



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

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March 12, 2023 – 11:00 am

Third Sunday of Lent



Your divine throne is eternal and everlasting. Your royal scepter is a scepter of justice. You love righteousness and hate wickedness. No wonder God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of joy more than all your companions! Psalm 45: 6-7 (CEB)

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Welcome to our service of worship. Although we are worshipping in a variety of locations, we still affirm that God is present in our worship, whether in-person or virtually. Our prayer is that all who worship with us this day will truly feel the presence of God in this time. Know that you are loved and we are so glad you are here! Parts of today's liturgy are from Ruth Burgess and Chris Polhill, Eggs and Ashes: Practical and Liturgical Resources for Lent and Holy Week (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2004); and Sally Foster-Fulton, Dancing in the Desert: Prayers and reflections for Lent (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2016).

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *March to the Cross*

P.I. TCHAIKOVSKY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***OPENING HYMN #423:** *Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun*

ISAAC WATTS

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does its successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made,
And praises throng to crown His head;
His name, like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The prisoners leap to lose their chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all who suffer want are blessed.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honors to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud amen!

***OPENING SENTENCES**

Blazing in a bush, burning in a fiery pillar, Moses met you. ***Come God and meet us now.***
Walking through a city, listening to a story, disciples met you. ***Come God and meet us now.***
Fire round their heads, holiness in their lives, believers met you. ***Come God and meet us now.***

Let us worship our God.

***GATHERING PRAYER**

"BELOVED," SALLY FOSTER-FULTON

Oh, how you love us, God – number the hairs on our heads, counting fingers and toes,
memorize the curve of our smile and the hope in our hearts.

Oh, how you love us, God! You see the beauty housed within us and give it a home.
You're intimately familiar with our frailties, but refuse to hold them against us.
When we are at our best, we emulate you and adore each other. When we are at our best,
we cannot help the love. Thank you for the shelter we find with each other,
the freedom found in not having to pretend. Thank you for the challenge laid at our door
when we are called to change our plans for somebody else's dream.

Oh, how you love us, God – when we are at our best, we emulate you and adore each other.
Teach us to be at our best. The world sometimes shows us its worst –
hunger, poverty, war, oppression, greed, injustice...
When we are part of the worst the world has to offer, stop us and change us and turn us back towards love.
Whenever and wherever we can, help us to help each other.

Amen.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Merciful God, your word is our way of truth and life. Create in us hearts that are clean and put your Holy Spirit within us, so that we may receive your grace and declare your praise forever; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

PSALM 45:6-7

PEW BIBLE, 699

MATTHEW 22:1-14

PEW BIBLE, 1201

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

AN OFFERING OF OUR PLEDGES

***DOXOLOGY #592:** *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

THOMAS KEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***BLESSING OUR GIFTS**

***HYMN OF THE DAY #85:** *What Wondrous Love is This*

ANONYMOUS

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul!

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sing!

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on.
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on.
And through eternity I'll sing on.

CONFESSONAL LITANY AND PRAYER

Throughout Lent we will be praying through the Lord's Prayer. In your bulletin you received a prayer cloth. We will begin this time of prayer by the choir singing the Lord's Prayer, reciting a brief litany, and then praying and meditating on the specific phrase from the Lord's Prayer of the day. When we are done, you will be invited to bring the prayer cloth and lay it before the three crosses and pick up a rock from the table while we chant The Lord's Prayer.

Let us come together to tell the truth about ourselves,
singing together the prayer our Lord taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER (CHOIR)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

Give us this day our daily bread.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Give us this day our daily bread.

PRAYING THE LORD'S PRAYER

We will now enter into a time of silent prayer. You are invited to pray and meditate on the phrase "give us this day our daily bread" while holding your prayer cloth.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE: The Lord's Prayer

As our time of silent prayer is concluded, you are invited to come forward and leave your cloth at the foot of the cross, symbolizing bringing your Lenten prayer before Christ while we sing together. Once you place your cloth, please pick up a rock with the name of a member of the church on it. We will pray for one another after the sermon.

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 sins, as we forgive them that sin 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. Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *I Lay My Sins on Jesus*

HORATIUS BONAR

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *"Awkward Family Weddings"*

REV. PHILLIPS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

You are once again invited to enter into a time of silent prayer. This time we will be praying for the person on the name of the rock you picked up from the table.

