

Sunday
March 17, 2019
10:30 a.m.

Second Sunday in Lent

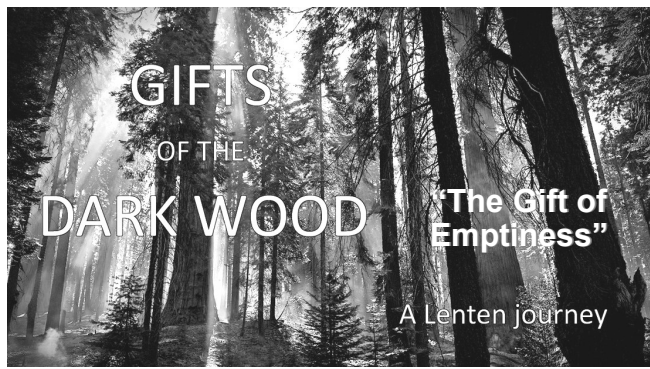
Pastor Greg

Becoming disciples,
serving God's world.



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Plain print indicates worship leader.

Bold print indicates the people.

*Indicates please stand as able.

Gather

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements, Ministry Opportunities

Threshold to the Dark Woods

(Choir) There's a path... though it winds its way through
darkness

We would choose... to avoid it if we could

We awake... to an unexpected calling

God says, "Come... there are gifts in the Dark Wood"

Our journey through the Dark Wood invites us to the gift of emptiness. Many of us, at times, may feel empty inside and we fear that there is nothing there of worth. But what if we let go of our obsession with worthiness and open to the idea that if we want to be filled — to encounter God — getting empty is the better way. God will find US! In our Lenten journey toward the Cross, we know that even Jesus felt empty despair. It was at this hard moment that His Father's possibility of life beyond that pain became revealed.

(Choir) There's a path...

There's a path

...though it winds its way through darkness

We would choose...

We would choose

...to avoid it if we could

We awake...

We awake

...to an unexpected calling

God says, "come..."

God says, "come

...there are gifts in the Dark Wood"

Opening Prayer

Trusted Love, enter our lives and open us to the gifts residing deep within the strange darkness of our lives. Help us to

empty ourselves with every breath. Make room in us so that You might take up residence in the very marrow of our bones. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

***Hymn of Praise: #454** Open My Eyes That I May See

***Litany of Confession, Assurance, and Peace**

For filling up our lives with little room for You,

Forgive and restore us, O God.

For worry that outlasts trust,

Forgive and restore us, O God.

For choosing being right over being in relationship,

Forgive and restore us, O God.

Silent prayers...

Hear these words of assurance: God chooses relationship over perfection. Who you are is "loved by God." God is with you, forgiving and restoring you to wholeheartedness.

Thanks be to God! Amen!

Let us pass the unsurpassed peace of Christ with each other!

Pass the Peace.

Proclaim

The Word Read Aloud: Mark 15:22-38;

Luke 17:33

Hymn: #2233 Where Children Belong

Children's Time ~ *Hank Stamm*

Children 3 yrs. to 3rd grade will be dismissed to POP! with Laurie Nic

The Word in Music: Be Still ~ *Chancel Choir*

The Word Proclaimed: "The Gift of Emptiness" ~ *Pastor Greg*

Respond

Reflect in Action

As you ponder your heart before God, focus on how the things that possibly fill you — like ego, fear of being unloved, worry of not measuring up, need to be emptied so that you might live. You are invited to write something on the piece of paper you received when you came in that you need to let go of. This is something that needs to die in order that you can live more fully. Bring it to the cross and place it through one of the nails. *These papers will NOT be read and analyzed by anybody else and will be shredded after worship.*

***Prayer Song:** Come and Rest

(Choir) Come and rest

Come and rest

Come and listen

Come and listen

Lay the fullness of your lives before the Maker

Ushers will collect prayer requests.

Prayer for Scout Sunday

Thank you, Troop 251, for your enlivening the church on any given evening of the week!

