

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

**FIFTH SUNDAY in LENT**

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** *(from Psalm 105)*

One: "Give thanks to the Lord, proclaim God's greatness."

**All: "Tell the nations what the Lord has done."**

One: "Sing praise to the Lord."

**All: "Tell the wonderful things God has done."**

One: "Be glad that we belong to God."

**All: "Let all who worship the Lord rejoice."**

**\*OPENING HYMN** "O Lord My God" GtG 625 *(Verses 1-3)*  
*(How Great Thou Art)*

1. **O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder  
consider all the worlds thy hands have made,  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
thy power throughout the universe displayed:**

*Refrain:* **Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:  
How great thou art! How great thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:  
How great thou art! How great thou art!**

2. **When through the woods and forest glades I wander  
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,  
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze: *(Refrain)***
3. **And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,  
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,  
that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
he bled and died to take away my sin: *(Refrain)***

*(next page...)*

Words: Stuart K. Hine, 1953  
Music: HOW GREAT THOU ART, Swedish folk melody; adapt. Stuart K. Hine, 1949  
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## UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**You have loved us, O God, with the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ;  
but we have not loved you with all our heart and soul and mind and strength.  
You have called us to share your love with our neighbors, near and far;  
but we hog it for ourselves instead.  
Forgive us for ignoring the lesson of your love.  
Touch us once again by the example of Jesus Christ,  
that we might be remade in his image  
by the power and working of your Spirit.  
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

## SILENT CONFESSION

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from Mark 1 and Romans 5)*

One: "The right time has come, and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!"  
All: **The Good News is this: "God has shown us how much God loves us, for it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us!"**  
One: Friends, believe that Good News.  
All: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.  
All: **And also with you.**

*(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)*

## THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 14:53-54,66-72

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**SERMON** “From a Distance” by Pastor Bill Vincent

**\*HYMN** “O Jesus, I Have Promised” GtG 724

1. **O Jesus, I have promised  
to serve thee to the end;  
be thou forever near me,  
my Master and my friend;  
I shall not fear the battle  
if thou art by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway  
if thou wilt be my guide.**
  
2. **O let me feel thee near me!  
The world is ever near:  
I see the sights that dazzle;  
the tempting sounds I hear.  
My foes are ever near me,  
around me and within;  
but, Jesus, draw thou nearer  
and shield my soul from sin.**
  
3. **O let me hear thee speaking  
in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion,  
the murmurs of self-will;  
O speak to reassure me,  
to hasten or control;  
O speak, and make me listen,  
thou guardian of my soul.**
  
4. **O Jesus, thou hast promised  
to all who follow thee  
that where thou art in glory  
there shall thy servant be.  
And, Jesus, I have promised  
to serve thee to the end;  
O give me grace to follow,  
my Master and my friend.**

Words: John Ernest Bode, 1866, alt.

Music: ANGEL'S STORY, Arthur Henry Mann, 1881  
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**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from “*A Declaration of Faith*”)

**Christ calls us to live in the presence of God.**

**Jesus lived with a constant sense of his Father's presence.**

**He put God's claim on his life above all else.**

**He joined others in God's worship and praise.**

**He drew strength from the Scriptures.**

**He prayed and taught his disciples to pray.**

**We believe Christ gives us and demands of us**

**personal lives that are centered in God**

**and open to God's reality and rule.**

**Christ teaches us**

**to put obedience to God**

**above the interests of self, family, race, or nation;**

**to offer God joyously**

**our money, ability, and time.**

**It is part of our discipline**

**to observe a day of worship and rest,**

**setting aside our own working to enjoy God's work,**

**celebrating with sisters and brothers the Lord's goodness.**

**We need constantly to search out God's way in Scripture,**

**not expecting detailed directions for every decision,**

**but relying on the Word to tell us who God is,**

**to press God's present claim on us,**

**and to assure us of God's grace and comfort.**

**We are charged to pray for ourselves and others**

**with gratitude, boldness, and persistence,**

**confident that God hears and answers our prayers**

**in ways best for us all.**

**Life in God's presence issues in life for others,**

**for if we do not love sisters and brothers whom we see,**

**we cannot love God whom we do not see.**

“A Declaration of Faith” is Copyright 1977, 1991, the Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); adopted (1977) “as a contemporary statement of faith, a reliable aid for Christian study, liturgy, and inspiration, with the clear understanding that” it is not approved as a part of the *Book of Confessions*.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**One:** Draw near, O Lord...

**All:** ...and deliver us in your mercy.

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** (Traditional)

**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 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. Amen.**

**OFFERING**

*Invitation*

*Reflection*

*\*Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**Most giving and forgiving God,  
you provide for our every need.  
You have touched us with your love  
and showered us with your blessings.  
You open our lips to offer you praise.  
You strengthen our hands to respond to Christ's call.  
With hearts, hands, and voices renewed by your Spirit,  
we place now before you our commitment to serve.  
Use us in ways that will benefit others,  
and accept what we offer as a sign of our faith.  
For it is in Christ's name that we pray. Amen.**

**SENDING**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee" GtG 738

**1. O Master, let me walk with thee  
in lowly paths of service free;  
tell me thy secret; help me bear  
the strain of toil, the fret of care.**

*(continued...)*

2. **Help me the slow of heart to move  
by some clear, winning word of love;  
teach me the wayward feet to stay,  
and guide them in the homeward way.**
  
3. **Teach me thy patience, still with thee  
in closer, dearer company,  
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,  
in trust that triumphs over wrong.**
  
4. **In hope that sends a shining ray  
far down the future's broadening way;  
in peace that only thou canst give,  
with thee, O Master, let me live.**

Words: Washington Gladden, 1879  
Music: MARYTON, Henry Percy Smith, 1874  
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#### **\*CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One:           ...And let the gathered people of God say...  
All:            ...Amen.

#### **POSTLUDE**

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