

SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
12 High Street, Brookeville, Maryland 20833

March 22, 2020

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Sue Shorb-Sterling

Music Director: Dr. Harry Dunstan

Internet Technician: Brandon Savage

Glorifying God

Prelude—Music Before Worship

Welcome

Opening Song—“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

Verse One

Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy folds prepare:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

Verse Two

We are Thine, do Thou befriend us,
Be the guardian of our way;
Keep Thy flock, from sin defend us,
Seek us when we go astray:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Hear, O hear us when we pray;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Hear, O hear us when we pray.

Verse Three

Early let us seek Thy favor,
Early let us do Thy will;
Blessed Lord and only Savior,
With Thy love our bosoms fill:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou hast loved us, love us still;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou hast loved us, love us still.

Call to Worship (L: Leader; P: People)

L: When we are separated from each other,

P: Christ provides us with spiritual solidarity.

L: When our vision dims due to the darkness of fear of getting sick,

P: Christ opens our eyes with the gift of sight.

L: When we cannot find our way back to love and peace,

P: Christ sees into our hearts and transforms them.

L: Even in the midst of a pandemic,

P: The Good Shepherd provides for us.

Giving Thanks For Our Blessings

A Prayer for Covid-19 (In Unison)

God of Healing Power, you who sees inside the human heart, you know what we are feeling. Take away our spirit of fear. Give us a spirit of courage to get through this time. Remind us that as we remain in our homes, we are doing so not just to protect ourselves, but to protect others, especially those who are most vulnerable. Take away our spirit of greed, and give us a spirit of generosity. Remind us when we feel alone in isolation, you are with us as the Good Shepherd. Thank you for continuing to watch over us, the sheep of your pasture. We pray this and the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, “Our Father”.....

A New Song in the Time of Coronavirus—“God Whose Will Is Health and Wholeness” (Sung to—“There is a Wideness in God’s Mercy” #121 in the red book)

Verse One

God whose will is health and wholeness, hear your people as we pray:

Many now are facing illness; more face sickness every day.

As we lift our song toward heaven, may we use the gifts you give—

Science, justice, and compassion — to help others safely live.

Verse Two

Jesus taught that your commandments call for us to use the mind.

May we use the gifts of science to seek health for humankind.

Bless the ones who work for healing; bless the ones who seek to be

Builders of a health care system that protects society.

Verse Three

God, you call for love and justice, yet our laws are far from wise:

Many don't have good insurance; lack of health care threatens lives.

Many workers must keep working, sick or not, to pay the bills.

Turn us round when we have sanctioned greed that leads to greater ills.

Verse Four

Loving God, we ask your blessing on the sick and those they love,
And we pray for those now grieving as they lift their cries above.
There is trouble all around us; illness causes pain and fear.
Give compassion, love and kindness as we serve your people here.

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Introducing Jesus Christ **(as well as God the Father and the Holy Spirit!)**

Hebrew Lesson—I Samuel 16:1-13 (Common English Bible)

The Lord said to Samuel, “How long are you going to grieve over Saul? I have rejected him as king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and get going. I’m sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem because I have found my next king among his sons.

How can I do that?” Samuel asked. “When Saul hears of it he’ll kill me!”

“Take a heifer with you,” the Lord replied, “and say, ‘I have come to make a sacrifice to the Lord.’ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will make clear to you what you should do. You will anoint for me the person I point out to you.”

Samuel did what the Lord instructed. When he came to Bethlehem, the city elders came to meet him. They were shaking with fear. “Do you come in peace?” they asked.

“Yes,” Samuel answered. “I’ve come to make a sacrifice to the Lord. Now make yourselves holy, then come with me to the sacrifice.” Samuel made Jesse and his sons holy and invited them to the sacrifice as well.

When they arrived, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, That must be the Lord’s anointed right in front.

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Have no regard for his appearance or stature, because I haven’t selected him. God doesn’t look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart.”

Next Jesse called for Abinadab, who presented himself to Samuel, but he said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either.” So Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, “No, the Lord hasn’t chosen this one.” Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord hasn’t picked any of these.” Then Samuel asked Jesse, “Is that all of your boys?”

“There is still the youngest one,” Jesse answered, “but he’s out keeping the sheep.”

“Send for him,” Samuel told Jesse, “because we can’t proceed until he gets here.”

So Jesse sent and brought him in. He was reddish brown, had beautiful eyes, and was good-looking. The Lord said, “That’s the one. Go anoint him.” So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him right there in front of his brothers. The Lord’s spirit came over David from that point forward.

