

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

**SECOND SUNDAY in LENT**

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

- One: Come to this place of prayer; God is calling us.  
Come, all who are burdened; there is healing here.
- All: We have brought with us all that weighs us down.  
We have come to hear the Word of God.**
- One: Let voices of praise greet the one who calls us.  
Be glad together and sing for joy.
- All: Our hearts respond with hope for a new day.  
Our voices join in thankful prayers and praise.**

**\*OPENING HYMN** “Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above” GtG 645

1. Sing praise to God who reigns above,  
the God of all creation,  
the God of power, the God of love,  
the God of our salvation.  
With healing balm my soul is filled,  
and every faithless murmur stilled:  
to God all praise and glory!
2. What God's almighty power hath made  
God's gracious mercy keepeth;  
by morning glow or evening shade  
God's watchful eye ne'er sleepeth.  
Within the kingdom of God's might,  
lo! all is just and all is right:  
to God all praise and glory!
3. The Lord is never far away,  
but, through all grief distressing,

*(continued...)*

**an ever present help and stay,  
our peace and joy and blessing,  
as with a mother's tender hand  
God gently leads the chosen band:  
to God all praise and glory!**

- 4. Thus all my toilsome way along  
I sing aloud thy praises,  
that all may hear the grateful song  
my voice unwearied raises.  
Be joyful in the Lord, my heart;  
both soul and body, take your part:  
to God all praise and glory!**

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Music: Bohemian Brethren's *Kirchengesang*, 1566; harm. Maurice F. Bell, 1906, alt. *Public Domain.*

#### **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Dear God, as we sing your praises,  
we ask that you would help us rightly reflect your glory in our lives.  
Forgive us when we tarnish your image in us:  
when the love you so richly lavish upon us we distort and betray.  
Forgive us when we turn from you and seek after our own glory.  
Forgive us when we insist on our own way and ignore your way.  
In your mercy, Lord, forgive us.  
Refresh us with the breath of your Spirit.  
Renew the fire of your love within us.  
And remake us in the image of your Son,  
our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,  
in whose name we pray. Amen.**

#### **SILENT CONFESSION**

##### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON** *(based on II Corinthians 5)*

**One:** The word is true and worthy to be believed: that God was in Christ,  
reconciling the world to God, and giving us the message of reconciliation.  
**All:** **In Christ's sacrifice we are made whole. In Christ's life we have new  
life.**  
**One:** My friends, hear and believe that good word: In Jesus Christ we are  
forgiven, renewed, and restored.  
**All:** **Thanks be to God! Alleluia!**

#### **THE PEACE**

**One:** The peace of Christ be with you.  
**All:** **And also with you.**

*(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)*

## THE WORD

**SCRIPTURE READING** John 5:1-9

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SERMON** “How Silly!(?) How Serious?(!)” by Pastor Bill Vincent

**\*HYMN** “We Come to You for Healing, Lord” GtG 796

**1. We come to you for healing, Lord,  
of body, mind, and soul,  
and pray that by your Spirit’s touch  
we may again be whole.**

**2. As once you walked through ancient streets  
and reached toward those in pain,  
we know you come among us still  
with power to heal again.**

**3. You touch us through physicians’ skills,  
through nurses’ gifts of care,  
and through the love of faithful friends  
who lift our lives in prayer.**

**4. Through nights of pain and wakefulness,  
through days when strength runs low,  
grant us your gift of patience, Lord,  
your calming peace to know.**

**5. We come to you, O loving Lord,  
in our distress and pain,  
in trust that through our nights and days  
your grace will heal, sustain.**

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**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We trust in Jesus Christ,  
fully human, fully God.**

*(continued...)*

~ 3 ~

**Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:  
preaching good news to the poor  
and release to the captives,  
teaching by word and deed  
and blessing the children,  
healing the sick  
and binding up the brokenhearted,  
eating with outcasts,  
forgiving sinners,  
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.  
Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,  
Jesus was crucified,  
suffering the depths of human pain  
and giving his life for the sins of the world.  
God raised this Jesus from the dead,  
vindicating his sinless life,  
breaking the power of sin and evil,  
delivering us from death to life eternal.**

(from *A Brief Statement of Faith*, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Confessions)

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**Sing:** “O Christ, the Healer” GtG 793

- 1. O Christ, the healer, we have come  
to pray for health, to plead for friends.  
How can we fail to be restored  
when reached by love that never ends? (Prayer)**  

One: Lord, in your mercy...  
All: ...hear our prayer.
- 2. From every ailment flesh endures  
our bodies clamor to be freed;  
yet in our hearts we would confess  
that wholeness is our deepest need. (Prayer ... Response)**
- 3. How strong, O Lord, are our desires,  
how weak our knowledge of ourselves!  
Release in us those healing truths  
unconscious pride resists or shelves. (Prayer ... Response)**
- 4. In conflicts that destroy our health  
we recognize the world's disease;  
our common life declares our ills.  
Is there no cure, O Christ, for these? (Prayer ... Response)**

*(continued...)*

**5. Grant that we all, made one in faith,  
in your community may find  
the wholeness that, enriching us,  
shall reach the whole of humankind.**    *(Prayer ... Response)*

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#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**    (Contemporary)

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

#### **OFFERING**

*Invitation*

*Reflection*

*\*Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**O God, we give out of your giving to us. You shower us with  
blessings. You renew us by your grace. You embrace us in your love.  
Accept the gifts we offer as part of our life of thanks and gratitude to you,  
that others too may be blessed and know your healing touch; for the sake of  
Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

#### **SENDING**

**\*CLOSING HYMN**    "We Cannot Measure How You Heal"    GtG 797

**1. We cannot measure how you heal  
or answer every sufferer's prayer,  
yet we believe your grace responds  
where faith and doubt unite to care.  
Your hands, though bloodied on the cross,  
survive to hold and heal and warn,  
to carry all through death to life  
and cradle children yet unborn.**

*(continued...)*

~ 5 ~

**2. The pain that will not go away,  
the guilt that clings from things long past,  
the fear of what the future holds,  
are present as if meant to last.  
But present too is love which tends  
the hurt we never hoped to find,  
the private agonies inside,  
the memories that haunt the mind.**

**3. So some have come who need your help  
and some have come to make amends,  
as hands which shaped and saved the world  
are present in the touch of friends.  
Lord, let your Spirit meet us here  
to mend the body, mind, and soul,  
to disentangle peace from pain,  
and make your broken people whole.**

*Text by John L. Bell and Graham Maule.  
Music: Scottish melody. Tune arrangement by John L. Bell.  
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**\*CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...  
All: ...Amen.

**POSTLUDE**

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