

The Mount Carmel Congregational Church

A United Church of Christ



Jesus Healing the Blind Man, Brian Jekel c. 2008

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 19th, 2023

Prelude

“Amazing Grace”

Arr. Mark Patterson

Greeting

Passing of the Peace of Christ

*Call to Worship

One: God is our shepherd; we will have all that we need;

All: Our Shepherd guides us in fruitful living, giving us healing and pardon.

One: Even though difficulties and dangers lie ahead, we do not have to be controlled by our fear.

All: God’s love and strength are like a rod and staff for us, offering guidance.

One: God will give us abundant love in all circumstances.

All: Surely this goodness and will be with us all of our days, and we will dwell in God’s loving care forever.

*Hymn

“The Master Has Come”

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The Call to Confession

Unison Prayer of Confession

O God, we cannot do this alone. Help us to concentrate our thoughts on you; We feel the weight of the world, and you offer rest; We are lonely, yet you do not leave us; We are feeble in heart, and you call us to courage; We are restless, and you foment patience in our hearts; We harbor bitterness, and you plant seeds of gratitude; We give into despair, and you awaken hope. Whatever these days may bring, we cannot do this alone. We are your people, held in your hands; forgive us, we pray. Amen.

(Adapted from a prayer by Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

Words of Assurance

[Note: Please stand for sections labeled with an asterisk (*).]

The First Lesson:

Ephesians 5:8-14

Bev Jurkiewicz

You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live your life as children of light. Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice, and truth. Therefore, test everything to see what's pleasing to the Lord, and don't participate in the unfruitful actions of darkness. Instead, you should reveal the truth about them. It's embarrassing to even talk about what certain persons do in secret. But everything exposed to the light is revealed by the light. Everything that is revealed by the light is light. Therefore, it says, *Wake up, sleeper! Get up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.*

Reflections on the Reading

The Gospel:

John 9: 1-11

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who was blind from birth. Jesus' disciples asked, "Rabbi, who sinned so that he was born blind, this man or his parents?"

Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents. This happened so that God's mighty works might be displayed in him. While it's daytime, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After he said this, he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and smeared the mud on the man's eyes. Jesus said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (this word means sent). So the man went away and washed. When he returned, he could see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am he." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight."

Sermon

The Joys and Concerns of the Parish Family

Altar flowers for this week’s service are given by Bev Churchill in memory of the ‘Churchills’: ‘Church’ Sr., Dorothy Churchill, and ‘Church’ Jr.

Please remember the following persons in your prayers: Karl Paulette; Carmen McKee; Peter Copeland; Amos Hewitt; Rhonda Pruzinsky; Gilbert Spencer; Ron Vanacore; and Kathy Willey.

Moments of Silent Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

The 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 for ever and ever. Amen.

Call to Offering

Offertory

“In the Cross”

Arr. Thomas Keesecker

***The Doxology (Mary Luti)**

Praise God, who made all people one,
whose healing work is never done,
who calls us steadfast to abide
in mercy at each other’s side. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

*Benediction (Sung)

I need thy presence every passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

XX

*As a community of faith, gathered in Christ's love,
we strive to support one another in hearing the Word,
living the Word, and sharing the Word.*

The Master Has Come



1. The Mas-ter has come, and He calls us to fol-low the track of the
2. The Mas-ter has called us; the road may be drear-y, and dan-gers and
3. The Mas-ter has called us, in life's ear-ly morn-ing, with spir-its as



foot-prints He leaves on our way; far o-ver the moun-tain and
sor-rows are strewn on the track; but God's Ho-ly Spir-it shall
fresh as the dew on the sod: we turn from the world, with its



through the deep hol-low, the path leads us on to the man-sions of day: the
com-fort the wea-ry; we fol-low the Sav-ior and can-not turn back; the
smiles and its scorn-ing, to cast in our lot with the peo-ple of God: the



