

Third Sunday of Lent
 March 23, 2025
 The Lesson: Risking Challenge

The Worship Committee also encourages you to use the props and take pictures in the various areas decorated as ancient Jerusalem in Roman times, for a photo shoot. Use one of the corresponding signs for your pictures. Then, at the end of Lent, we will use your photos to create something very special out of the collection of people photographed in this church.

All people: *This season we are putting a frame around a bit of life; we will section off a scriptural scene; we will look long into a face, to see what we can see; to know what we can know.*

Liturgist: Just as we have done with the art and story today, zoom in your focus on the art and story of *your* life all through the week. The Divine Artist offers us such poignant beauty each day in our own stories, in the stories around us, in the heartbreak and pain and joy and awe of a simple moment turned significant.

All people: *That's what happens when we put a frame around it. We zoom in for a close-up and search for clues for living this life with more attention and intention.*

Pastor: May you be blessed by the sacred frames that surround the moments of your life - that you dare not miss!

POSTLUDE *Exiting the Passion* (Bell)

CANDLE EXTINGUISHING **ACOLYTE**

WORSHIP LEADERS & CHOIR RECESS

THE BODY OF CHRIST EXITS THE SANCTUARY AND ENTERS THE WORLD

PREWORSHIP MUSIC

PRELUDE *Entering the Passion* (Bell) **Kevin Crone, piano**

CANDLELIGHTING & CHOIR PROCESSION

GREETING & WELCOME

Pastor: We continue our journey through Lent as we step inside the story of a teacher who turned the world upside down. We put ourselves in the picture of Holy Week so that we might let the ancient story open us to deeper conviction for the call to follow the Teacher, Jesus. The past two weeks in worship, we learned that during the final week of Jesus' life, he did NOT "lay low." He put himself out there! He made himself susceptible to those who wanted to trap him, twist his words, and get him to say something damning. Even so, he refused to turn from his vocation. He was not only a master teacher, but also a prophet and the voice of God. It was Jesus' ability to draw the people to his teachings that posed a threat and challenge to the authorities. Let's place ourselves in the Passion-week crowds again in order to get a more faithful perspective. We wonder: what would we have seen, heard and felt? And: what do we do NOW?

INTROIT

Entering the Passion

En - ter. En-ter the pas - sion. En-ter the place we be-long,
 not just look-ing on. For this is our pas-sion. En-ter the pas-sion.
 En-ter the sto - ry... En-ter the pas - sion... En-ter His pas - sion...

INVITATION TO THE CONFESSION

Leader: We are now half-way through the season of Lent, and as with so many times before, we may still find that we are not fully ready for the journey of discipleship. So many things claim our lives and prevent us from being ready to take the steps in faith. Let us take some time in silence to confess the barriers that keep us from committing fully. We will then, pray together in one voice. Let us confess... (Moment of silence for personal confession time)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All people: We come here to encounter the teachings of Jesus. Many wanted to destroy him for these teachings, and sometimes we too find that his words challenging us, calling us to more than we think we can be or do. Forgive us, O God. Let us be shaped into a new people, made in the mold of justice, not the stamp of Caesar's coin. You entered our story through Jesus, now help us to enter fully into the story of your kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

I Need Thee Every Hour

Red Hymnal #469

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS & PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Pastor: Beloved children of God, know this: There are people whose lives have been changed *completely* by Christ's story of love and passion. Transformation IS possible. Hear the Good News: You are forgiven and freed, encouraged and loved by a God who wants you to live fully. This gives us peace. Let us pass the peace of Christ with each other, using the words: Peace be with you

All people: And also with you.

WELCOME HYMN TO CHILDREN

I Love to Tell the Story

Red Hymnal #467

I love to tell the story of unseen things above;
of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;
it satisfies my longing, as nothing else can do.
I love to tell the story; 'twill be my theme
in glory – to tell the old, old story
of Jesus and his love.

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES

“Jesus’ Teaching is Tested”

Matthew 22:15-22

HYMN

Take My Life and Let it Be

Red Hymnal #253

(Verses 1 - 4, only)

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 4:1-11

A CHARACTER EMERGES FROM THE STORY

Mr. Gary Knisely, dramatist

SUNG RESPONSE

Take My Life and Let it Be

Red Hymnal #253

(Verse 5, only)

SERMON

Rev. Laura C. Baker

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

All people: 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 us 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.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Kevin Crone

OFFERING INVITATION

Liturgist: God promises much to humanity, and we have an opportunity to participate in those promises. This moment in worship is God's invitation to say “yes” by committing ourselves to share our time, talent, and financial resources or to say “no” and turn away. Let us dedicate all we offer with a song and prayer.

OFFERING RESPONSE

Take My Life and Let it Be

Red Hymnal #253

(Verse 6, only)

OFFERING PRAYER

All people: God of the wilderness, We give these offerings in gratitude, rejoicing in the abundance of your gifts to us. We give these offerings in faith, trusting that you will provide for our needs. We give these offerings in hope, knowing you can use them to spread your love in this world. And with these offerings, we give ourselves; May we live with generous hearts, with open hands. Amen.

HYMN

Lord, Speak to Me

Red Hymnal #256

COMMISSION & BENEDICTION

Pastor: Each week, the Worship Committee and I invite you to take photos—to capture “life moments” through the lens of your camera or phone and post it to our church Facebook page with the hashtag “#lifeframe” and “#starviewucc”. If you're not on social media, please send your pictures to the church via email, or bring them with a note, and we'll post them for you!