

ST. LUKE'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Rev. E. Paul Emily, Pastor
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Margie Foley, Organist/Pianist
Matthew Bennett, Conductor/Violinist

Nanette Moore, Administrative Assistant/Director of Christian Education

Pastors Emeriti: Rev. David Lyon & Rev. Ralph Koch

*If comfortable doing so, you are invited to stand.

The hymns today come from The Methodist Hymnal.

MARCH 3, 2024

ASH WEDNESDAY

SILENT REFLECTION: "Deep in the wintery parts of our minds, we know that there is no such thing as a work-free transformation. We know that we will have to burn to the ground in one way or another, and sit right in the ashes of who we once thought we were and go on from there."—Clarissa Pinkola Estes

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETING

PRELUDE

"God So Loved the World"

Arr. John Stainer

*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN No. 415 "Take Up Thy Cross"

GERMANY

"Take up thy cross," the Savior said, "if thou wouldst my disciple be;
deny thyself, the world forsake, and humbly follow after me."

Take up thy cross, let not its weight fill thy weak spirit with alarm;
his strength shall bear thy spirit up, and brace thy heart and nerve thine arm.

Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame, nor let thy foolish pride rebel;
thy Lord for thee the cross endured, to save thy soul from death and hell.

Take up thy cross and follow Christ, nor think till death to lay it down;
for only those who bear the cross may hope to wear the glorious crown.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We have turned from all other pursuits to focus our hearts and minds.

All: Together, we begin a season of self-examination.

One: We begin a humble walk toward fellowship with God and one another.

All: This season of desert spirituality will nurture our trust and hope in God.

One: Our spirits shall be renewed in the shelter of God's abiding sanctuary.

All: From our season of solitude, a season of ceaseless compassion will arise.

*PRAYER (Unison)

Ever-present God, we fall silent tonight in order to listen to what your Spirit would speak to us. If we cannot understand your silence, we will never understand your words. Give us the patience to listen to your still small voice. Give us the desire to respond to your call. Give us boldness to be honest about who we are and who you call us to be. Give us hope that lifts our spirits from places of abiding sorrow to newness of joy. Amen

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone”

Arr. Ralph Carmichael

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 32:22-32

REFLECTION

“Crossing the Jabbok”

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Holy and Seeking God, we realize our running leads us nowhere. We run only farther from joy of fellowship with you. We confess that we pursue the paths of righteousness with less than sincere hearts. Forgive us for wandering aimlessly or fleeing from your presence in rebellion. Carry us by your Spirit toward our one true source and let our souls enter your peace. Amen

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

***GLORIA PATRI** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

INVITATION TO LENTEN DISCIPLINE

***CONGREGATIONAL HYMN** No. 470 “My God, I Love Thee”

WINCHESTER OLD

“My God, I love thee, not because I hope for heaven thereby,
nor yet because, if I love not, I must forever die.

Thou, O my Jesus, thou didst me upon the cross embrace;
for me didst bear the nails and spear and manifold disgrace.

Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ, should I not love thee well?
Not for the sake of winning heaven, nor of escaping hell.

Not with the hope of gaining aught, not seeking a reward,
but as thyself hast loved me, O everlasting Lord.

So would I love thee, dearest Lord, and in thy praise will sing;
because thou art my loving God and my eternal King.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Instrumental Music “I Love You Lord” Laurie Klein

***CONGREGATIONAL HYMN** No. 430 “O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”

MARYTON

O Master, let me walk with thee in lowly paths of service free;
tell me thy secret; help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear, winning word of love;
teach me the wayward feet to stay, and guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me thy patience; still with thee in closer, dearer company,
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong, in trust that triumphs over wrong;

In hope that sends a shining ray far down the future's broadening way,
in peace that only thou canst give, with thee, O Master, let me live.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

POSTLUDE

"Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"

Alison Prestwood

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE LENTEN STUDY

The Lenten Study "**Lenten Rivers**"
will begin on Tuesday, March 11th, at 7 PM.

It will be hybrid, both in person and on Zoom.

The Zoom recording will be posted in Windows into St. Luke's Facebook Group
on Wednesdays.

If you would like to receive email with the zoom link and information
about that week's study just text the word **Rivers** to 816-312-5053