Sunday, February 18, 2024 – 9:30 a.m. First Sunday in Lent

TODAY'S FOCUS: **REPENTANCE**. For Jesus, repentance comes before hearing the good news. Is it hard for us to repent? Does that get in the way of our ability to hear and follow God?

PRELUDE — Anneke Toomey

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — Rev. Lin Cheek

*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST — Lin

*OPENING HYMN

UMH #400 "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

- 1. Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for sons of loudest praise.

 Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.

 Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy redeeming love.
- 2. Here I raise mine Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come; And I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home. Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God; He, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.
- 3. O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be! Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee. Prone to wander, Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love; Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.

*CALL TO WORSHIP — Eric Presnall

One: Lenten travelers, when you feel the security of God's love, when you feel the affirmation of God's call, when you feel covered in God's grace,

Many: God comes near.

One: When you feel deserted and alone, starving and parched for a caring hand or an encouraging word, when you are troubled and uncertain, and the ground under you shifts like sand,

Many: God comes near.

One: When you feel emboldened to act, inspired to speak, and energized to live as bearers of

the good news that the Kingdom of God is here,

Many: God comes near.

One: In all seasons of our lives, God comes near to us and does not forsake us.

Many: We gather to come near to God, whose ever-present love remains near, no matter

where our journey takes us.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock, Discipleship Ministries, September 2023.

OPENING PRAYER — Lin

HYMN TFWS #2233 "Where Children Belong"

CHILDREN'S STORY — Dan Smith

SPECIAL MUSIC — Chancel Choir "Down to the River to Pray"

SCRIPTURE: Mark 1:9-15

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." ¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. ¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

MESSAGE "The Good News" Rev. Lin Cheek

RESPONSIVE HYMN UMH #473 "Lead Me, Lord" (2x)

Lead me, Lord, Lead me in thy righteousness. Make thy way plain before my face. For it is thou, Lord, thou Lord only who makest me to dwell in safety.

OFFERTORY — Anneke Toomey

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION — Eric Presnall

ALL: Holy God, we bring our tithes and offerings to your altar, asking you to bless our gifts for your unfinished kingdom work. Remind us, as we worship here, that the redemption of our lives did not come without a price, which was paid for us. Without our own repentance, we can miss the enormity of the gift Jesus gave. Knowing we cannot earn this redemption and forgiveness, this wiping clean of our ledger, we can only hope to reflect such grace and compassion in our encounters with others. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER — Lin

All: 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

TFWS #2241 "The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve" (v. 1-3)

- 1. The Spirit sends us forth to serve; we go in Jesus' name To bring glad tidings to the poor, God's favor to proclaim.
- 2. We go to comfort those who mourn and set the burdened free; Were hope is dim, to share a dream and help the blind to see.
- 3. We go to be the hands of Christ, to scatter joy like seed and, all our days, to cherish life, to do the loving deed.

*BENEDICTION — Lin

POSTLUDE — Anneke Toomey

Prelude/Postlude—Anneke
Song Leader—Janice Bachman
Liturgist — Eric Presnall

Accomp.—Anneke
Special Music — Choir
Children's Message— Dan Smith

Offertory—Anneke Organ — Betsy