

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2026

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

FOURTH SUNDAY in LENT

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are so happy to have you join us for this Service of the Lord's Day. We acknowledge this Sunday as the Fourth Sunday in Lent.

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Psalm 23:1-4;6)*

One: The Lord is [our] Shepherd; [we] shall not want.

All: He makes [us] to lie down in green pastures; He leads [us] beside the still waters.

One: He restores [our] soul[s]; He leads [us] in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

All: Yea, though [we] walk through the valley of the shadow of death, [we] will fear no evil;

One: For You are with [us]; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort [us].

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow [us] All the days of [our lives]; And [we] will dwell in the House of the Lord Forever.

*OPENING HYMN "Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us" GtG 187

**1. Savior, like a shepherd lead us;
much we need your tender care.
In your pleasant pastures feed us;
for our use your fold prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us: we are yours.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us: we are yours.**

**2. We are yours: in love befriend us;
be the guardian of our way.
Keep your flock: from sin defend us;
seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.**

(continued...)

3. **You have promised to receive us,
poor and sinful though we be;
you have mercy to relieve us,
grace to cleanse, and power to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
early let us turn to you.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
early let us turn to you.**

4. **Early let us seek your favor;
early let us do your will.
Blessed Lord and only Savior,
with your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us; love us still.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us; love us still.**

Words: Thrupp's *Hymns for the Young*, 1836, alt.

Music: BRADBURY, William Batchelder Bradbury, 1859, alt.
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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy and Merciful God, in Your Presence we confess our sinfulness, our shortcomings, and our offenses against You. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from Your Ways, in wasting Your gifts, in forgetting Your love. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we are ashamed and sorry for all we have done to displease you. Forgive our sins, and help us to live in Your Light, and walk in Your Ways, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (*Psalm 23:5*) [NKJV]

All: Dear God, in spite of us, "You prepare a table before [us] in the presence of [our] enemies; You anoint [our heads] with oil; [Our cups run] over."

One: Dear friends, we are forgiven, let us walk in His Ways.

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

SUNG PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION “Open Our Eyes” StF 2086

**Open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus,
to reach out and touch him,
and say that we love him.**

**Open our ears, Lord,
and help us to listen.
Open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus.**

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SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 *(NKJV)*
GOSPEL: John 9:1-41 *(NKJV)*

PRAYER FOR SERMON

One: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14, NKJV)

SERMON “Is the Darkness Blinding Our Light?” by Rev. Paula Cooper

****HYMN** “Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness” (Christ, Be Our Light) GtG 314

**1. Longing for light,
we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth,
we turn to you.
Make us your own,
your holy people,
light for the world to see.**

Refrain:

**Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.**

(continued...)

**2. Longing for peace,
our world is troubled.
Longing for hope,
many despair.
Your word alone
has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.**

Refrain:

**Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church
gathered today.**

**3. Longing for food,
many are hungry.
Longing for water,
many still thirst.
Make us your bread,
broken for others,
shared until all are fed.**

Refrain:

**4. Longing for shelter,
many are homeless.
Longing for warmth,
many are cold.
Make us your building,
sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.**

Refrain:

**5. Many the gifts,
many the people,
many the hearts
that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants
to one another,
making your kingdom come.**

Refrain:

(next page...)

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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH “The Apostles Creed” (Traditional)**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

***THE LORD’S PRAYER (Contemporary)**

**Our Father, who art in Heaven,
hallowed be Your Name,
Your Kingdom come,
Your Will be done,
on earth as is 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.**

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

**Unison Prayer of Dedication*

Lord, use these offerings and us to partner with You in the building-up of Your Kingdom here on Earth.

***CLOSING HYMN “Open My Eyes, That I May See” GtG 451**

1. **Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me.
Place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes; illumine me, Spirit divine!**
2. **Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear.
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears; illumine me, Spirit divine!**
3. **Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth everywhere.
Open my heart, and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart; illumine me, Spirit divine!**

Words and Music (OPEN MY EYES): Clara H. Scott, 1895. *Public Domain*

***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

***Standing if able.**

Call to Worship: Psalm 23:1-4; 6; NKJV.

Assurance of Pardon: Psalm 23:5; NKJV

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Prayer for Illumination: Grammarly, 2006.

Prayer for Sermon: Psalm 19:14; NKJV.

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