

GATHERING IN GOD'S WORD

Prelude

Sharing Our Lives in Prayer

- Prayer Requests
- Silent Prayer
- Pastoral Prayer

Welcome

Letting God In

During this time, we invite you to prepare your heart and your mind for worship. We want you to be able to use this quiet time to settle your thoughts, set aside any distractions that may be troubling you, and focus your whole self on God. Open your heart, your mind, and your spirit, and let God into your life.

Centering Prayer: Teach me authenticity, my Savior, my Truth.

As you breathe in, pray, "Teach me authenticity."

As you breathe out, pray, "My Savior, my Truth."

* **Opening Praise:**

One: We come into God's house

Many: To seek the presence of the Holy One.

One: We come seeking –

Many: Seeking God's strength and compassion.

One: We come seeking –

Many: Seeking Christ's grace and wholeness.

One: We come seeking –

Many: Seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance and inspiration.

One: We come offering –

Many: Offering our humility and honesty,

One: Offering our frailty and frustration,

Many: Offering all that we are and all that we seek.

ALL: Together, we will call upon our God.

Sacred Space for Sacred Story

Throughout Lent this year, we're focusing on Story: on God's story, our own stories, and the ways God's story lifts up and inspires our own. Each week, we're going to spend some time holding sacred space for each next question and phase of putting that story together. It's time you can spend thinking, praying, and writing on your testimony so far or on what may come next. You're also invited to share (if you so choose) what has developed with your story so far.

4th Sunday of Lent: Life Before

Sacred Space: To the best of your knowledge/remembrance, what were things like before that pivotal moment when God was with you?

Prayer

Hymn #455 – Listen to the Word That God Has Spoken

Listen to the word that God has spoken;
Listen to the One who is close at hand;
Listen to the voice that began creation;
Listen even if you don't understand.

* Invitation to Confession

* Joining in Prayer (based on *Spill the Beans*, iss. 26, © 2018 Spill the Beans Resource Team):

God, you made us, and you know us through and through. Best, and most amazingly of all, you love us ... no matter what. Not only is there no point trying to pretend with you, there is no need. You know all the broken places we try to hide. You know the goodness and generosity in us that we tend to discount. Not only do you see what we have done or failed to do, but you also understand the reasons why, as even we ourselves do not. And still ... yes, still ... you love us. Draw close to us now in the silence, we pray. Draw close to us as we take the risk – as much as we dare – of opening ourselves to the gentle, thorough scrutiny of your Spirit. Shine your mercy into the shadowed places of our lives, and speak your word of peace. Set us free from guilt and share for what is past. Set us free from whatever it is that makes us most likely to fail again. Set us free to be who we already are: your beloved children, called into the service of your Son and equipped by your Spirit to continue faithfully to the end. (*Please take a moment for silent reflection and confession.*)

In the name of Jesus, the Christ, we pray.

Amen.

* God's Promise of Grace

* Song of Peace: "Come and Fill Our Hearts With Your Peace" (sing through 3 times) (insert)

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.

You alone, O Lord, are holy.

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.

Ho – ly One!

HEARING GOD'S WORD

Prayer to Open Minds and Hearts

Scripture reading – John 18:12-27 (from the *Common English Bible*, © 2011)

¹² Then the company of soldiers, the commander, and the guards from the Jewish leaders took Jesus into custody. They bound him ¹³ and led him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. (¹⁴ Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was better for one person to die for the people.) ¹⁵ Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Because this other disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard. ¹⁶ However, Peter stood outside near the gate. Then the other disciple (the one known to the high priest) came out and spoke to the woman stationed at the gate, and she brought Peter in. ¹⁷ The servant woman stationed at the gate asked Peter, "Aren't you one of this man's disciples?" "I'm not," he replied. ¹⁸ The servants and the guards had made a fire because it was cold. They were standing around it, warming themselves. Peter joined them there, standing by the fire and warming himself. ¹⁹ Meanwhile, the chief priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. ²⁰ Jesus answered, "I've spoken openly to the world. I've always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews gather. I've said nothing in private. ²¹ Why ask me? Ask those who heard what I told them. They know what I said." ²² After Jesus spoke, one of the guards standing there slapped Jesus in the face. "Is that how you would answer the high priest?" he asked. ²³ Jesus replied, "If I speak wrongly, testify about what was wrong. But if I speak correctly, why do you strike me?" ²⁴ Then Annas sent him, bound, to Caiaphas the high priest. ²⁵ Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing with the guards, warming himself. They asked, "Aren't you one of his disciples?" Peter denied it, saying, "I'm not." ²⁶ A servant of the high priest, a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, said to him, "Didn't I see you in the garden with him?" ²⁷ Peter denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

Sermon: "Testimony is Truth-Telling" – Rev. Lisa Johnson

Hymn #618 – O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

O love, how deep, how broad, how high,
Beyond all thought and fantasy,
That God, the Son of God, should take
Our mortal form for mortals' sake.

For us baptized, for us he bore
His holy fast and hungered sore;
For us temptations sharp he knew,
For us, the tempter overthrew.

For us by wickedness betrayed,
For us, in crows of thorns arrayed,
He bore the shameful cross and death;
For us gave up his dying breath.

For us he rose from death again;
For us he went on high to reign;
For us he sent the Spirit here
To guide, to strengthen, and to cheer.

All glory to our Lord and God,
For love so deep, so high, so broad:
The Trinity whom we adore
Forever and forevermore.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Coming Together in Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer: 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 sins as we forgive those who sin 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.

Hymn #465 – What a Friend We Have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit;
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
Take it to the Lord in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge;
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield thee;
Thou wilt find a solace there.

Prayer of Gratitude and Blessing

Our offering plates are located at the entrance to the sanctuary. This offering allows us to continue our outreach and mission both here in the community of Oronoco and beyond – in the greater Rochester area, in Minnesota, and even around the world. We are grateful for your willingness to join us in this mission and thank you for your generosity.

Announcements

BEING SENT OUT IN GOD'S WORD

* Charge & Blessing

Postlude

** indicates please rise in body or spirit as you feel led*