

Worship Order
February 21, 2021
First Sunday in Lent
9:30 AM Online Worship

WELCOME

+ WE GATHER BEFORE GOD +

PRELUDE Hymn Tune *Abbot's Leigh* (God Is Here!) – setting, Sedio

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MOMENT OF SILENCE

LIGHTING OF TRINITY CANDLE

As we strive to be a community of faith that is

Ignited by Spirit, Growing in Love,

we light this candle in the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit
who surround us in this moment of worship.

WE COME TO GOD IN WORSHIP

God meets us in the night—

before the sun rises,

before the wound heals,

before there are answers,

before there is closure.

God meets us in the light—

where joy is effervescent,

where laughter is contagious,

where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,

and where people gather around the table.

God meets us at the threshold—

at the edge of the water,

at the beginning of the wilderness,

at the start of something new,

on the edge of faith.

And if God meets us in all those places,

then surely God meets us in between—

staying with us through the wilderness.

We are not alone. God is all around.

Let us worship the God of the here and now.

HYMN ELW 526 God Is Here!

God is here! As we your people
meet to offer praise and prayer,
may we find in fuller measure
what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us,
all our varied skills and arts
wait the coming of the Spirit
into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us
of our lifelong need of grace;
here are table, font, and pulpit;
here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching,
here in silence, as in speech,
here, in newness and renewal,
God the Spirit comes to each.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000

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GREETING

The mercy of God, the love of Jesus
and the power and presence of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

WE CONFESS TO GOD

Again and again, God meets us where we are.
God's love knows no bounds, which is hard for us to understand and easy for us to forget.
Therefore, in confession we remember together that we are not alone.
And in a unified voice, we once again ask for God's grace in that holy reminder.
People of faith, please pray with me.

God who meets us where we are—
There is nowhere we can go that you are not.
You were with Jesus at his baptism.
You were with him in the wilderness,
And even in between, you were there,
Saying aloud, "This is my beloved."

We know that you are with us too—
in the good, the bad, and everything in between—
but so often we act like we are alone.
Instead of coming to you with our hurt,
we hold it in or cast it onto others.
Instead of coming to you with our joy,
we credit ourselves and offer you nothing.

How can we long for a deeper relationship with you
while living like you are nowhere to be found?

Forgive our self-centered ways.

Remind us that in every breath, in every step, you are there.

You are the God who meets us where we are.

Before and behind, above and below, within and around. Amen.

People of faith, if you hear nothing else today, hear this:

God is here. God sees you. God knows you. God meets you at the edge of every new beginning,
and God calls you beloved.

We are washed by the water.

We are called beloved.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

PRAYER FOR THIS DAY

Let us pray.

Holy God,

If I am honest, faith often feels like water in my hands.

No matter how hard I try to hold onto it, some of it always slips through—
like droplets of truth running down my wrists, back toward my heart.

This human inability to hold onto you leaves me thirsty for more.

So as we prepare to read scripture,

I pray that once again, you would meet us here.

Meet us in our hope and our heartache.

Meet us in our fear and our joy.

Meet us in our cupped hands and clenched fists.

And even if the water keeps running,

and we do not have a sky-parting moment of clarity,

or a tangible sense that you are near;

even if we do not hear the words, “This is my beloved,”

ringing in our ears,

we will trust that you are near,

always and forever meeting us here,

running toward our hearts.

Gratefully we pray,

Amen.

+ WE HEAR GOD’S WORD +

FIRST READING: Genesis 9:8-17

Today’s reading is the conclusion to the flood story. Because of human sin, God destroys the earth by flood, saving only Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Yet divine destruction gives way to divine commitment. As in the first creation, God blesses humanity and establishes a covenant with all creatures.

⁸God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a

flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹²God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

We are turning, Lord to hear you, we are merciful and kind –
slow to anger, rich in blessing, and with love to us inclined.

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GOSPEL: Mark 1:9-15

The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the good news of God's reign.

