



We are an Open and Affirming, Creation Justice Congregation

Order of Service

Third Sunday in Lent, March 15, 2020

We Gather in God's Presence

Light a candle and center yourself in the presence of God, connecting the light of the candle with the divine light within you.

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS,
CELEBRATIONS

Remember the words of our welcome – “No matter who you are and no matter where you find yourself on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

Please note the following announcements:

- Until further notice we will be suspending all in-person worship and church gatherings as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Please stay up to date with the newsletter for the latest.
- Keep connecting! Consider calling someone in the church directory and asking them how they’re doing. Think of something you appreciate and admire about them – and let them know.
- We will be holding a “Virtual Fellowship Hour” online at 11am. See the “Zoom Meeting” instructions from the church email.

Pause and consider – in the midst of it all, what am I joyful about today? What am I grateful for? What is good and beautiful and true and worth celebrating?

CREATION CARE MOMENT

Have you read the profile that *Seven Days* did about our church and our Creation Justice efforts? If not, [read here as this week’s Creation Care Moment.](#)

CALL TO WORSHIP

We come to you, O God, to thank you for what is good. We come to you, O God, to cry out for what is wrong. We come to you, O God, to ask for help and restoration. We come to you, O God, with aching hearts and glad souls.

We come to you, O God, to worship and adore.

*HYMN Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

Here's a lovely version by Sufjan Stevens...

1. Come, O Fount of ev-ery bless - ing, tune my heart to sing your grace; streams of
2. Here I pause in my so - jour - ning, giv - ing thanks for hav - ing come; come to
3. O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I am drawn a - new! Let that

mer - cy nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of end - less praise. Teach me...
trust at ev - ery turn - ing, God will guide me safe - ly home. Je - sus...
grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan - dering heart to you. Prone to...

some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by... flam - ing tongues a - bove. Praise the
sought me when a stran - ger, wand - ering from the fold of God; Came to
wan - der, I can feel it, wan - der... from the love I've known: here's my

mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - fail - ing love.
res - cue me from dan - ger, bless - ed bod - y, pre - cious blood.
heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your ver - y own.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, hear our prayer. Sometimes our lives are a mess, because of choices we have made or because of choices others have made. Sometimes our lives are great, and we're kind and generous. Sometimes our lives are great and we forget to be to grateful and humble. We trust that in the jumble of all of this, you are present. We trust that you are with us, walking with us when we stray, nudging us back to the right path, slowing us down when we get ahead of you, and waiting for us when we lag behind.

So we thank you, and ask for your forgiveness, and pray that you will stay with us throughout the journey. Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

“Pandemic,” by Rev. Lynn Ungar

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?
Cease from travel.
Cease from buying and selling.
Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.
Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.
Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.
Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)
Know that our lives
are in one another’s hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)
Do not reach out your hands.
Reach out your heart.
Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love--
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

We Listen for God's Word

SCRIPTURE read today's scripture here: [John 5: 1-18](#)

REFLECT - The Gospel of John tells the story of Jesus's life through telling about seven key miracles, or signs as they're also called, that Jesus performs. This Lent we are studying these seven stories as a way to prepare for the 8th and most miraculous sign, the resurrection of Jesus on Easter.

Today's scripture tells the third miracle/sign of Jesus—the healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda. As you read it, reflect: what *message – question – challenge – invitation* does God have for me in today's scripture? How does this story help me in my Lenten journey towards Easter and preparing for the miracle of the Resurrection?

We Respond to God's Word

OFFERING OF GIFTS

- *We will be checking the church mailbox each week, so please continue to donate to our life and mission together through the mail.*

*DOXOLOGY

[Watch & Sing Along](#)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A Prayer in the Time of the Coronavirus

Almighty and All-loving God,
Father and Mother of us all,
we pray to you through Christ the Healer
for those who suffer from the Coronavirus Covid-19
in the US and across the world.

We pray too for all who reach out to those who mourn the loss
of each and every person who has died as a result of contracting the disease.

Give wisdom to policymakers,
skill to healthcare professionals and researchers,
comfort to everyone in distress
and a sense of calm to us all in these days of uncertainty and distress.

This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ
who showed compassion to the outcast,

acceptance to the rejected
and love to those to whom no love was shown.

Amen.

We Depart to Serve God in the World

*BENEDICTION

“Deep peace of the running wave to you. Deep peace of the flowing air to you. Deep peace of the quiet earth to you. Deep peace of the shining stars to you. Deep peace of the Christ of peace to you.”