



March 9, 2025  
 First Sunday in Lent

## WE GATHER

### CENTERING

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell, Pastor

ONE:	God meets us in the night—
PULPIT SIDE:	<b>before the sun rises,</b>
PIANO SIDE:	<b>before the wound heals,</b>
PULPIT SIDE:	<b>before there are answers,</b>
PIANO SIDE:	<b>before there is closure.</b>
ONE:	God meets us in the light—
PULPIT SIDE:	<b>where joy is effervescent,</b>
PIANO SIDE:	<b>where laughter is contagious,</b>
PULPIT SIDE:	<b>where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,</b>
PIANO SIDE:	<b>where people gather around tables.</b>
ONE:	God meets us in between—
PULPIT SIDE:	<b>at the edge of the water,</b>

<b>PIANO SIDE:</b>	<b>at the beginning of the wilderness,</b>
<b>PULPIT SIDE:</b>	<b>at the start of something new,</b>
<b>PIANO SIDE:</b>	<b>on the edge of faith.</b>
<b>ONE:</b>	And if God meets us in all those places, then surely God meets us everywhere—
<b>PULPIT SIDE:</b>	<b>at the water’s edge, at the start of something new,</b>
<b>PIANO SIDE:</b>	<b>after the baptism, and before the call.</b>
<b>ONE:</b>	We are not alone. God is all around.
<b>ALL:</b>	<b>Let us worship the God of everything.</b>

## PRELUDE

### Jesus Is All the World to Me

Composer: Bill Wolaver, living  
Ann Bartlow, Piano

## WELCOME

Ryan Miller

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Bruce Werber, Liturgist

<b>ONE:</b>	Here in this place, we can ask big questions.
<b>ALL:</b>	<b>Who is my neighbor? How can I help? What do I have to learn? Where is God in it all?</b>

ONE:	Here in this place, we can ask big questions.
ALL:	<b>So may we listen. May we learn. May we stay curious, and may we look for God.</b>
ONE:	This is our invitation to lean in. Let us worship our holy God.

## WORD

### ANTHEM

#### *We Shall Walk Through the Valley*

Negro spiritual, arr. Undine Smith Moore, 1904-1989

Publisher: Augsburg Fortress, 1977; GIA Publications, 2004

Chancel Choir: Dr. Michael Wu, Director

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

### CONFESSION AND PARDON

Bruce Werber, Liturgist

#### *Call to Confession*

ONE:	<p>Our faith tells us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, but you and I know that is often easier said than done.</p> <p>Fortunately for us, prayer can be a tool for transformation.</p> <p>When we are honest before God and each other, we open the door to growth and change.</p> <p>So join me in the prayer of confession.</p> <p>Join me now, so that tomorrow, we will be even better at loving our neighbors as ourselves.</p> <p>Let us pray:</p>
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*Prayer of Confession*

<b>ALL:</b>	<b>Holy God, you have told us to love our neighbors as ourselves, but we get tripped up on logistics. We want to know: who is our neighbor? Do we have to love the stranger? Must we have compassion for our enemy? Forgive our human tendency to create exceptions in the face of love. Rewire our hearts so that we might see the face of a neighbor in every stranger we pass. With hope we pray, amen.</b>
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*Words of Forgiveness*

<b>ONE:</b>	Family of faith, when we set limits on love,
<b>ALL:</b>	<b>God loves extravagantly.</b>
<b>ONE:</b>	When we forget that we are neighbors,
<b>ALL:</b>	<b>God claims us as God's own.</b>
<b>ONE:</b>	When we judge, hold back, or harm
<b>ALL:</b>	<b>God surrounds us with grace.</b>
<b>ONE:</b>	There is nothing we can do or leave undone that could separate us from the love of God.
<b>ALL:</b>	<b>This is the good news of the gospel. Thanks be to God! Amen.</b>
<b>ONE:</b>	Beloved, as those who cannot be separated from God, let us share the peace of Christ with those around us this morning. May the peace of Christ be with you.

**PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Bruce Werber, Liturgist

## SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 10:25-37

Bibliodrama written by Rev. Bonnie Campbell, adapted

Bruce Werber, Liturgist

Hunter Prillaman and Suzanne Smedberg

## MESSAGE

“Stranger & Neighbor”

Kris Neale, Ministry Intern

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Kris Neale, Ministry Intern

ONE:	Church, if God asked you, “Who is your neighbor?” What would you say?
ALL:	<b>We would say, every child, every person, every weeping willow, and every morning lark. Every freckled face, every wrinkled pair of hands, every tail-wagging dog, and every crisp ripe apple. We would say, we are connected— to one another, to all of God’s creation. There are no strangers in God’s house. We are all family here.</b>
ONE:	I think God would delight in that answer. For it is said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
ALL:	<b>with all your soul,</b>
ONE:	with all your strength,
ALL:	<b>with all your mind,</b>

<b>ONE:</b>	and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
<b>ALL:</b>	<b>We believe. Help our unbelief. Amen</b>

**\*HYMN #397**

*I Need Thee Every Hour*

Words: Annie S. Hawks, 1872 (John 15:5)

Music: Robert Lowry, 1873

Congregation and Choir Chancel

Ann Bartlow, Organ

**WONDER**

**MISSION MOMENT**

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

**INVITATION TO OFFERING**

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Bruce Werber, Liturgist

**WHAT NOW**

**RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS**

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell and Brian Jones, Lay Member to Annual Conference

Marijka Frazier

Michael and Michelle Buckley, Audrey & Elizabeth

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

Kris Neale, Ministry Intern

**\*HYMN #521**

*I Want Jesus to Walk with Me*

Words: Afro-American spiritual

Music: Afro-American spiritual, adapt. William Farley Smith, 1986  
Congregation and Chancel Choir  
Ann Bartlow, Organ

## **SENDING FORTH**

Kris Neale

## **POSTLUDE**

### **Allegretto**

Composer: Florence Price, 1887 - 1953  
Ann Bartlow, Organ

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## **SERVING US TODAY**

Acolyte:

Altar Guild for March: Debbie Spriggs

Audio Visual Volunteers: Aaron Dowd, Brian Hahs and Debbie Spriggs

Chat Room Host: Linda Pickle

Congregational Welcome: Ryan Miller

Fellowship Hosts: Emily Sama-Miller and Family

Liturgist: Bruce Werber

Nursery Staff: Celina Schmidt and Barbara Wege

Offering Counters: Jim Johnston and Glenn Simpson

Sunday School Teachers - Elementary Grades: Jan Spencer and Janelle Veazey

Sunday School Teachers - Middle School Grades: Jeff Bryant and Sara Romeyn

Welcome Team: Bill and Lloydie Zaiser

## **LEADERSHIP BOARD**

Bill Maas, Chair

Mike Coppersmith

Rachel Hedrick

Brian Jones

Mike Kitzman

Nancy Kneisly

Pastor Laura Norvell

Jane Rall

Janelle Veazey

Jennifer Young

## FAITH UMC STAFF

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell, Pastor

Ann Bartlow, Organist

André Coleman, Tenor Section Leader

Valerie Kunsman, Office Administrator

Kris Neale, Ministry Intern

Curtis Osborne, Coordinator of Intergenerational Nurture

Tessa Ricketts, Nursery Staff

Suzanne Smedberg, Youth Coordinator

Kim Webster, Finance Manager

Dr. Michael Wu, Music Director

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