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Pastor Becky Schanely

WE PROFESS OUR FAITH IN GOD

**We believe in a God who is everywhere and right here,
bigger than the sky and in the smallest details,
all at once and in every moment.**

**We believe that God meets us where we are—
in heartbreak and high hopes,
around crowded tables and in quiet homes,
in joy and in suffering,
in loneliness and in connection,
in sanctuaries and in living rooms,
in marches and in waiting rooms.
We believe that nothing we do or leave undone
can distance us from God’s love.
God is forever drawing us close and pulling us in.
Again and again, God meets us where we are
and invites us into wholeness.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

WE PRAY TO GOD

Receive our prayers, O God:
In you we put our trust.

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through
your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING I Want Jesus to Walk with Me – arr. Larson
Meghan Carlin, Soprano

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+ WE FEAST AT GOD’S TABLE +

WE SHARE GOD’S PEACE

The peace of God, that washes over us again & again, be with you all.
And also with you.

*Take a moment to share a sign of the peace with those who are worshipping in your household.
If you are alone, take a moment to receive God’s peace for yourself in the silence.*

WE COMMUNE WITH GOD

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Again & again, God promises to feed us,
and so we come to the table to receive grace after grace from our God.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD’S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,**

as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

WE SHARE THE MEAL CHRIST GAVE US

Share the bread and wine with those in your household using the words,

The body of Christ, broken for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

+ WE ARE SENT OUT +

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING HYMN ELW In the Cross of Christ I Glory

In the cross of Christ I glory,
tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me,
hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
never shall the cross forsake me;
lo, it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
light and love upon my way,
from the cross the radiance streaming
adds more luster to the day.

Text: John Bowring, 1792-1872, Public Domain

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God's grace.
And may this be your rhythm—
again and again and again,
until God's promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,
go with courage, go with heart, go in peace. **Amen.**

SENDING MUSIC

A Time for Prayer – Paxton

Play Something Quick, Compiled by Dorothy Wells

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Opening liturgy and statement of faith by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Mark Your Calendar	
Sat, Feb 20 th	9-11am Food Collection for Open Link
Sunday, Feb 21 st	9:30am First Sunday in Lent Worship (zoom)
Monday, Feb 22 nd	7:30pm Executive Meeting (zoom)
Tuesday, Feb 23 rd	7:30pm Lenten Study (zoom)
Wed, Feb 24 th	7:30pm Mid Week Community Worship & fellowship (zoom)
Friday, Feb 26 th	2-7pm Blood Drive –Multipurpose Room

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD’S LOVE

Worship Attendance 2/14/2021 – Zoom - 55 households		
Giving Amounts	Total received between 1/23-2/13/2021	Amount Needed between 1/23-2/23/2021
General Fund	\$9,682.50	\$16,825
Building Fund	\$768.75	
<i>Weekly average is based on the 2021 budget. A weekly building fund amount needed is no longer reported as the building fund has been used for the mortgage, which has been paid off. All other building expenses are included in General Fund budget and giving. The above numbers include electronic giving. Mint duty is being done every other week for the time being.</i>		

Capital Campaign Activity Update	
Capital Campaign Contributions Pledged	\$ 260,000.00
Capital Campaign Contributions received between 1/10-23/2021	\$362.25
Capital Campaign Contributions received to date	\$ 249,470.90

WORSHIP IN LENT

Sunday mornings – join us as we dig into the theme *Again & Again: A Lenten Refrain*
9:30 AM Sundays on Zoom starting February 21

In Lent, we're reminded that, again and again, suffering and brokenness find us. We doubt again, we lament again, we mess up again. Again and again, the story of Jesus on the cross repeats – every time lives are taken unjustly, every time the powerful choose corruption and violence, every time individuals forget how to love. With exacerbation, we exclaim, 'Again?! How long, O God?' And yet, in the midst of the chaos of our lives, God offers a sacred refrain: 'I choose you, I love you, I will lead you to repair.' Again and again, God breaks the cycle and offers us a new way forward.

