

Order of Worship

Second Sunday of Lent
February 25, 2024



Gathering and Welcome *My Faith Has Found a Resting Place*

Prelude *Ash Grove Variations* – arr. Howard Helvey
Jessye Whitis, Pianist

Chime Choir *When I Can Read My Title Clear* – Bill Ingram
Bruce Vineyard, Director

***Call to worship** (based on Mark 8:31-38)

Let us not be ashamed of our Savior. Let us sing and praise our God out loud.

In the midst of the crowd, we will praise you. In our community, we will bear witness to our faith.

Let us set our minds on divine things.

Let us take up our cross and follow Christ.

***Opening Hymn # 686** *God of Our Life*

***Call to confession**

When we cry to God in prayer and confession, God hears. Let us approach God's throne of grace with confidence and faith.

***Prayer of confession**

Savior God, the public spectacle of the cross calls us to account. We hesitate and hedge when opportunities arise to speak of you. We are shy in faith and not bold to proclaim. Your story saves, yet we keep it to ourselves. Forgive our reticence of faith. Forgive the ways we fail to serve as public witnesses. Help us be your candlelight, held high to set the world aglow. Amen.

***Assurance of pardon**

God does not forsake us. Our God is a gracious God, abounding in steadfast love. Know that, in Jesus Christ, you are forgiven and be at peace. Amen.

**Choral Anthem *Trust and Obey God's Word* – Jean A. Shafferman
George Weaver, Director**

Prayer for illumination

Merciful, God, help us to seek you and the message you
intend for us in your Word read and proclaimed today.
Amen.

Scripture readings Psalm 22: 23-31 Mark 8: 31-38

Sermon *Remember: ZAKAR*

Rev. Kathy Vineyard, H.R.

***Affirmation of faith** (from A Brief Statement of Faith)

**In life and in death we belong to God.
Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,
whom alone we worship and serve.
We trust in Jesus Christ,
fully human, fully God.
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:
preaching good news to the poor
and release to the captives,
teaching by word and deed
and blessing the children,
healing the sick
and binding up the brokenhearted,
eating with outcasts,
forgiving sinners,
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.
Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,
Jesus was crucified,
suffering the depths of human pain
and giving his life for the sins of the world.
God raised this Jesus from the dead,
vindicating his sinless life,
breaking the power of sin and evil,
delivering us from death to life eternal.**

Hymn of Response # 213 *In the Cross of Christ I Glory

Call for the offering

God calls us to lives of grateful generosity. Let us praise the giver of all good gifts through our offering today.

Offertory *Jesus Walked This Lonely Valley* –Folk Hymn

Jessye Whitis, Pianist

Doxology # 606 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

***Prayer of dedication**

God of grace, you provide for us in amazing ways. May our offerings provide for others and be used to further Christ's ministry and mission. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

God our hope and our holy companion, we come before you on this Second Sunday of Lent, knowing we can be honest because you know us; you know our thoughts, our struggles, our joys. You know our prayers even before they form in our minds and are articulated with whispered words. You know how we struggle. You know how we hope. You delight in our joy. You desire our peace.

God, we are vulnerable, and we know it. We need you. As the thirsty deer longs for the flowing stream, our souls thirst for you. Our hearts ache for your love. Our spirits cry for relief from the turmoil and the sorrow. Our bodies yearn for the ecstatic movement of joy. Our minds want to be assured, without a doubt, of your presence among us and with us. Life is a wilderness, and so often we are lost.

Therefore, in these long wilderness days of Lent, we audaciously ask for your help and hope. Comfort the sick and the grieving. Heal our wounds of heart and body. Calm our frantic anxieties. Order the chaos.

God, come near to us this Second Sunday of Lent, and near to those we love. Sit and stay awhile. And hear our prayers, as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us saying, "**Our Father ...**".

Hymn of Sending # 49 *The God of Abraham Praise

Charge and benediction (from the “Invitation to Observe a Holy Lent,” *Book of Common Worship*)

Beloved people of God;
I invite you, in the name of Christ,
to observe a holy Lent
by self-examination and penitence,
by prayer and fasting,
by works of love,
and by meditating on Gods’ Word.

May the grace, hope, peace and love of God our Creator,
Redeemer and Sustainer be with us all, now and forever.
Amen.

Postlude *What a Friend* – arr. Jack Schrader

Jessye Whitis, Pianist

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott.

When I Can Read My Title Clear

When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies
I'll bid farewell to every fear
And wipe my weeping eyes...

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was an English Congregational minister. He began preaching in 1702 and was the author of many hymns, ***Joy to the World, When I Survey the Wondrous Cross***, and ***Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*** just to name a few.

When I Can Read My Title Clear was published in 1707 and arranged to this Scottish folk melody in 1817. Watts is interred at Westminster Abbey.