

ZOOM Service, February 21, 2021

Lenten Journey 1: a walk on the wild [erness] side

Centering Ourselves for Worship

As we prepare now to worship together while apart, I invite you to take three slow, deep breaths and allow your space to become worship space for this time. [*brief silence*]



Lighting of Candle

Light and warmth are returning to the land outside these walls. Light and warmth are represented in the light glowing from this flame. May the light of this candle remind us of the light and the warmth of Divine Presence through all the changing seasons.

Opening Music

Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights

<https://vimeo.com/507875614>

[James Gertmanian to a tune by Jean Strathdee, sung by Jean Strathdee]

Prayer

In days to come, Holy One, we will go with you through many a Lenten landscape. Your wisdom has much to teach us: about practicing Divine Presence; about costly commitment; about true sacred space; about deep transformation; about the path of simplicity and letting go. In each such lesson there is challenge and comfort - all we need to enter more deeply into sacred time, the sacred time of Holy Week and the sacred time of our faithful living. May we each find the Spirit-gifts we most need to make this journey with courage and openness. Amen.

Readings from Ancient and Modern Wisdom

reader Barb Sheen

Genesis 9:8-17

Mark 1:9-15

Poem

Desert Spaces

by Robert Frost [1874-1963]

Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast.
In a field I looked into going past,
And the ground almost covered smooth in snow,
But a few weeds and stubble showing last.

The woods around it have it - it is theirs.
All animals are smothered in their lairs.
I am too absent spirited to count;
The loneliness includes me unawares.

And lonely as it is, that loneliness
Will be more lonely ere it will be less -
A blanker whiteness of benighted snow
With no expression, nothing to express.

They cannot scare me with their empty spaces
Between stars - on stars where no human race is.
I have it in me so much nearer home
To scare myself with my own desert places.

Special Music

Ashes to Ashes

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uB_BMUZ4KkM

[Dan Schutte, on classic themes for the beginning of Lent- sung by St John 5 p.m. Choir]

Reflection

Lenten Lands

Music for Reflection

We Are Not Alone

<https://vimeo.com/461677650>

Jim Strathdee, performed by Jim and Jean Strathdee with Chris Allan [saxophone]

Offering Prayer

O Bright Rainbow Presence, we trust in the colours and depths of your promises, even when we do not know what else to trust. We trust that we and all your creatures are held gently in your infinite Compassion. And so we can live, love and share beyond the limits of our fears. Through all that we have, all that we are, may we be messengers of your love in places of physical, emotional and spiritual hunger. And so we give what we have and what we are, that others too may find a way in their wilderness times and places. May it be so!

The Community at Prayer

Announcements, Joys and Concerns

Jane will get back to anyone who contacts her to express interest in a Lent study- format, email or Zoom, to depend on who's interested. This week the usual routine: Thurs. Facebook Live. Friday coffee Zoom gathering at 10 a.m. [same Zoom as you received for this Sunday's service- note it's no longer available via the website] and Sun. Feb. 28 Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with a home service also provided.

Closing Music

Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAN4EojeF0Y>

[Williams/Hughes, sung by Huddersfield Choral Society with some rousing musical accompaniment]

Blessing and Sending Forth

Let us go forth, walking this Lenten way while we must, seeking the Light, learning the lessons this season holds for us. And may we trust that Beloved Community is always near at hand and that good news is born among us even in the wilderness.

Sharing the Light

And as we leave this space and time of worship, the light goes with us. Light and Love will not fail us even in this time of Lenten journey toward brighter days to come.

Centering words from Susan Lukey and candle lighting words adapted from Peter Chynoweth from Gathering L/E/P 2021. Other prayers by Jane. Jane thanks Edward Hirsch [How to read a poem and fall in love with poetry] for introducing her to today's poem and guiding her reading of it.

Tax Receipts and 2020 Annual Report

Tax Receipts will be available for pick up at Wesley (Upper Hall) on Monday, February 15th 2-4 pm Tuesday, February 16th 10-12 pm and 2-4 pm
If not picked up, your tax receipt will be mailed.

In an effort to reduce costs and paper, the **Wesley United 2020 Annual Report (draft)** will be emailed. If we have missed you or you prefer a paper copy please email us at wesleyunitedstandrews@gmail.com. There will be printed copies available at the church. Our Congregational Annual Meeting will be scheduled at a later date.