

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
March 19, 2023
Fourth Sunday of Lent

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Are you awake? Are you alert?

All: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Leader: Are you watching the signs? Are you interpreting what is happening today?

All: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Leader: Do you see opportunities for ministry? Do you see the poor, the homeless, the hungry, the needy?

All: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Leader: Come, let us worship and let us work in the reign of God.

All: Christ has extended the invitation: let us work together in the reign of God on earth.

Leader: Come, let us worship God.

***HYMN**

God Is Here!

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***CALL TO CONFESSION**

This is the proof of God's great love: that while we were sinners, Christ died for us. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Watchful God, you ask us to be awake to your work in the world. But we are tired from the tasks of our lives and fall asleep; we are wasteful with our energy and burn out before the watch is done; we give our limited attention to a million things that are not you. Your presence in our lives, your will for our communities, and your kingdom's progress pass by us unnoticed as we sleep and watch other things.

Wake us up, O God, that we might not miss the things you are showing us. Forgive our lack of attention, and set our hearts, minds, and eyes upon you alone. Amen.

We reflect in silence on the ways we have fallen short.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Amen. God's love has been poured into your hearts through the gift of the Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Amen, and thanks be to God.**

O Lord, have mercy; O Lord, have mercy; O Lord, have mercy, have mercy on us.

O Christ, have mercy; O Christ, have mercy; O Christ, have mercy, have mercy on us.

O Lord, have mercy; O Lord, have mercy; O Lord, have mercy, have mercy on us.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God, our way in the wilderness, guide us, by your Word, through these forty days, and minister to us with your Holy Spirit, so that we may be reformed, restored, and renewed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING*Matthew 22:1-9*

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten young women took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those young women got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'

The Word of God for the people of God!

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM*Worthy Is the Lamb*

MPC Choir

SECOND READING*Matthew 25:10-13*

And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. Later the other young women came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

Rev. Ben Shaw

HYMNRejoice! Rejoice, Believers*

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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

from A Brief Statement of Faith

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we serve to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying "Come, Lord Jesus!".

CALL TO OFFERING

Now let us present the offerings of our life and labor to the Lord. Freely you have received, freely give.

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

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*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

... And now hear as we pray as Jesus taught us:

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 debts
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***HYMN**

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning

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CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all this day, and unto your life eternal. Amen.

POSTLUDE

