

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2025

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

**FIRST SUNDAY in LENT**

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: The season of Lent sets us on a journey.  
**All: The journey begins in the wilderness.**  
One: Let us follow Jesus through the wilderness this Lent,  
examining our temptations, resisting them and returning to God.  
So, come, those who yearn to know.  
**All: Come, those who yearn to grow.**  
One: We gather around the table to be nurtured for the journey.  
**All: We open our hearts to be led on our way, to be shown God's way.**  
One: So, come; to celebrate the presence of God in our midst.  
**All: Come, to know the love and grace of God.**  
**Unison: Come, let us worship the Lord.**

**\*OPENING HYMN** "Lead On, O Cloud of Presence" StF 2234 [Tune 269]

**1. Lead on, O cloud of Presence, the exodus is come,  
in wilderness and desert our tribe shall make its home.  
Our slavery left behind us, new hopes within us grow.  
We seek the land of promise where milk and honey flow.**

**2. Lead on, O fiery Pillar, we follow yet with fears,  
but we shall come rejoicing though joy be born of tears.  
We are not lost, though wand'ring, for by your light we come,  
and we are still God's people. The journey is our home.**

**3. Lead on, O God of freedom, and guide us on our way,  
and help us trust the promise through struggle and delay.  
We pray our sons and daughters may journey to that land  
where justice dwells with mercy, and love is law's demand.**

*(next page...)*

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## UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**In the journey of life, we need you, O Lord.**

**But too often we go our own way.**

**We want to make our own choices, informed by our own wisdom.**

**But our wisdom is short-sighted and our choices are flawed.**

**We want to stand on our own two feet, claiming our self-made success.**

**But our success does not meet your standards and we quickly stumble and fall.**

**Forgive us for seeking to go it alone without you, O God.**

**Lift us up when we stumble.**

**Show us your way.**

**And grant us the humility to learn from you**

**and the courage to follow in your way.**

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

## SILENT CONFESSION

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: In the strength of the Lord Almighty we confide.

**All: In the mercy of God we trust.**

One: By the power of God we are restored.

**All: By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we are renewed.**

One: So rejoice and celebrate this day!

**All: For in Jesus Christ we are forgiven, we are loved, we are given new life. Thanks be to God!**

### THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

**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 Luke 4:1-13

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON "Hold On? Let Go? Or Both?" by Pastor Bill Vincent

**\*HYMN** "Jesus Calls Us" GtG 720

1. **Jesus calls us: o'er the tumult  
of our life's wild, restless sea;  
day by day his sweet voice soundeth  
saying, "Christian, follow me."**
2. **Jesus calls us from the worship  
of the vain world's golden store,  
from each idol that would keep us,  
saying, "Christian, love me more."**
3. **In our joys and in our sorrows,  
days of toil and hours of ease,  
still he calls, in cares and pleasures,  
"Christian, love me more than these."**
4. **Jesus calls us: by thy mercies,  
Savior, may we hear thy call,  
give our hearts to thine obedience,  
serve and love thee best of all.**

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1852  
Music: GALILEE, William H. Jude, 1887  
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**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from "*A Declaration of Faith*")

**We believe in one true and living God.**

**We acknowledge one God alone,  
whose demands on us are absolute,  
whose help for us is sufficient.**

**That One is the Lord,  
whom we worship, serve, and love.**

**We must not set our ultimate reliance on any other help.  
We must not yield unconditional obedience to any other power.  
We must not love anyone or anything more than we love God.**

**To worship God is highest joy.  
To serve God is perfect freedom.**

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## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: When we call to you, you will answer us.  
All: **Hear our cry, O God, on our lips and in our hearts.**

## THE EUCHARIST

### OFFERING

*Invitation*

*Reflection*

*\*Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**Gracious and Generous God,  
we are amazed by the good gifts you bestow in abundance.  
Thank you for food that sustains us on our journey.  
Thank you for the company of saints to whom we are joined.  
Thank you for giving us your work to do on earth.  
We offer back to you a portion of all that we have received,  
to remind us of our commitment to you  
and our pledge to walk in your way.  
Use these gifts, and use us,  
to work your will and proclaim your love.  
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

### SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Invitation to the Lord's Table*

*Prayer of Thanksgiving*

One: The Lord be with you.  
All: **And also with you.**  
One: Lift up your hearts.  
All: **We lift them to the Lord.**  
One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*(The prayer continues...)*

*The Lord's Prayer* (Contemporary)  
*(next page...)*

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

*Breaking of the Bread*

*Communion of the People*

(You are invited to go ahead and partake of each of the elements as you are served, remembering how Christ comes to you and your personal commitment to him.)

*Prayer*

### **SENDING**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** “Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart” GtG 688 (*Verses 1, 3, & 5*)

- 1. Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;  
wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;  
stoop to my weakness, mighty as thou art,  
and make me love thee as I ought to love.**
  
- 3. Hast thou not bid us love thee, God and King;  
all, all thine own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind?  
I see thy cross; there teach my heart to cling.  
O let me seek thee, and O let me find!**
  
- 5. Teach me to love thee as thine angels love,  
one holy passion filling all my frame;  
the baptism of the heaven-descended Dove,  
my heart an altar, and thy love the flame.**

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Words: George Croly, 1867  
Music: MORECAMBE, Frederick Cook Atkinson, 1870  
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**\*CHARGE AND BLESSING**

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

**POSTLUDE**

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