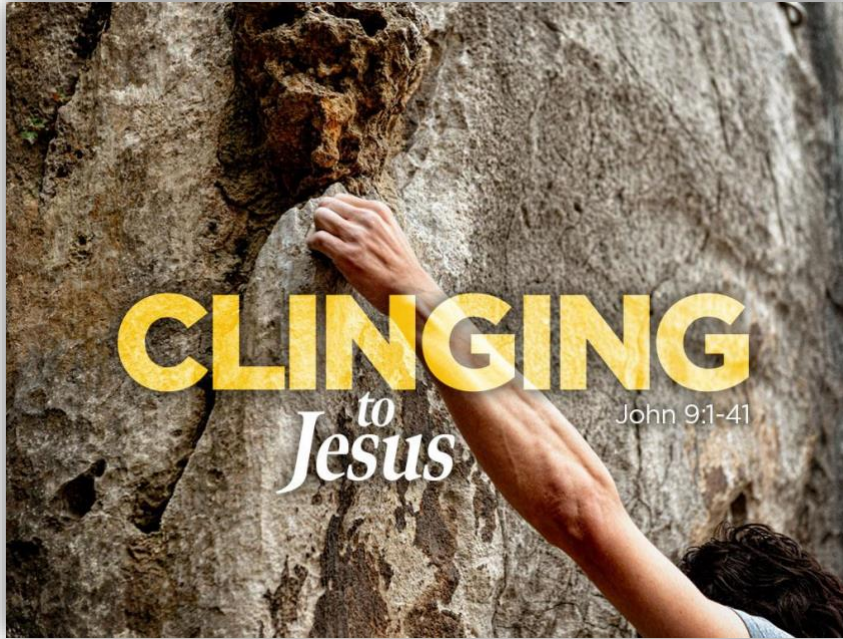




“A Lighthouse Guiding People to Christ”



Fourth Sunday of Lent
Letting Go: Clinging to Jesus

March 10, 2024

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PRELUDE / COUNTDOWN
WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS
WELCOMING OF GUESTS
PASSING THE PEACE

Pastor
Pastor

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist

Liturgist: Welcome pilgrims on the way to the cross.

Congregation: We are learning to follow Jesus.

Liturgist: On this Lenten journey, where do we find God's presence among us?

Congregation: One thing we know: God calls us to witness extraordinary love in ordinary moments.

Liturgist: On this Lenten journey, how does God's presence work among us?

Congregation: One thing we know: God uses the messy and mundane to heal and restore us to one another.

Liturgist: On this Lenten journey, what does God's presence do in our midst?

Congregation: One thing we know: God opens us to recognize presence, sustenance, and abundance where the world perceives isolation and lack.

Liturgist: Pilgrims on the way, come let us worship God!

All: We come to worship God as we learn to live inside out! Amen.

*HYMN OF PRAISE

Fairest Lord Jesus (v.1-4)

UMH #189

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Lenten Creed

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.

**Please stand as you are able.*

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

See screen

OLD TESTAMENT READING 1 Samuel 16:1 (NKJV)

Liturgist

Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons." ² And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears *it*, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' ³ "Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you." ⁴ So Samuel did what the LORD said and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵ And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶ So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before Him." ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For *the Lord does not see as man sees*; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." ⁸ So Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰ Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." ¹¹ And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here." ¹² So he sent and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this *is* the one!" ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So, Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

CHILDREN'S SERMON
CHILDREN'S PRAYER

Pastor

Dear Lord, the difficulties in our life seem small when compared to what others may be facing. Help us not to grumble and complain, but to praise and glorify you in every situation. Amen.

SERMON ANTHEM

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

Choir

MISSION MOMENT

GOSPEL READING John 9:1-41 (NKJV)

Liturgist

¹ Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. ⁴ "I must work the works of Him

who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. ⁷ And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. ⁸ Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" ⁹ Some said, "This is he." Others *said*, "He is like him." He said, "I am *he*." ¹⁰ Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So, I went and washed,

and I received sight." ¹² Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." ¹³ They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ¹⁶ Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷ They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸ But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. ¹⁹ And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰ His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹ "but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." ²² His parents said these *things* because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed *that* He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." ²⁴ So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner *or not* I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" ²⁸ Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. ²⁹ "We know that God spoke to Moses; *as for* this *fellow*, we do not know where He is from." ³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! ³¹ "Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. ³² "Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³ "If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out. ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" ³⁶ He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" ³⁷ And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." ³⁸ Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him. ³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." ⁴⁰ Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore, your sin remains.

PRESENTATION OF PRAYERS AND PRAISE
PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor
Pastor

*HYMN OF PREPARATION

I Am Thine, O Lord (v. 1-4)

UMH #419

SERMON

Pastor

Title: Letting Go

Theme: Clinging to Jesus

Main Idea: As Christ followers we must cling to Jesus rather than become like the Pharisees who valued knowing about God more than walking with God...All I know is that I was blind but now I see.

RECEIVING OF TITHES AND SACRIFICES

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Generous God, you tenderly care for each person you have created. You miraculously restore people to health and shine light into the lives of those who are discouraged. Guide us so that we will not regard others according to outward appearances but seek to find your love in their hearts. We dedicate our offerings and ourselves to contribute to the work of your kingdom on earth until Christ returns in glory. Amen.

PASSING THE PLATE

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings

UMH #94

*HYMN OF CELEBRATION

Count Your Blessings (v. 1-4)

CEL #786

*COMMISSION / BENEDICTION

As you leave this time of worship, may God's presence follow you, heal you, and empower you to witness and to witness to the goodness and love of God everywhere you go. Amen.

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Love and Fellowship

See screen

POSTLUDE



Members

Marion Lollie and her husband, Sammie

Friends and Family

Stevie Hubbard (son of Edie Hubbard)

Doris Mathiesen (aunt of Virgil Hall)

Kerry, Tiffany, & Christian Foote

Family of Eula Sawyer (Verlie LaBounty's sister and Paula Davies' aunt)

Bill Butler

Dell Speigner (friend of Diane Matthews)

Pat and Bob McNealy

Ricky Benton (brother of Marion Lollie)

Tamara (friend of Gerry Nielsen)

Rita Mathis (friend of Franklin & Frances Chaires)

Laura (daughter of Franklin & Frances Chaires)

Alan Blackburn (friend of Terry Hatcher)

Jael (friend of Gretchen)

A praise that Jim Taylor's son, daughter-in-law, and grandson will be moving to town.