

Lent 5B  
March 17, 2024  
Pastor Kim Swenson



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*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

**GATHERING**

**Worship Volunteers**  
**Assisting Minister:** Sandi Tibbetts  
**Reader:** Karl Peterson  
**Altar Guild:** Marilyn Meister  
**Communion Assistant:** Dar Schuurmans  
**Ushers:** Jerry Boettcher and Howard Schroeder  
**Video Tech:** Yvonne Pamperin

**Welcome**

## **Call to Worship**

Why are you here?

**I am seeking God with my whole heart,  
with my entire mind,  
with a fire burning in my bones.**

I see it! You're in the right place!

This is God's house. The door is open to you.

**Why are you here?**

I am seeking God with my whole heart,  
with my entire mind,  
with a fire burning in my bones.

**We see that in you! You're in the right place.**

**This is God's house. The door is open to you.**

Let us worship God.

Let us learn from the Spirit. Amen!

Bind us to - geth - er, Lord, bind us to - geth - er with cords that

can - not be bro - ken. Bind us to - geth - er, Lord,

bind us to - geth - er, Lord; bind us to - geth - er in love.

1 There . . is on - ly one God. There . . is on - ly one King.  
2 You are the fam-'ly of God. You are the prom-ise di - vine.

There . . is on - ly one Bod-y; that . . is why we can sing;  
You are God's cho-sen de - sire, you are the glo-rious new wine.

*Refrain*  
B<sup>b</sup>/C

## **Confession & Forgiveness**

Friends, when you study Peter's story in scripture it's almost impossible to ignore how much he loved to ask questions. He asks Jesus:

"What does the parable mean?"

"Where are you going?"

"How many times should we forgive?"

Like a tenacious toddler, Peter was full of questions, because Peter was eager to learn. I wish I was more like that. I still have so much to learn.

So friends, let's be like Peter. Let's return to Christ with the humility of a student as we pray together the prayer of confession. Let this be a moment of learning. Let us pray:

**Holy God,**

**We long to be lifelong learners.**

**We long to approach you with curiosity and an open mind.**

**Instead, we often live as if we know best.**

**We forget that the disciples called you "Rabbi, Teacher."**

**Forgive us for the times when we fail to be curious.**

**Forgive us for the times when we assume we know best.**

**Forgive us for the moments when we imagine that our learning is done  
and that we have all the answers.**

**Like Peter—who was brave enough to ask, "How many times should we forgive?"—make us brave. Spark a desire in us to learn, and may our curiosity carry our faith into deeper waters. With hope and humility we pray, amen.**



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.  
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.  
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.  
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.  
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

Family of faith,

When Peter asked Jesus, "How many times should I forgive?" Jesus responded with abundance.

That abundance exists for you as well.

No matter what you have done or left undone,

no matter what lessons you have learned or are still learning,

God's abundant grace exists for you. God's love will never run out.

So hear and rest in this good news:

You are forgiven.

You are loved.

You are invited to serve.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

## Prayer of the Day

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

Let us pray, Teaching God,

**We want to learn your ways.**

**We want to learn the ways of forgiveness.**

**We want to learn the ways of grace.**

**We want to learn your ways of love.**

**That is part of why we return to your text week after week,  
because we are hungry to be more like you.**

**So as we prepare to listen to your good Word,  
calm the noise in our minds.**

**Center our spirits to focus on you  
so that we might learn and hear what we have missed in this story before.  
God, we want to learn your ways.**

**Meet us here.**

**Speak your truth.**

**Help us listen.**

**Amen.**

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*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

**WORD**

**First Reading: Psalm 119:9-16** *read responsively by full verse*

<sup>9</sup>How can young people keep their way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

**<sup>10</sup>With my whole heart I seek you;**

**do not let me stray from your commandments.**

<sup>11</sup>I treasure your word in my heart,

so that I may not sin against you.

**<sup>12</sup>Blessed are you, O LORD;**

**teach me your statutes.**

<sup>13</sup>With my lips I declare

all the ordinances of your mouth.

**<sup>14</sup>I delight in the way of your decrees**

**as much as in all riches.**

<sup>15</sup>I will meditate on your precepts,

and fix my eyes on your ways.