Mas-ter has called us, the chil-dren who fear Him, who march 'neath Christ's
Mas-ter has called us; though doubt and temp-ta-tion may com-pass our
Mas-ter has called us, His sons and His daugh-ters, we plead for His

Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior



1 Pass me not, O gen - tle Sav - ior, hear my hum - ble cry;
2 Let me at thy throne of mer - cy find a sweet re - lief;
3 Trust - ing on - ly in thy mer - it, would I seek thy face;
4 Thou, the spring of all my com - fort, more than life to me,



while on oth - ers thou art call - ing, do not pass me by.
kneel - ing there in deep con - tri - tion, help my un - be - lief.
heal my wound - ed, bro - ken spir - it, save me by thy grace.
whom have I on earth be - side thee? Whom in heav'n but thee?

Refrain



Sav - ior, Sav - ior, hear my hum - ble cry;



while on oth - ers thou art call - ing, do not pass me by.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please join us for coffee hour following this morning's worship service.

The One Great Hour of Sharing is our Lenten offering which supports disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ. Today is the offering date. You may put your donation in the offering plate in an envelope marked OGHS.

If you would like to write a check, make it out to the church but put OGHS in the memo line. Thank you.

The Deadline for April Bell Tree Submissions is this coming Tuesday, March 21st. Please submit any materials to the office by 12pm in order to ensure inclusion in April's newsletter!

The deadline for Committee Reports for the 2023 Annual Meeting is Thursday, March 30th. Please send any outstanding reports to Aren in the office, preferably by email. For additional information, please see this month's newsletter.

If you have any updates to our directory, please contact the office by Thursday, March 30th. We plan on distributing physical copies of the 2023 Directory at the Annual Meeting alongside the Annual Report.

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 23rd, following our regularly scheduled worship service.

Keep your Ark Banks floating! Please don't forget to keep bringing in your ark banks. The monies collected go into a discretionary fund which can be used to help people in need.

We are always looking for Volunteers for Coffee Hour. If you are interested, please contact Aren in the office, or use the sign-up sheet now located near the main entrance to the Parish House.

Donations for the Food Bank are always needed if you are able to contribute. Non-perishable items such as canned beef stew, hearty soups, canned fish, peanut butter, mac and cheese packages, and oatmeal would be greatly appreciated.

March 19th, 2023

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**Note: Although we are now mask-optional in worship, we ask that you refrain from attending service if you are not feeling well and please wear a mask if you have been exposed to COVID. We thank you for your consideration of others.*



In Galatians, the Apostle Paul encourages followers of Jesus to generously help and care for others. Though there is great need in the world and we can grow weary because we do not know how to help, God's Spirit energizes and re-energizes us in every season.

We can make a difference. We do make a difference. Your generosity makes all the difference. Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing provide immediate aid and long-term support to people experiencing hunger, thirst, disaster, or crisis around the world.

The need has never been greater. The opportunity is now. **It's time to share.**

YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

Esmerelda Robles lives in rural Honduras. She and her neighbors participate in a "pass chain" program. A family receives a pregnant pig, sheep, or cow; families are taught how to feed and care for the animals. When the next piglet, lamb, or calf is born, it is passed on to another family, which in turn will do the same. "A dream we have as a family is to have a micro-business for the production and sale of meat," Esmerelda says. Families now envision a future not possible before. This is just one part of a program to improve food security. This program and its components are made possible because of your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing.



So let's not allow ourselves to get
fatigued doing good. At the right
time we will harvest a good crop
if we don't give up...
— Galatians 6:9



The Altar Guild

Memorial Easter Plants, 2023

Place Orders At:

Sunday Coffee Hours, **March 26th & April 2nd**.
or call **Karen Amato at (203) 272-0174 by Wednesday, April 5th**.

Choice of:

Tulips, Daffodils, or Hyacinths	Cost: \$8.00 each
Easter Lilies:	Cost: \$10.00 each

Plants will be displayed on Easter Sunday and can be taken after worship Service.

Order forms will be available for pickup in the Parish House near the entrance. For a PDF copy, please contact the office.