

## March 7, 2021 (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent)

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

One: O God of all ages and all generations, we come to worship you.

**Many: Women, men, youth, and children bow before you, the only wise God.**

One: Our foreparents led the way for spiritual awareness and growth.

**Many: We try to follow in their footsteps recognizing you as God of all.**

One: As we worship you, all your attributes of glory, mercy, and love show forth.

**Many: We humble ourselves in your holy presence, because you are awesome.**

**All: Holy, holy, holy is the name of the Lord.**

#### INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER

We acknowledge you, O God, as creator and as liberator.

You are the One who brought the captives out of Egypt  
and delivered them from the oppression of slavery.

You gave laws which shaped how people were to relate to you,  
to each other and to the whole environment.

You implored people to worship only you,  
knowing that whatever was put in your place

would become the object of idolatry—  
would become the priority of people's lives.

In this time of worship, help us to focus on you, O God,  
as the priority of our lives.

Remind us of your steadfast love  
revealed so clearly in the new commandment of love  
which Jesus disclosed with his life and,  
as we especially remember in this period of Lent, with his death.  
Speak to us anew as we offer this prayer and our worship  
in Jesus' name and for his sake we pray, saying...

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.

## HYMN We Sing Your Mighty Power, O God #64

1 We sing your mighty power, O God,  
that made the mountains rise,  
that spread the flowing seas abroad,  
and built the lofty skies.

We sing the wisdom that ordained  
the sun to rule the day;  
the moon shines full at your command,  
and all the stars obey.

2 We sing your goodness, sovereign God,  
who filled the earth with food;  
you formed the creatures with your word,  
and then pronounced them good.

Oh! how your wonders are displayed  
where'er we turn our eyes,  
if we survey the ground we tread,  
or gaze upon the skies.

3 There's not a plant or flower below  
but makes your glories known;  
and clouds arise, and tempests blow,  
by order from your throne.

While all that borrows life from you  
is ever in your care,  
and everywhere that we can be,  
you, God, are present there.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Liberating God,  
in love You have set us free:  
free from slavery to sin and self,  
free to know and love You,  
free to follow and serve You.

We praise You for Your faithful love toward us,  
and for the many ways You have demonstrated that love to us.  
We see Your love in the natural world around us—  
in the sky and trees and rivers.

We see Your love in the gift of Your commandments—  
the rules for living that guide us into right relationship with You,  
and with the people around us.  
And we see Your love in Jesus Christ,  
who lived and died to bring us life.

Because we have experienced Your love,  
we come before You with confidence,  
bringing our needs and the needs of our world.  
God, in your unfailing love, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have been victims of violent crime,  
and for those whose loved ones have been injured or murdered.  
God, in your unfailing love, hear our prayer.

We pray for our homes and families:  
for parents juggling the responsibilities of work and family,  
for husbands and wives whose marriages are breaking down,  
for children chafing under parental authority or expectations,  
God, in your unfailing love, hear our prayer.

We pray for the many people in our world who do not yet know You

and have not experienced the new life that comes from knowing Christ Jesus;  
who continue to search for purpose and meaning.  
God, in your unfailing love, hear our prayer.

Merciful God,  
give us strength and courage to keep Your commandments,  
to live in faithful obedience to Your will.  
Guard our hearts and minds from all that might distract us  
from living out our commitment to You.  
Help us to find our true worth in knowing You more fully,  
and serving You more faithfully.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, our Cornerstone. Amen.

CALL TO COMMUNION  
WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER  
OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

SCRIPTURE READING Exodus 20:1-17

Then God spoke all these words:

2 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 3 you shall have no other gods before me.

4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, 6 but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9 For six days you shall labour and do all your work. 10 But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

12 Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

13 You shall not murder.

14 You shall not commit adultery.

15 You shall not steal.

16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

17 You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

SERMON TITLE: Stretching the Commandments

HYMN #249 Spirit Vs. 1,2, & 4  
Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness,  
wind, wind on the sea.

1 You moved on the waters,  
you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains  
from the valleys of sleep;  
and over the eons you called to each thing:  
""Awake from your slumbers  
and rise on your wings.""

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness,  
wind, wind on the sea.

2 You swept through the desert,  
you stung with the sand,  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
and when they were blinded

#### BENEDICTION

Go now to will and to work for God's purposes.  
Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.  
Be filled with the same love  
and look to the interests of others.  
May Christ Jesus strengthen you and encourage you;  
And may the Holy Spirit lead you on and make your joy complete.  
We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,  
In the name of Christ. Amen.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Call to Worship from T. Anne Daniel, *The Africana Worship Book for Year B*, Discipleship Resources, 2007, p. 58.
- Invocation written by Moira Laidlaw and posted on Liturgies Online.
- Prayers of the people form <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning>
- Benediction 2002 Nathan Nettleton [LaughingBird.net](http://LaughingBird.net)

with idols and lies,  
then you spoke through your prophets  
to open their eyes.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness,  
wind, wind on the sea.

4 You call from tomorrow,  
you break ancient schemes.  
From the bondage of sorrow  
all the captives dream dreams;  
our women see visions,  
our men clear their eyes.  
With bold new decisions  
your people arise.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness calling and free,  
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness,  
wind, wind on the sea.