**<sup>16</sup>I will delight in your statutes;**

**I will not forget your word.**

**The Word for All Ages**



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

### Gospel: Matthew 18:15-22

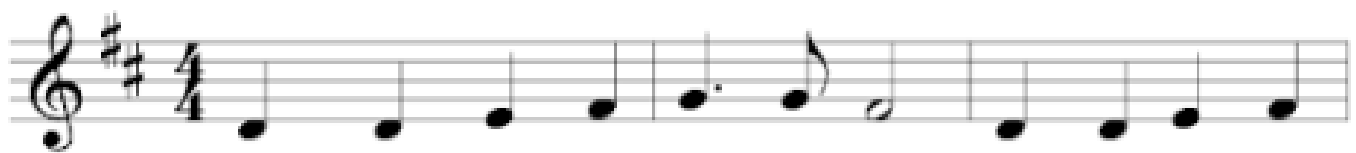
Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>15</sup>If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

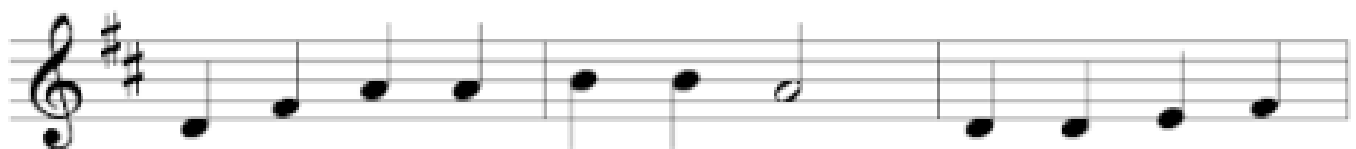
### Sermon



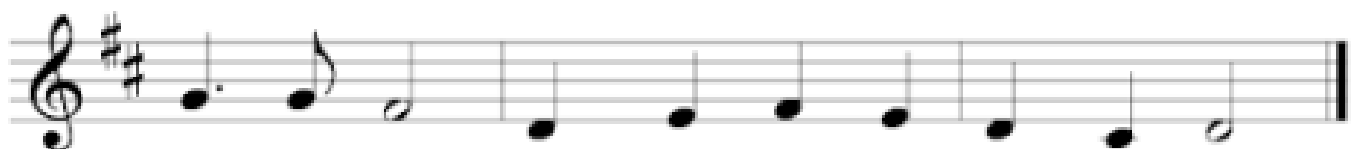
"Love your neigh - bor and for - give" Words so sim - ple  
Sounds of bombs and bul - lets ring War is all we've  
Love is ris - ky, peace is faint And for - give - ness



yet so hard We have wounds be - cause we've lived  
ev - er known Pac - i - fists are framed as weak  
feels na - ive All are sin - ners, all are saints



Cal - lus - es en - fold our hearts Jes - us reach - es  
We re - ly on might a - lone Jes - us paves the  
And we all God's grace re - ceive So we fol - low



out to touch Wounds and hearts that hold too much  
paths of peace Ev - en as the threats in - crease  
mer - cy's way Soft - en - ing our hearts to grace



## **Affirmation of Faith**

We believe that questions are a building block of faith.

**“How many times should I forgive?”**

**“Jesus, where are you going?”**

**“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”**

We believe that humble curiosity can open our eyes.

**“Where does it hurt?”**

**“What do you need?”**

**“How can I help?”**

We believe that God is a teacher.

**“Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.”**

**“Here I am.”**

**“Send me.”**

We believe that faith invites our whole being to engage,

**with all our heart,**

**with all our mind,**

**with all our strength.**

We believe. Help our unbelief.

**In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

## **Prayers of the People**

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

O God you are our God, and we will offer you praise our whole lives long, for your steadfast love endures forever.

At the same time, our hearts ache, our world aches;  
We offer these prayers to you, knowing that you  
are one who heals and restores.

We offer to you all who are in pain or ill health . . .  
We offer to you all who do not have enough to get by . . .  
We offer to you all who are grieving, anxious, or depressed . . .  
We offer to you all who are trapped in feelings of shame and guilt . . .  
We offer to you the world that is crying out for healing. . . .  
We offer to you the concerns of our families, friends, and neighbors . . .

For what else do the people of God pray?  
*Silent and spoken prayers are invited*

Let the words of our mouths and the prayers of our hearts be acceptable to you, O God, our rock and redeemer. **Amen.**

## Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always,  
**And also with you.**

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*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**MEAL**

## Offering

### Offertory

*Create In Me a Clean Heart*

**Cranberry 188**

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your  
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -  
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,  
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

## **Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

God's love nurtures our wandering spirits each day  
and God's light sustains our souls each night.

What wondrous love is this?

**Love that ate with sinners. Love that welcomed children.**

What wondrous love is this?

**Love that healed the lame.**

**Love that listened to the silenced.**

What wondrous love is this?

**Love that died for us.**

**Love that rose for us.**

**Love that still forgives and knows us.**

Family of God, we are invited to the table  
each week of God's wondrous love.

Through Jesus, we remember the night before his arrest,  
The night of serenity, solemnity, and love.  
Jesus took in his hands bread from the table.  
He broke it and blessed it, and said,  
"Eat in remembrance of me."

