



**February 21, 2021**

**St. John's United Church of Christ**

*As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.*

**Called by God  
Sharing with the World**

**February 21, 2021**  
**First Sunday in Lent**

## **Gathering**

### **Meditation**

“Repentance doesn’t mean going through life with your head down, feeling remorseful for being so bad. It means start doing something good. Start practicing what you believe in.” Mark Trotter

### **Chimes**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

**Prelude**      O Love That Will Not Let Me Go - Arr. Austin Lovelace

**Opening Hymn**      *How Deep The Father's Love For Us*

#### Verse 1

How deep the Father's love for us  
How vast beyond all measure  
That He should give His only Son  
To make a wretch His treasure  
How great the pain of searing loss  
The Father turns His face away  
As wounds which mar the Chosen One  
Bring many sons to glory

#### Verse 2

Behold the Man upon a cross  
My sin upon His shoulders  
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice  
Call out among the scoffers  
It was my sin that held Him there  
Until it was accomplished  
His dying breath has brought me life  
I know that it is finished

#### Verse 3

I will not boast in anything  
No gifts no pow’r no wisdom

But I will boast in Jesus Christ  
His death and resurrection  
Why should I gain from His reward  
I cannot give an answer  
But this I know with all my heart  
His wounds have paid my ransom

CCLI Song # 1558110

## **Lifting up our Joys**

## **Passing of the Peace**

### **✠ Call to Worship: (Congregation reads bold print)**

We are gathered to worship our God.

**Send your Spirit upon us.**

We come from many places, with many burdens.

**Send you Spirit upon us.**

We turn our hearts to you, O God.

**Send your Spirit upon us, and make us your beloved family.**

### **✠ Opening Prayer**

#### **✠ Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

**God of the rainbow, you made a covenant with all creatures, promising life and hope. God of pathways, you show us how we should walk. Yet we forget our connection with one another and think that we are the center of the universe. We wander from your paths of truth into paths of deceit and pride. Forgive us and lead us back into the arms of your love. Amen.**

*Silent pause for reflection*

#### **✠ Assurance of Forgiveness**

God is merciful and full of steadfast love. God will not forget us. God will wash us clean, and lead us on paths of steadfast love and faithfulness.

**Thanks be to God!**

*(the congregation may be seated)*

**Bible Readings**     *Genesis 9: 8-17, 1 Peter 3: 18-22*

**Children's Message and Blessing**

Pastor Jeff

**Today's Message**

*"The Promise of the Rainbow"*

Pastor Jeff

## **✝UCC Statement of Faith**

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify: He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets before him the ways of life and death. He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself. He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races. He calls us into his church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory. He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen.

## ✠ Giving our Gifts to God

### ✠ Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.**

**Praise God all creatures here below.**

**Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.**

**Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*(the congregation may be seated)*

## Prayers of the People

Pastor Jeff

### Prayer of Our Savior *(unison)*

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen**

### ✠ Sending Forth and Final Blessing

*(the congregation may be seated)*

## Closing Hymn

### Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley

#### Verse 1

Jesus walked this lonesome valley  
He had to walk it by Himself  
Jesus walked this lonesome valley  
He had to walk it by Himself  
O nobody else could walk it for Him  
He had to walk it by Himself

#### Verse 2

We must walk this lonesome valley  
We have to walk it by ourselves  
O nobody else can walk it for us  
We have to walk it by ourselves

#### Verse 3

Jesus walked the road to Calv'ry  
He bore our sins upon the cross  
O nobody else is like our Savior  
He died that we may live  
CCLI Song # 2118349

Pastor Jeff will offer a Wednesday evening devotion and prayer time on Facebook live during lent (Feb 24<sup>th</sup>, Mar 3, 10, and 17, and 24) at 7:00 PM

•Maundy Thursday service with Tenebrae, April 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm

•Easter Celebration - Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 10 am

***Worship Leader: Pastor Jeff Johnson***

***Blessings to you from St. John's United Church of Christ in Orwigsburg.***

*Make Handwashing a Time of Prayer: Washing our hands for 20 seconds is one of the ways to reduce the spread of the COVID virus. How long is 20 seconds? That is sometimes hard to track. However, there is a way that combines adequate handwashing and praising God. The Doxology that we sing during worship, (it starts with "Praise God from whom all blessings flow...") takes approximately 20 seconds to sing. By choosing to sing the Doxology each time we wash our hands we mentally shift our focus from the challenge of living within a pandemic to thoughts of gratitude and the blessings God has bestowed. Focusing on these positives in the midst of our challenges improves our health and wellbeing. Thanks be to God.*

*New Bible Study for women has started, contact Kay Jones for information.*

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