptation of Jesus

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. 3 The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." 4 Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

5 Then the devil[a] led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6 And the devil[b] said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." 8 Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

9 Then the devil[c] took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, 10 for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' 11 and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

12 Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 13 When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Word of God, For the People of God, **Thanks Be to God!**
Children's Moments

Faith Hymn #395 "Take Time to be Holy"

Author: William D. Longstaff (ca. 1882)

Copyright: Public Domain

**1. Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word.
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,
Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.**

**2. Take time to be holy, the world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.**

**3. Take time to be holy, let Him be thy Guide;
And run not before Him, whatever betide.
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
And, looking to Jesus, still trust in His Word.**

**4. Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each motive beneath His control.
Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love,
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.**

Meditation

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God. God of Love. God of Comfort.

You are indeed our Everything – you're a shelter in times of storm,

You are the Alpha and Omega,

You are the God of the angel armies.

Thank you for your pure goodness toward us.

Thank you that you did not just arrive to meet us on this Sunday, but you have been with us all week long.

O Lord, we have failed to bring you the first of all our blessings. We have been slow to come to the place you have chosen as a dwelling for your name. We have been intoxicated by a hunger for power, possessions, and protection. We have been dehydrated by injustice. We are misguided and deluded. As former aliens in this land of milk and honey, we have continued the cycle of discrimination and the exploitation of new aliens and strangers. Forgive us, we pray. Refresh us for justice and compassion. Make us sober for sacrificial service. Guide us again through your Word and your will and your way.

In your mercy O Lord, Hear our prayers.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR EARLY IN LENT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,

always and everywhere to give thanks to you,

Father Almighty creator of heaven and earth.

You brought all things into being and called them good.

From the dust of the earth, you formed us into your image

and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

When rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights,

you bore up the ark on the waters, saved Noah and his family,

and made covenant with every living creature on earth.

When you led your people to Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights,

you gave us your commandments and made us your covenant people.

When your people forsook your covenant,

your prophet Elijah fasted for forty days and forty nights;

and on your holy mountain, he heard your still small voice.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

When you gave him to save us from our sin,

your Spirit led him into the wilderness,

where he fasted forty days and forty nights to prepare for his ministry.

When he suffered and died on a cross for our sin, you raised him to life,

presented him alive to the apostles during forty days,

and exalted him at your right hand.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection

you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death,

and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

Now, when we your people prepare for the yearly feast of Easter,

you lead us to repentance for sin and the cleansing of our hearts,

that during these forty days of Lent we may be gifted and graced

to reaffirm the covenant you made with us through Christ.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving,
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father now and forever. Amen.

WILDERNESS – A PRAYER FOR LENT

Forty days alone,
a wilderness of thoughts,
tempting and inviting thoughts,
which could so easily have distracted you
from your task, your mission,
your vision.

Yet you emerged, stronger and more attuned
to all that had to be done,
despite a time constraint
that to our eyes would have seemed hopeless.

We too live in stressful times.
Demands are made of our time,
that leave so little
for the important things of life.
We are easily distracted

in the wilderness of our lives,
by every call to go this way or that,
to turn stone to bread
leap from mountains,
and do all that would keep us from the truth.

We listen to the voices of this world,
and ignore the one who endured all this
and so much more,
and emerged triumphant,
that we might not have to suffer so.

Forgive us, Father,
when we get distracted from our task.
Forgive us those times when we try
to be all things to all men,
and fail to be anything to anyone
In the name of the one who gave his life,
so that we might know God, abundance, and life eternal we come to you in prayer...

***Departing Hymn #130 “ God Will Take Care of You”**

Author: Civilla D. Martin (1904)

Publication Date: 1989

Composer: W. Stillman Martin (1905)

**1. Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you;
beneath his wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.**

Refrain:

**God will take care of you,
through every day, o'er all the way;
he will take care of you,
God will take care of you.**

**2. Through days of toil when heart doth fail,
God will take care of you;
when dangers fierce your path assail,
God will take care of you. [Refrain]**

**3. All you may need he will provide,
God will take care of you;
nothing you ask will be denied,
God will take care of you. [Refrain]**

**4. No matter what may be the test,
God will take care of you;
lean, weary one, upon his breast,
God will take care of you. [Refrain]**

INTO LENT BLESSING

Written by Roddy Hamilton, and posted on Listening to the Stones, <http://newkilpatrickblog.typepad.com/nk-blogging/mucky-paws>. Reposted: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2013/02/lenten-blessing-into-lent.html>.

May the dust of the wilderness hold our footprints
Lovingly - shaped as they are by your hurt,
for dust remembers

May the journey into wilderness unfold
Honestly, - for honesty is the gift
your soul recognizes as you

May your time in this wilderness
be shaped by space rather than minutes
so, there is time enough for all of you

May the stones in this wilderness
cry out your name loudly
that your spirit recognizes the voice
that has been calling you always

And may you know this wilderness
has been expecting you
and you find between the stones
a promise growing

Postlude