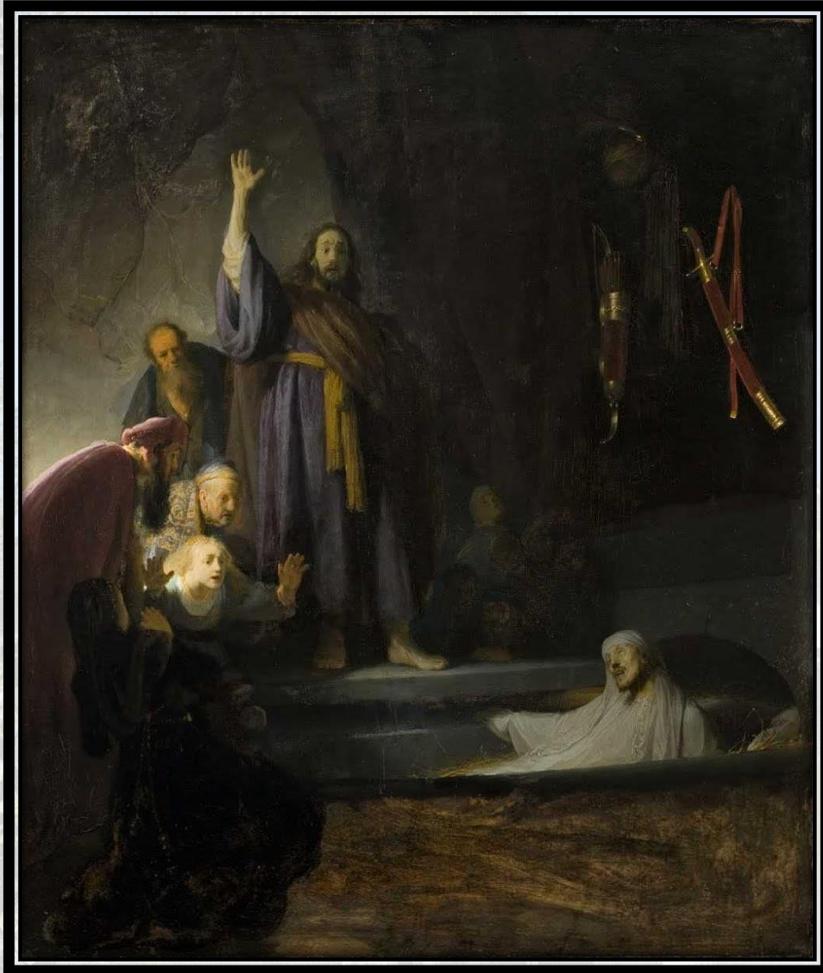


The Mount Carmel Congregational Church

A United Church of Christ



The Raising of Lazarus, Rembrandt c. 1632

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 26th, 2023

Prelude

“O God, In Whom All Life Begins”

Arr. Franklyn Ashdown

Greeting

Passing of the Peace of Christ

*Call to Worship

One: We gather to worship God together this morning, eager to see the ways in which God will speak to us.

All: Because God is a listening God, we trust God hears our prayers.

One: Because God is a redeeming God, we trust that we can stand without fear.

All: Because God is a forgiving God, we trust that we are forgiven.

One: Because God is a loving God, we trust that we are valued.

All: Let us bear witness to God’s loving presence, which we know most clearly in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

*Hymn

“O God, In Whom All Life Begins”

NCH #401

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)

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

Words of Assurance

The First Lesson:

Psalm 130

Mark Leach

I cry out to you from the depths, Lord—
my Lord, listen to my voice!

Let your ears pay close attention to my request for mercy!
If you kept track of sins, Lord—
my Lord, who would stand a chance?

But forgiveness is with you—
that's why you are honored.

I hope, Lord.
My whole being hopes,
and I wait for God's promise.
My whole being waits for my Lord—
more than the night watch waits for morning;
yes, more than the night watch waits for morning!

Israel, wait for the Lord!
Because faithful love is with the Lord;
because great redemption is with our God!
God is the one who will redeem Israel
from all its sin.

Reflections on the Reading

The Gospel:

John 11: 1-8, 32-40

A certain man, Lazarus, was ill. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (This was the Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped his feet with her hair. Her brother Lazarus was ill.) So the sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, "Lord, the one whom you love is ill."

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This illness isn't fatal. It's for the glory of God so that God's Son can be glorified through it." Jesus loved

Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. When he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed where he was. After two days, he said to his disciples, “Let’s return to Judea again.” . . .

When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.”

When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who had come with her crying also, he was deeply disturbed and troubled. He asked, “Where have you laid him?”

They replied, “Lord, come and see.”

Jesus began to cry. The Jews said, “See how much he loved him!” But some of them said, “He healed the eyes of the man born blind. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?”

Jesus was deeply disturbed again when he came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone covered the entrance. Jesus said, “Remove the stone.”

Martha, the sister of the dead man, said, “Lord, the smell will be awful! He’s been dead four days.”

Jesus replied, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believe, you will see God’s glory?” So they removed the stone. Jesus looked up and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. I know you always hear me. I say this for the benefit of the crowd standing here so that they will believe that you sent me.” Having said this, Jesus shouted with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his feet bound and his hands tied, and his face covered with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Untie him and let him go.”

Sermon

***Hymn**

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

NCH #223

The Joys and Concerns of the Parish Family

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

“Cantilena”
Arr. Franklyn Ashdown

*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

*Hymn

“Take My Life, God, Let It Be”

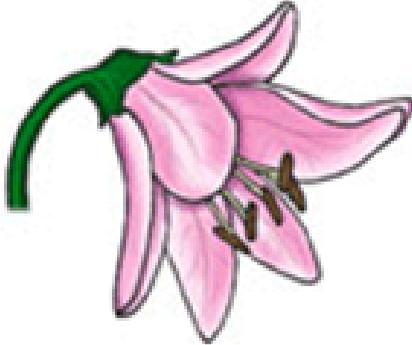
NCH #448

*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 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The deadline for Committee Reports to be submitted for the 2022 Annual Report is this coming Thursday, March 30th. Please send reports to Aren in the office by email at office@mccucc.com.

Please join us next Sunday for our Palm/Passion Sunday service. Service will begin in the courtyard with the Procession of the Palms.

Our service for Maundy Thursday on April 6th begins at 6:30pm.

Our 2023 Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 23rd, following our regularly scheduled worship service. The meeting will be held in the Parish Hall with a breakfast brunch to follow.

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.

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Board of Trustees: Anna Anderson, Chair
aanderson545@gmail.com

**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.*