

February 25, 2024

Prelude and Chimes

Welcome and Announcements

***Call to Worship** (based on the Psalm 22 Lection for the day)

Leader: I sing praises to the Lord.

People: Those who seek the Lord shall offer praise.

Leader: The Lord did not despise my affliction.

People: All the families of the nations shall worship the Lord.

Leader: The Lord did not hide from me but heard my cries.

People: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord.

***Hymn #22:** "Sing Praise to God, Who Has Shaped"

***Passing the Peace**

Call to Confession

Standing beneath the cross of Jesus, as we observe the season of Lent, is a sobering experience, for the cross judges both our world and our individual lives. Today, people are still killed by the same forces that executed Jesus. Today, each of us falls short of the resolve and dedication to God which Jesus exhibited in the way he lived and died. So let us as a people who live in a twisted world and who are all too weak in spirit, join together in our prayer of confession.

***Prayer of Confession**

Holy God, sometimes we think we know better than you do. We make our own attempts to save ourselves and others from the cross filled path you have called us to walk. Help us to get behind you, because it has become easier to rely upon ourselves, rather than on your strength and presence. Grant us grace and help us to let go of our need for control so that you and your way might be our guide and path forward. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

May the God of compassion, Jesus the wounded healer, and the Holy Spirit who shapes and transforms us anew, grant you peace and hope for your soul. For we know that the One who calls us to follow in the way of Jesus is merciful and offers the consolation of love in a world of empty promises. We are forgiven, thanks be to God.

Scripture:

Mark 8:31-38

Louise Piper

Anthem: Blessings, arranged by Ruth Elaine Schram

Time With Young Disciples

***Unison Prayer**

We give thanks, O God of sacred stories, for the witness of holy scripture. Through it, you nurture our imaginations, touch our feelings, increase our awareness, and challenge our assumptions. Bless, we pray, our hearing of your word this day. Speak to each of us; speak to all of us; and grant that by the power of your Spirit, we may be hearers and doers of your word. Amen.

Sermon: "Difficult to Hear, Difficult to Do"

***Hymn #197:** "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"

The Community at Prayer (*Joys and Concerns, Prayers for the People, Lord's Prayer*)

If you are watching online, type any prayer requests in the chat by the end of the sermon and we can voice them and get the names on the prayer list.

Prayer Response

Invitation to the Offering

(Opportunities to give for the ministries of this church are available through an offering plate during service, by mailing your gift to the church office, or by signing up for electronic giving through our website.)

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Giving God, Jesus invited us to give our lives away, take up our cross, and to follow. Rather than exchanging our souls, may the sharing of these gifts nurture our commitment to walk in your way. In the name and way of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

***Hymn #493:** "O Jesus I Have Promised"

*Commissioning and Blessing

*Choral Response

*Postlude