Wednesday evenings – join us as we explore the theme *Created for Community*
7:30 PM Wednesday evenings on Zoom, starting February 24 (see weekly email for link)

The invitation to Lent spoken on Ash Wednesday reminds us that we enter this season together "with the whole church." It goes on to state that "we are created for communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation." Though many common Lenten practices rightly invite us to individual acts of "repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love," Lent is also a time for deepening of community. Using readings from Mark's gospel, our mid-week Lenten worship will invite participations to reflect on what it means to be in community with one another, with the world, with creation, and with God, especially at a time when we are physically distanced from one another.

- **Feb 24** – *In community with creation* – worship provided by Pastor Wayne Moritz and the people of St. Paul's, Red Hill
- **March 3** – *In community with all the saints* – Pastor Becky Schanely and the people of St. John's, Sumneytown
- **March 10** – *In community with our neighbor* – Pastor Nick Pence and the people of Palm Schwenkfelder, Palm
- **March 17** – *In community with those on the margins* – Pastor Deb Schwartz and the people of Friedens UCC, Sumneytown
- **March 24** – *In community with Christ* – Pastor Homer Royer and the people of New Goshenhoppen UCC, East Greenville

Worship will be followed by a fellowship time utilizing breakout rooms on Zoom for small group gatherings.

Adult Faith Formation: Lenten Journeys of Faith

Tuesday evenings starting February 23 thru March 30
7:30 PM on Zoom

Using the book – *The Soul's Journey* – we will explore the Stations of the Cross in new ways that will open your soul to grace. The book features the paintings of artist Kathrin Burleson as well as soul-searching reflections on her creative process and spiritual journey. Each station offers devotions from key leaders of faith. In these images, stories, and prayers, these stations reflect the Passion of Christ, exploring betrayal, judgment, and suffering but ultimately celebrating the great triumph of life over death, the Resurrection of Christ Jesus.

Lenten At-Home Service Project

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) is in serious need of personal care kits. Their warehouse shelves are nearly empty and they cannot keep up with the demand. This Lent, St. John's invites you to create personal care kits at home. Make one - make 10. You determine what you are able to give based on your family's personal situation.

**The challenge - we have 200 active families at St. John's -
our hope is to collect 200 personal care kits - this Lent!**

Visit the LWR website (<https://lwr.org/kits/personal-care-kits/instructions>) to get all the information you need on what goes in each personal care kit and how to package it.

If you want to participate but need the information sent to you, please call the church office.

Personal care kits can be dropped off at one of two times:

Sat. March 20 from 9-11 am (during the food collection drop-off time)

Sat. March 27 from 9-11 am (when palms will be available for pick-up)

You can also drop off personal care kits at the church office,
Monday thru Thursday (9 am to 12 noon) the week of March 22.

The cemetery committee will be clearing away any remaining Christmas decorations on **Monday, March 1st**. Please collect or clear away any decorations before that date. Please call Evey Koffel, if you have any questions.

Blood Drive - There will be a blood drive at St. John's on Friday, February 26th from 2-7pm. Sign up at redcrossblood.org to set up an appointment

Meal Train for Brian & Jennifer Allebach

As you may be aware, Brian Allebach, former chancel choir director at St. John's, was diagnosed with ALS in 2019. As the disease progresses and life changes for the Allebachs each week, we are hoping to support them in whatever ways we can.

A meal train, to provide one home-made meal two Saturdays a month, has been started. To access the meal train sign-up, see what dates are available and find out all the pertinent information, see the weekly email or contact the church office.

Brian also loves to receive cards - so feel free to drop one in the mail to their home address, which is:

Brian Allebach

1096 Soffa Road

East Greenville, PA 18041

Thank you for your tender care for this family at this challenging time - and watch for new ways to be present with and for them in the months to come.