

Bethany Presbyterian Church, Johnstown, PA  
March 20 2022 3rd Sunday in Lent  
PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP-I Am the Gate

**CALL TO WORSHIP\*\***

L: We come, because we seek our God.

**P: Every morning, every day, every evening, every moment, God is with us.**

L: We come, because we hunger for Christ.

**P: Jesus will feed us with hope, will replace our emptiness with grace.**

L: We come, because we thirst for the Spirit.

**P: Who fills our yearning for peace, who ends the drought of justice.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE "Jesus, Priceless Treasure" #413**

**CALL TO RECONCILIATION\*\***

L: Do you think that because you have spoken hurtfully, or failed to help, or left God behind as you travel through each day, that God forgets you? God's love is as constant as the sun; God's forgiveness is as sure as the stars in the night sky. Let us join together, as we pray, saying,

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION\*\***

**ALL: The thirsty come, and we offer lead-filled water; the hungry come, and we offer a single can from our overflowing pantries; the lonely come, and we cling to our cliques; the broken come, and we hand them an aspirin; the needy come, but we have wasted everything on stuff we do not need. Have mercy on us, Steadfast love, and pour your heart into our grace-parched souls. As you have been with us in every moment, may we go to be with all around us. May we listen to the needs and hearts of others, even as you lean down to listen to us in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.**

**SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON\*\***

L: In every moment, God seeks what is best for us, continually offering us peace, hope, and forgiveness.

**P: We will bless God in every moment, rejoicing with the One who fills us with steadfast love.**

L:....Friends, Believe the Good News

**ALL: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen**

GLORIA PATRI

#623

CHURCH NEWS

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

*(Please greet your neighbor by saying, "The Peace of Christ be With You.")*

**REDEDICATION OF SELF AND SUBSTANCE**

Offertory

Doxology

#625

Prayer of Dedication

**LESSONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES**

First Lesson

Isaiah 55:1-9

p.635

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

p.997

Gospel Lesson

Luke 13:1-9

p.906

MESSAGE Denise Ann Todero, CP

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH THE APOSTLES' CREED**

HYMN

"My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

#410

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

L: Hear our prayers, O Lord.

**P: And let our cry come unto Thee.**

L: Let us bless the Lord!

**P: Thanks be to God.**

**PASTORAL PRAYER and THE LORD'S PRAYER**

HYMN

"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

#374

**BENEDICTION/SENDING\*\***

L: God sends us out to empty our gifts for others.

**P: Letting us charge whatever we need to grace's account.**

L: Jesus sends us out to find those who are thirsty and hungry.

**P: Giving us the water for parched children, filling our arms with bags of groceries for the hungry.**

L: The Spirit sends us out to search for those who long for community.

**P: Taking us by the hand when we grow weary, so we might continue to welcome the stranger.**

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE "Let There Be Peace"**

**\*\*Rev. Thom Shuman ©**

**ORGANISTS: John Griffin and Elaine Bilger**

**COMMISSIONED PASTOR: Denise Ann Todero**

**WORSHIP LEADER: Tina Varner**

## **I Am the Gate**

*(Third Sunday in Lent)*

When Jesus said, "I am the gate," he referred to himself as the gate, the opening, the doorway to the abundant life God has for us. Through Christ, we find safety from the dark powers of the world; we find a full, rewarding life with physical and spiritual needs provided. Christ is the door into a new life. How, when, and for what reasons we enter it are individually our own. No one, not even God, can force us to enter. But, one fact is clear — through that gate is meaningful and eternal life, outside it is emptiness and frustration.

Often in our lives we tend to close gates between ourselves and others. When these gates are shut tight, they become walls which cannot be breached. Our pride, our jealousy, our ambition, and our insecurity shut gates which are difficult to open except through Christ. He is the gate through which we all may pass, and through which we learn about opening gates to those around us — gates between family members, gates between generations, gates between races, gates between nations, and gates between religious denominations.

During this season of reflection upon our Christian lifestyles, it is important to examine our actions. Are we gate openers, or do we hide behind our gates? Are we selective with whom we share God's love or are our doors open to all? Are we open-minded and willing to consider another's point of view? Is our faith strong enough to withstand questioning and testing, or do we find security behind a closed door?

# I am the gate

John 10:7