Let us pray:

O God, Your will is that all Your children should grow into fullness of life. We lift to You the ministry of scouting. We offer thanks for camping in the woods, to teach us that the world is our great home; for study and work, to build character; for service, to see our responsibility to those in need; for encouragement in genuine patriotism and vital faith. Bless the work of scouting, in this place and around the world, that, through its efforts, the young may, like our Lord, increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with You and all people.

Amen.

**Prayers of the People, and The Lord's Prayer
Offering Our Gifts to God**

Offertory: I Did Nothing but Believe ~ *Chancel Choir*

***Doxology: #95** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Sent

***Closing Hymn: #364** Because He Lives

***Blessing**

You have a place in this world — a place where everything comes together in your soul and your body as you merge into the Kingdom of God. Please speak these words:

**May the Spirit of the Living God,
Made known to us most fully within life's
Dark Wood:**

Go before you to show you the way;

Go above you to watch over you;

Go behind you to push you into places

you may not necessarily go yourself;

Go beneath you to uphold and uplift you;

Go beside you to be your strong and constant companion;
 And dwell within you to remind you that you are surely not alone,
 And that you are loved — loved beyond your wildest imagination.
 And may the fire of God's blessing burn brightly upon you, and within you,
 Now and always. Amen.

***Refrain**

(Choir) There's a path...
There's a path

...and it leads us out together
 To the wood...
To the wood
 ...where the darkness hovers still
 We are sent...
We are sent
 ...and the Spirit goes before us
 God says, "go..."
God says, "go
 ...be my presence in the world."

***Postlude.**

Prayer for Family and Friends

Updates and New Requests This Week

Aiden Adams (David and Carol Eaton's 7-wk-old grandson) has been at Bronson Hospital with RSV.

James B. needs healing. (prayer request sent to our website)

Jack Buckallew is still in ICU. They are still trying to get him off the respirator.

Austin, Molly, and Eli Linebaugh (Marshall's son and family) moved to Kansas this past week.

Austin is transferring to a new opportunity with Pfizer.

Avery Schutter (Paul and Marilyn's infant great-granddaughter) had surgery again this past week. She is still in Ann Arbor.

Pray for people in the southern states as they have had worse winds than we have.

Previous Requests

Jody Alzner (Sharon Pendola's coworker) passed away. Please pray for her family and friends.

Deb Denney (Den and Marlene Sherman's friend) just found out she has cancer and will have surgery soon.

Don (one of Diana Pomeroy's clients) fell. He is 98 years old. He lost a lot of blood and received 30 stitches.

Stacey Simpson Duke, a UM minister in Ann Arbor, is fighting cancer. Her father in Georgia is also fighting the same disease.

Carol Eaton

Please continue to pray for Lizz Heikes. It appears that she needs a hip replacement and may need the other done soon.

Nona Mattheis is now at Heartland Nursing Home in Three Rivers.

Regardless of the letters this world applies to us (i.e. Gen X, Gen Y, RN, MD, LGBTQ), let us remember the most important letters are LOVE. Only God knows hearts.



In Service to Our Country

Matthew Kohler

Ryan Miller

Walker Polsinelli is in Kuwait

Tyler Smith

Geoff White

5112 Hickory Ln
 Klamath Falls OR 97601

For Cheer and Hello

David Bretz
 Barb Griner
 Pat McClelland
 Beverly Nimmo

Robert & Carmen
 Parsons
 Marv & Kitty Starbuck
 Mina Willett

This Week's Celebrations

Birthdays

3/18 Alexandra Morris

3/19 Jo Pope

3/23 Gabriel Culver
 Mark Johnson

3/23 Marc Tilbury

Shirley Valencourt

Anniversaries

3/22 Jack & Liz Page

Coming deadlines

- Newsletter items for the April newsletter are due in the church office by Monday, Mar. 25.
- Minutes and reports for the April 1 Church Council meeting are due in the church office by Tuesday, Mar. 26.
- ScripCents orders are due in the church office by 2:00 Monday, April 1.