And after supper,  
As the night grew long,  
Jesus took a cup, and filled it with the fruit of the vine.  
As he blessed it, he said  
"Take and drink and always remember me."

The Spirit who traveled with Christ in the wilderness  
and fills us with the hope of God  
surrounds these elements.  
The Spirit speak to us in this season of wandering  
becoming our strength on this journey  
and filling our lives with love. **Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Guide us all through the promise of Jesus, your light, who teaches us to pray:

**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,**

**forever and ever. Amen**

Lamb of God

Setting 10

Cranberry Pg. 208



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.



1 God, when hu - man bonds are bro - ken and we lack the  
2 Through that still - ness, with your Spir - it come in - to our  
3 You in us are bruised and bro - ken: hear us as we  
4 Send us, God of new be - gin - nings, hum - bly hope - ful  
5 Give us faith to be more faith - ful, give us hope to



love or skill to re - store the hope of heal - ing,  
world of stress, for the sake of Christ for - giv - ing  
seek re - lease from the pain of ear - lier liv - ing;  
in - to life. Use us as a means of bless - ing:  
be more true, give us love to go on learn - ing:



give us grace and make us still.  
all the fail - ures we con - fess.  
set us free and grant us peace.  
make us stron - ger, give us faith.  
God, en - cour - age and re - new!

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889

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### **Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray, Compassionate God,  
**you have fed us with the bread of heaven.**  
**Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage:**  
**may our fasting be hunger for justice,**  
**our alms, a making of peace,**  
**and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts;**  
**through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**SENDING**

### **Announcements**

#### **Benediction**

Beloved wanderer, as you leave this place,  
may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve.  
May you look for God in every face.  
May you find the courage to get out of the boat,  
to run to the tomb, and to speak of your faith.  
And when the world falls apart,  
may you hear God's voice deep within, saying,  
"Take heart, it is I, be not afraid."

The blessing of God, who so loves the world;  
The blessing of Jesus, ✚ who teaches us to love one another;  
And the blessing of the Holy Spirit, who brings love to birth,  
Be with you and with all. **Amen.**

1 O Christ the same, through all our sto - ry's pag - es—  
 2 O Christ the same, the friend of sin - ners, shar - ing  
 3 O Christ the same, se - cure with - in whose keep - ing

our loves and hopes, our fail - ures and our fears;  
 our in - most thoughts, the se - crets none can hide;  
 our lives and loves, our days and years re - main;

e - ter - nal Lord, the king of all the a - ges,  
 still as of old up - on your bod - y bear - ing  
 our work and rest, our wak - ing and our sleep - ing,

un - chang - ing still a - mid the pass - ing years:  
 the marks of love in tri - umph glo - ri - fied:  
 our calm and storm, our plea - sure and our pain:

O liv - ing Word, the source of all cre - a - tion,  
 O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heav - en—  
 O Lord of love, for all our joys and sor - rows,

who spread the skies and set the stars a - blaze;  
 O Prince of life, in all your sav - ing power;  
 for all our hopes when earth shall fade and flee;

O Christ the same, who wrought our whole sal - va - tion,  
 O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are giv - en:  
 O Christ the same, be - yond our brief to - mor - rows,

we bring our thanks for all our yes - ter - days.  
 we bring our thanks for this the pres - ent hour.  
 we bring our thanks for all that is to be.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926  
 Music: LONDONDERRY AIR, Irish tune

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## Dismissal

Go in peace, to live and share the love of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

## Funding for Mission & Budget

Monthly Receipts through 3/12/24    \$ 15,799.30

Monthly Budget Expenses:.....    \$ 18,743.00

YTD Receipts through 2/29/24.....    \$ 41,661.00

Yearly Budget.....    \$ 224,917.00

### The Bethel Weekly

**Fellowship Hour:** Please, if you are able to help on a future date in April, sign up in the hallway.

**Handbags for Hope:** In conjunction with the Resurrection Food Pantry, we are asking all the ladies to bring in any unwanted purses. Donations are also needed of travel size hygiene items such as toothbrushes, shampoo, lip balm, etc. to fill the purses prior to distribution. Suggestions can be found on the front of the bin.

**Palm Sunday:** There will be a cinnamon roll fellowship immediately following worship. Please sign-up if you are planning to attend. Also, we are looking for volunteers to help set-up, serve and clean-up.

**Holy Week:** Sign-up sheets are in the hallway for worship volunteers. Please help out as you are able.

**Midweek Lenten Services:** Wednesday March 20th, is the final Midweek Lenten Service at Resurrection at 6:30pm.

**Bethel Photo Directory:** If you haven't already done so, please submit a recent photo for the new church directory. It can be emailed to the church or brought to the office for scanning.

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