



*Is the grind life
giving you the
kind of grounded
faith you long for?*

Sermon Series: From the Ashes
Contemplation
March 23, 2025
Third Sunday of Lent

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PRELUDE / COUNTDOWN

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS
WELCOMING OF GUEST
PASSING THE PEACE

Pastor
Pastor

OPENING PRAYER

Liturgist

God, there are times when I feel distant from you. Help me to carve out the time necessary in my life to develop a deep and abiding relationship with You. Give me a focused desire to know You and to make You known to others around me. Please help me to add a regular time of prayer to what I do every day...Amen"

*HYMN OF PRAISE *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days* (v. 1-5) UMH #269

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

A Lenten Affirmation

Liturgist

I believe in God the Creator, who made me and all things, who set me on my path in this world.

I believe in God the Savior, who is one with the Creator, who rescued me and all creation from the depredations of our violations against God and creation. This man, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, walked a path through this world, taking on human form having been born of a woman through the power of the Holy Spirit. He lived and worked in this world among people just like me. He walked God's path to death on a cross and rose from the dead to open our pathway to eternal life.

I believe in God the Holy Spirit, my counselor and guide, who is one with the Creator and the Christ, who through the body and blood of Jesus brings me into communion with all people, past, present and future; who calls me to walk a sacred way of life through this world, caring for creation and the people I meet on the way, loving them, helping them, welcoming them without prejudice, being God's hands and feet in the world.

*GLORIA PATRI

UMH #70

**Please stand as you are able*

OLD TESTAMENT READING 1 Kings 19:11-13 (NKJV)

Liturgist

Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. ¹³ So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice *came* to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Liturgist: This is the word of God for the people of God.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor

CHILDREN'S PRAYER

Dear Jesus, you showed us how to love one another and think of someone besides ourselves. Help us to let go of the selfishness that weighs us down. Help us to lift our spirits by putting the needs of others ahead of our own. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Matthew 11:28-30 (NKJV)

Liturgist

"Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ "For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light."

Liturgist: This is the word of God for the people of God.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

MISSION MOMENT

PRESENTATION OF PRAYERS AND PRAISE

Pastor

Prayer cards are on the information table. If you have a prayer that you would like to share with the congregation, please fill out the card and pass it toward the center aisle of the congregation as we are singing the Hymn of Preparation. The pastor will collect them during the hymn and pray over cards at the chancel rail.

HYMN OF PREPARATION

Just As I Am (v. 1-4)

UMH #357

PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor

SERMON ANTHEM

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

Choir

SERMON

Pastor

Title: From the Ashes

Theme: Contemplation

Main Idea: Drawing near to God through contemplative prayer is the way in which we experience the nearness of God.

RECEIVING OF TITHES AND SACRIFICES (Celebrating Our Gifts)

OFFERTORY PRAYER

God of compassion and mercy, you claim each one of us as your children. Like a parent, you are joyful when we find joy and your heart aches when we fall, fail, or feel less than the beloved heirs to the kingdom you meant us to be. The yoke the Bible describes doesn't burden us but reminds us that you yearn for us to be a church, a community, that supports, steadies, and sustains when life makes us weary. The gifts we give this day we give in gratitude for this yoke that helps us finish the race in faithfulness. Bless our giving and its use, we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

COLLECTION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*DOXOLOGY *Praise God, From Whom All Blessings* UMH #95

*HYMN OF CELEBRATION *Near to the Heart of God (v. 1-4)* UMH #472

*COMMISION / BENEDICTION Pastor

*As you go from this place, remember: Christ offers His yoke to you, promising to come alongside and stick with you no matter where your journey takes you. So, when your week gets hard, when you feel like you are at your wits' end, when the overwhelm is too much, Christ holds out His yoke to you. Will you take it...and all of God's children said...**Amen.***

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Love and Fellowship* CEL #233

POSTLUDE