Kalamazoo Gospel Mission needs bread

We are continuing to collect bread for The Kalamazoo Gospel Mission. If you would like to contribute, please bring loaves of sliced white bread to the church, and they will be delivered.

Post General Conference Listening Sessions

United Methodists from around the globe gathered in St. Louis to wrestle with the proposal to move the denomination beyond our impasse related to inclusion of LGBT individuals in the life of our Church. There is the potential that questions remain.

To help address those you may have, the Greater Southwest District is offering two more listening sessions. Our intent is to present the facts as we know them, discussing the implications for local churches and providing a model to engage in further conversation. Everyone is encouraged to attend a listening session:

Today, 2:00 p.m. - Portage: Chapel Hill UMC
Today, 7:00 p.m. - Sturgis: First UMC

Mission Moment—Plus 10 Families

Mar 17: Marshall Linebaugh
Mar 24:

Help is needed at the Welcome Center

Monthly Welcome Center “welcomers” are needed. Please sign up at the Welcome Center.

Today's acolytes are
Gabriel Cleveland and Xavier Cleveland

March 10 attendance:
Worship 80 Sunday School 35

This Week's Calendar

Today—Scout Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Sunday School for everyone
- 10:30 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
- 2:00 p.m. *Post General Conference Listening Session, Portage Chapel Hill UMC*
- 7:00 p.m. *Post General Conference Listening Session, Sturgis First UMC*

Monday, March 18

- 6:30 p.m. Family volleyball in the FLC
- 6:30 p.m. Scout Troop meeting
- 7:00 p.m. *Church Council in the Taylor Room*

Tuesday, March 19

- 12:00 p.m. *Lenten Luncheon in the Taylor Room*
- 2:00 p.m. Sew What Now God, Taylor Room
- 6:30 p.m. RAW (high school youth) in Rm 107
- 6:30 p.m. *Scout Bird Feeder Auction in the FLC*

Wednesday, March 20

- 10:30 a.m. Wednesday Winners, Taylor Room
- 2:45 p.m. SHED (mid. school outreach), Rm 107
- 5:00 p.m. HELIX (middle school youth), Rm 107
- 6:00 p.m. Handbell Choir practice, Sanctuary
- 6:30 p.m. Pickleball in the FLC
- 7:00 p.m. Choir practice in the Sanctuary

Thursday, March 21

- 7:00 p.m. Apprentice class, Room 125 (Fish Rm)

Friday, March 22 - Pastor's Day Off

no activities are scheduled

Saturday, March 23

- 9:00 a.m. Pickleball in the FLC

Monday through Friday

- 9:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. Heart & Hands Preschool

Next Week

Sunday, March 24

- 1:00 p.m. *Mission trip training session in the Youth Room*

- 1:00 p.m. *Eagle Scout Ceremony, Taylor Room*

Tuesday, March 26

- 12:00 p.m. *Lenten Luncheon at Lakeland Reformed Church*

VUMC's Mission Statement



The General Rule of Discipleship

To witness to Jesus Christ in the world, and to follow his teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Lenten Luncheons

Every year we join with other churches in the Vicksburg Ministry Alliance to hold a series of luncheons on Tuesday afternoons during Lent. The luncheons begin at noon, and a freewill donation covers the cost of the meal. Each week, a lay person from the host church will bring a devotional message. Reservations are not needed; everyone is welcome. The dates and locations are as follows:

- March 19 Vicksburg UMC
217 South Main St
- March 26 Lakeland Reformed Church
10442 Sprinkle Rd
- April 2 Chapman Mem. Nazarene Church
7520 East U Ave
- April 9 St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church
5855 East W Ave

17th Annual Peace Service

This year's speaker for the Interfaith Peace service is Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, founding president of Pax Christi USA, and one of the founders of the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights. The service will take place on Sunday, March 24, at 5:00 p.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church, 936 Lake St., Kalamazoo. For information, contact Joe Schmitt at jhschmitt@charter.net or 327-1822.



Children ages 3 yrs. to third grade leave the worship service right after the kids' message and return to the service after the offering.

Please be sure your child has a name tag with age or grade and your cell phone number.



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