



MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICE

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

7:00pm

**United Christian Church
499 East Malden Road
Coal Center, Pennsylvania**

Pastor Amory Merriman

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WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John. On this day we gather in our homes, amid a pandemic, seeking community. We come to remember his story, to offer our worship and to give witness to our faith.

Gather us in, O God. Leaving the security of home, family and daily work Jesus began a brave new journey; may we be willing to embrace new paths and new ways.

Many: Gather us in, and invite us to venture out, O God.

One: Knowing that Jesus would have begun this journey with human fears and apprehensions, we find the freedom to admit that we are not always courageous.

Many: Gather us in and give us courage, O God.

One: Jesus remained open to the Spirit all the way, so as we gather listen for the Spirit's voice and direction during this season. May we be willing to hear your voice address us in new ways,

Many: Gather us in and grant to us receptive hearts and minds, O God.

Adapted from a litany written by Ann Siddall, [Stillpoint Spirituality Centre](#)

CARRYING HYMN

**"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"
Chalice Hymnal #627, verse 1**

*I want Jesus to walk with me.
I want Jesus to walk with me.
All along my pilgrim journey,
O, I want Jesus to walk with me.*

PRAYER

**"Hear Our Prayer, O Lord"
Chalice Hymnal #306**

Be silent. Plant both feet on the floor. Breathe.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Incline thine ear to us and grant us thy peace.

Listen to God's words to you about your life: your desires, your shortcomings, your needs.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Listen to God's words to you about those who are near and dear to you: their health, their worries, their jobs, their schools, their faith journeys.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Listen to God's words to you about the nameless, faceless people whose cries God hears every day: people who cry out in every corner of the world; people who knew one or more of the more than 500,000 people who have died of COVID-19; people who are hungry and thirsty; people who are marginalized; people who cry out in every corner of the world, corners that may be peppered with steeples, temples, mosques, or synagogues.

Incline thine ear to us and grant us thy peace.

God hears your cries. God hears the cries of those you hold near. God hears the cries of those from every corner of the world.

Listen. Can you hear their cries?

Listen to God's heart for them, and for you.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Incline thine ear to us and grant us thy peace.

Trusting God's heart for us, trusting that God indeed inclines God's ear to our cries, let us lift our voices together as we pray as Jesus taught us:

“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.”

Adapted from “Listening Prayer,” from *Forgive Us: Confessions of a Compromised Faith*:

CARRYING HYMN

**“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me”
Chalice Hymnal #627, verse 2**

*In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
When my heart is almost breaking,
O I want Jesus to walk with me..*

THE GOSPEL READING

Matthew 5:43-48

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers and sisters,^[a] what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

GIVING UP SOMETHING BAD FOR LENT: Bitterness

LETTING GO OF BITTERNESS: FORGIVENESS LITANY

One: Jesus has taught us that we must forgive, but at times we find this too hard to do. We have been hurt, and we have hurt others.

Many: **At times we have become angered by the actions of another to the point that we carry a grudge, and sometimes, this grudge can define who we are.**

One: We light this candle as a symbol of our faith in Jesus Christ to help us to forgive as we are forgiven, to help us love as we are loved. Let us pray:

Many: **Faithful God, forgive us for our shortcomings and help us to forgive others. As we journey towards the cross this Lenten season, help us to let go of our grudges and to forgive, and to seek forgiveness where we have gone wrong. Amen.**

CARRYING HYMN

**“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me”
Chalice Hymnal #627, verse 3**

*When I'm troubled, Lord, walk with me.
When I'm troubled, Lord, walk with me.
When my head is bowed in sorrow,
O I want Jesus to walk with me.*

HOLY COMMUNION

BENEDICTION