

SUNDAY, March 19, 2023

4th Sunday in Lent

Caldwell United Methodist Church, 8 Academy Road, Caldwell, N. J. 07006

Rev. Vivian L. Rodeffer, Pastor

Ms. Maxine Alstrom, Music Director



## PRELUDE

## WELCOME AND INVOCATION

Pastor Viv

*Good and Gracious God, Be present in our worship today that all we say and pray, all we sing and dedicate is to Your Eternal Glory. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

All that we are is a gift from God.

**The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,**

All that we have is a gift from God.

**The world, and those who live in it;**

There are no words to describe the wonders of God's creation.

**We rejoice as we join together in praise for God's great gifts.**

## \*HYMN #114

**"Many Gifts, One Spirit"**

**1 God of change and glory, God of time and space,**

**When we fear the future, give to us your grace.**

**In the midst of changing ways, give us still the grace to praise.**

**REFRAIN**

**Many gifts, one Spirit, one love known in many ways.**

**In our difference is blessing, from diversity we praise one Giver,**

**One Lord, one Spirit, one Word known in many ways,**

hallowing our days. For the Giver, for the gifts, praise, praise, praise!

**2 God of many colors, God of many signs,  
You have made us different, blessing many kinds.  
As the old ways disappear, let your love cast out our fear.**

**REFRAIN**

**3 Freshness of the morning, newness of each night,  
You are still creating endless love and light.  
This we see, as shadows part, many gifts from one great heart.**

**REFRAIN**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Merciful God, we confess that there are moments in our lives when, we are hard pressed to lift up songs of praise. In our times of pain and suffering, unable to see anything but darkness, all we can do is weep. Forgive us, O Lord, when we fail to sense your comforting presence. Help us to remember that we are to know you as Emmanuel, God with us, for you share in our weeping and light the way to new life, even as we walk in the deepest shadows.**

*Time of silent meditation.*

Do not be afraid, says the Lord. For God's light shines forth no matter how deep the depths of our darkness. Take heart, for wherever you are, Christ is with you!  
**Amen.**

**SCRIPTURES      Psalm 137:1-6 and John 11:23-25    Jeannie Laureano, Reader**

#### **Psalm 137: 1-6**

- 1 By the rivers of Babylon—  
there we sat down, and there we wept  
when we remembered Zion.
- 2 On the willows there  
we hung up our harps.
- 3 For there our captors  
asked us for songs,  
and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying,  
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”
- 4 How could we sing the Lord's song  
in a foreign land?

5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
 let my right hand wither!  
 6 Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth,  
 if I do not remember you,  
 if I do not set Jerusalem  
 above my highest joy.

### **John 11: 23-25**

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

**CHOIR**                    **"Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"**

**MESSAGE**        **WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?**

**DEDICATION OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD**

#### **\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION FOR OUR COMMITMENT CARDS**

Loving God, Everything we have and everything that we are is a gift from you. You call us to be stewards of these gifts. As caretakers of all that you have provided, we give back now. We dedicate our commitment cards to you. Bless them and help us to always use your gifts wisely. Lead us as we share them with others. Let our faithful stewardship show Christ to others. We pray these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### **\*DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
 Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
 Praise God the source of all our gifts!  
 Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts!  
 Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**MORNING PRAYER, SILENT PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER**        **Pastor Karen**  
 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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 #671      “Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing”**

**1 Lord, dismiss us with your blessing; fill our hearts with joy and peace.  
Let us each, your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace.  
O refresh us, O refresh us, trav'ling through this wilderness.**

**2 Thanks we give and adoration for the gospel's joyful sound:  
may the fruits of your salvation in our hearts and lives abound!  
Ever faithful, ever faithful to your truth may we be found.**

**3 So whene'er the signal's given us from earth to call away,  
borne on angels' wings to heaven, glad the summons to obey,  
may we ever, may we ever reign with Christ in endless day.**

**\*BENEDICTION**

May the abundant love of God surround you,  
may the extravagant grace of Jesus Christ sustain  
you, and may the constant presence of the Holy Spirit  
inspire and encourage you in every good deed and word. **Amen.**

**POSTLUDE**

**\*Stand as able.**

### **CALENDAR**

**Monday, March 20**

**10:00 AM Prayer/ Discussion Group**

**Tuesday, March 21**

**7:00 PM Lenten Zoom Devotions**

**TUESDAY EVENING LENTEN DEVOTIONS.** We welcome home this week's special guest presenter, Rev. Barbara Stephens-Rich. If you are following along in our study book, Toward the Cross: Heart-Shaping Lessons for Lent, read the meditations on “A Committed Heart”, though you need not be reading the book to participate in the devotion. The zoom invitation is the same as the one you use for Sunday's church service. An email will be sent to you on Monday morning.