LITANY FOR LENT

"LEAD US ON OUR JOURNEY," RUTH HARVEY

God, our God,
you have called us to be a people
on the move;
travelling light,
dying to live,
ready to lose ourselves for the sake of the world.

***You have called us to be a people
with a purpose;
travelling without a map,
travelling to where we are lead,
sustained by your Spirit,
committed to the gospel for the hope of the world.***

You have called us, your people,
to be the church.
But we are a church with problems:
too strong for the weak,
too staid for the young,
too respectable for the poor,
too divided for mission,
too obsessed with our own lives to think of the lives of others,
too unsure of our message to speak to the world.

***Move us on our journey
from where we are to where you want us to go.
Open our eyes on the way
to the people of different cultures, continents and countries,
who can bring difference to our lives.***

Take us on our journey
from where we are to what you want us to be;
so that we become a community
where all are welcomed and no one is excluded,
all are valued and no one is made to feel inadequate,
all are forgiven and no one is ashamed to belong,
all are encouraged and no one is too hurt to come among us.

***Lead us on our journey
from who we are to who you want us to be;
so that patience is built into us,
kindness is assumed in us,
gentleness is part of us,
compassion flows from us,
truth is second nature to us,
and the commitment of love is part of us.***

Let us go gladly on the journey towards Easter –
the journey towards death and resurrection.
Let us journey in the peace and power of the Spirit.

***CLOSING HYMN #80:** *Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*

Jesus walked this lonesome valley,
He had to walk it by Himself;
O, nobody else could walk it for Him,
He had to walk it by Himself.

We must walk this lonesome valley,
We have to walk it by ourselves;
O, nobody else can walk it for us,
We have to walk it by ourselves.

You must go and stand your trial,
You have to stand it by yourself,
O, nobody else can stand it for you,
You have to stand it by yourself.

***SENDING**

"OPENING AND CLOSING RESPONSES FOR LENT," RUTH BURGESS

Holy God
Rich in mercy
Bless us with love

Healing God
Firm in forgiveness
Bless us with grace

Disturbing God
Strong in justice
Bless us with hope and joy

CHORAL BLESSING: *My Peace*

POSTLUDE: *How Firm a Foundation*

PATRICIA LOU HARRIS/TUNE: FOUNDATION

** Please stand in body or spirit.*



Our Faith Community @ Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Feb. 26th - March 26th Lenten Worship – 11am in the Sanctuary

The Season of Lent. Our Lenten Sunday worship will include periods of silent prayer and mediation on the Lord's Prayer as well as opportunities to pray for one another.

March 21st Alamance Co. Mobile Library

The Alamance County Public Libraries mobile library will be in the church parking lot 10:30 – 11:30.

Please stop by and “check-out” this wonderful service the library has to share.

April 1st Community Easter Egg Hunt – 10:00-11:30am in the Recreation Area

We're bringing back an old favorite of ours – our Easter Egg hunt! Kids of all ages are welcome to participate in this fun family

April 2nd Psalm Sunday Service – 11am in the Sanctuary

Our Palm Sunday service will include a Cantata sung by our choir and Communion.

April 3rd – April 9th Stations of the Cross – All day – here in the Recreation Area

We are excited to offer our Recreation Area as a space for the community for prayerful reflection during Holy Week. Our 15 stations (including a final station for the Resurrection) will utilize ecumenical meditations and prayers from the Iona Community.

April 6th Maundy Thursday Dinner Church – 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall

Come and join us for Dinner Church, a meal and liturgy around the table as we commemorate the Passover meal that Jesus celebrated with his disciples. RSVP to the office at 336-227-4041

Come as you are – all are welcome!

April 7th Good Friday Seven Last Words – 6:30 in the Sanctuary

We will hold a service of prayer and reflection on the Seven Last Words. Please note that there will be extended periods of silence and a darkened sanctuary during this service.

April 9th Easter Sunday – 11am in the Sanctuary

Our Easter celebration. Celebrate Jesus' resurrection with us!

This Week's Calendar:

Today Sunday, March 12th - 3rd Sunday in Lent

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

Wednesday, March 14th

6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, March 19th - 4th Sunday in Lent

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

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Session

Moderator: Rev. Jon Phillips

Clerk: Randy Cousins

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

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