Psalter—Psalm 23 (King James Version)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever

Gospel Lesson—John 9:1-12, 24-25, 35-41 (Translated by Taylor Burton-Edwards)

And going along, Jesus saw a person blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned so that he was born blind? This man or his parents?”

Jesus replied, “Neither this man or his parents sinned, but that the works of God might be shown in it. I have to perform what I was sent here to perform while it is day. The night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

After he said these things, he spat upon the ground, made mud from the spit, and anointed the blind man’s eyes with the mud. Then he said to the blind man, “Off with you now! Wash in the pool of Siloam.” (Siloam means “having been sent.”)

So he went away from there, and washed, and he came out of the water, seeing. Then his neighbors, and those who had seen him before because he was a beggar, said, “Wasn’t this man the one who sat and begged?” Others were saying, “Yes, he’s the one!” Others said, “No, but he looks like him. The blind man proclaimed, “It’s me!” They asked him, “How were your eyes opened?”

He replied, “A man called Jesus made mud, and he anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Off with you. Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and I washed, and I have new sight!”

They asked him, “Where is this man?” The blind, now seeing man, answered, “I don’t know.”

Later some Pharisees called the man who used to be blind and said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that the man who cured you is a sinner.”

The man told the Pharisees, “Whether he is a sinner, I don’t know. One thing I know. I was blind. Now I see.”

The religious leaders threw him out. When Jesus heard that the man was thrown out, he found him and asked, “Do you entrust your life to the Son of Man?” The man asked, “And who is this, sir, that I may entrust my life to him?” Jesus said, “You have also seen him. He’s the one speaking with you.”

The man knelt before Jesus and said, “Lord, I believe!”

Jesus proclaimed, “I have come into this world in judgment, that those not seeing may see, and those seeing may become blind.”

Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things, and they asked Jesus, “We’re not blind, are we?”

Jesus replied, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now you say, “We see. Your sin remains.”

Scripture Song—“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

Verse One

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!

Verse Two

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!

Verse Three

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!

Growing in Faith and Knowledge

Lenten Worship Series: Christ Acts For Us
Sermon Title: “In the Midst”

Time of Reflection

Growing in Love and Service

A Bidding Prayer During this Pandemic

Healing Christ, we lift up the concerns we have during this time of isolation and social distancing. We name them before you now ...

We pray for all those with health conditions unrelated to the virus. We name those that we know before you now ...

We pray for all those who have contracted the virus, especially those who are having trouble breathing ...

We pray for all the families who lost loved ones to this virus already ...

We pray for all the scientists that are working around the clock to find a vaccine and a treatment for this virus so lives can be saved ...

We pray for all the medical personnel who are working long hours to care for those who have the virus. Protect them from this virus, and if they contract it, heal them ...

We pray for all those who are our communities' support system, who are on the front lines so we can live. We pray for the workers in grocery stores, restaurants, police officers, those who make sure we have utilities in our homes, those who take away our garbage, those who keep us updated on the latest news, and many others ...

We pray for our political and medical leaders that they will continue to lead us safely through this pandemic ...

We pray for those who are protecting our country, wherever or however they serve ...

We pray for those who live alone, especially the elderly and those who are at high risk. Give them peace of mind and protect them from this virus.

We pray for those who are anxious...for those who have special challenges...for those who are mentally ill ...

We pray for all who have lost their jobs because of this virus ...

We pray for those who think only of themselves and seek self-protection ...

We pray for each of us. Keep us in solidarity with each other even when we are apart.

Remind us to not reach out with our hands, but with our hearts and words ...

We pray that you would continue to promise us your love, for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, so long as we all shall live. Amen.

Offerings

Please set aside your offering and bring it when we are able to gather again. Or mail it to Salem United Methodist Church, 12 High St., Brookeville, MD 20833.

Offertory

Closing Song—"God Be With You Till We Meet Again"

Verse One

God be with you till we meet again,
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you,
God be with you till we meet again.

Verse Two

God be with you till we meet again,
When life's perils thick confound you,
Put His arms unfailing round you,
God be with you till we meet again.

Verse Three

God be with you till we meet again,
Keep love's banner floating o'er you,
Smite death's threatening wave before you,
God be with you till we meet again.

Sending Forth Blessing

Congregational Response

“God Be With You Till We Meet Again” (chorus only)

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