



Rockville United Church
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ
First Sunday of Lent
March 9, 2025 ~ Hybrid Worship

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

CELEBRATING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

GATHERING MUSIC

Gather Us In

Haugen

Here in this place, the new light is streaming, shadows of doubt are vanished away.
See in this space our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken; gather us in; our spirits inflame.

Call to us now, and we shall awaken; we shall arise at the sound of our name.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

We may be arriving worn and fragile from pain and injustices.

Yet, God is still feeding our spirits.

We may be wandering, feeling as if we have no direction.

Yet, God is guiding us in the wilderness.

We may be wondering what comes next.

Yet, God is filling us with purpose.

We may be gathering with anxious and aimless spirits.

Yet, the Spirit of Strength meets us here and journeys with us.

*HYMN

I Want Jesus To Walk with Me

Chancel Hymnal, No. 627

I want Jesus to walk with me. I want Jesus to walk with me.
All along my pilgrim journey, O, I want Jesus to walk with me.

In my trials, Lord, walk with me. In my trials, Lord, walk with me.
When my heart is almost breaking, O, I want Jesus to walk with me.

When I'm troubled, Lord, walk with me. When I'm troubled, Lord, walk with me.
When my head is bowed in sorrow, O, I want Jesus to walk with me.

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (unison)

When we find ourselves in the wilderness spaces of our lives, when we feel tempted to act out of our worst fears or for the wrong reasons, when we feel vulnerable and alone, draw near to us, Holy One. Through your power and persistence, remind us that we are never alone because we are held in your love. As we acknowledge our own failings and frailty, turn us around and call us back, that we might know ourselves more fully,

and find our rightful place in relationship with you. Lift us up on the wings of your Spirit that a new life might take flight within us, and we might create a lasting and liberating change for the sake of our world. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

Ruah

Fullmer

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

The Inclusive Bible

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High and pass the night in the shadow of Shaddai, say “Yahweh, my refuge and my mountain fortress, my God in whom I trust!” Because you have made me your refuge and have me as your stronghold, no evil will befall you, and no disaster will come near your tent. For I will command my angels to guard you wherever you go. They’ll carry you in their hands so you don’t hurt your foot on a stone. You’ll tread on the young lion as easily as one does a cobra; you’ll trample down both lion and serpent. Because you love me, I will deliver you; I will rescue you because you acknowledge my Name. You will call upon me, and I will answer you; I will be with you and honor you. I will satisfy you with a long life and show you my salvation.”

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching.

All: *Thanks be to God.*

WORD FOR CHILDREN

All in a Day

Pastor Jennifer

by Cynthia Rylant

Children (ages 3 years old through 5th grade) are invited to attend a Sunday School faith formation class. Following the Word for Children, children will dismiss with their teachers to the classrooms on the lower level, through the front side door of the sanctuary. Parents/guardians, please pick up children in their classroom following the worship service. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany their child(ren) if they choose. Visitors are welcome.

Nursery care for infants through age 3 is available in the nursery on the lower level.

Our nursery caregiver is Caitlin Vredenburg. Our nursery helper is Cindy Livingston.

ANTHEM

On Eagle’s Wings

Joncas arr. Kingsbury

SCRIPTURE

Luke 4:1-13

The Inclusive Bible

Jesus returned from the Jordan filled with the Holy Spirit, and she led him into the desert for forty days, where he was tempted by the Devil. Jesus ate nothing during that time, at the end of which he was famished. The Devil said to Jesus, “If you are God’s Own, command this stone to turn into bread.” Jesus answered, “Scripture has it, ‘We don’t live on bread alone.’” Then the Devil took Jesus up higher and showed him all the nations of the world in a single instant. The Devil said, “I’ll give you all the power

and the glory of these nations; the power has been given to me and I can give it to whomever I wish. Prostrate yourself in homage before me, and it will all be yours.” In reply, Jesus said, “Scripture has it: ‘You will worship the Most High God; God alone will you adore.’” Then the Devil led Jesus to Jerusalem, set him up on the parapet of the Temple and said, “If you are God’s Own, throw yourself down from here, for scripture has it, ‘God will tell the angels to take care of you; with their hands they’ll support you, that you may never stumble on a stone.’” Jesus said to the Devil in reply, “It also says, ‘Do not put God to the test.’” When the Devil had finished all this tempting, Jesus was left alone. The Devil awaited another opportunity.

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

All: Thanks be to God.

CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION *Jesus Remember Me*

Taize

SERMON

“Wilderness Test”

Rev. Jennifer Knutsen

***HYMN**

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days Chalice Hymnal, No. 180

Lord, who throughout these forty days, for us did fast and pray,
teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.

As you with Satan did contend, and did the victory win,
O give us strength in you to fight, in you to conquer sin.

And thro’ these days of penitence, and thro’ your passion-tide,
forevermore, in life and death, O Christ with us abide.

Abide with us, that through of doubts and hope and pain,
an Easter of unending joy we may at last attain!

MORNING PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Refrain: One: Holy One, in your mercy,

All: Receive our prayers.

THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TEACHES (unison) (an interpretation from New Zealand)

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Our generosity is born out of our identity in a God whose love is unending and offered to all. In gratitude and joy, we share our resources to spread equity and hope among all people.

Offertory

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

With thanksgiving, we offer ourselves with our gifts, to you Creator God, confident that you have a purpose for them and for us. Expand our vision to embrace new possibilities as we rededicate ourselves to be and do the good we so long for in the world. May our offerings bring hope and healing, justice and joy to all whom they reach. Amen.

***HYMN**

It Is Well With My Soul
(verses 1 and 2)

Chalice Hymnal, No. 561

When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll;
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.

Refrain:

It is well, with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

May God haste the day when my faith shall be bright,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend,
even so it is well with my soul.
(refrain)

***BENEDICTION**

Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage.
Hold fast to that which is good. Render to no one evil for evil.
Be filled with the love of God. Befriend the Christ in each new day.
Sing with the song of the Spirit. Go in peace, hope and love. Amen.

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Thanks to our worship helpers today!

Liturgist: Dan Hockensmith

Digital Host: Joni Miller

Greeter: Mariana Nolan

Welcome Table: Mary Sue Pletcher

Welcome to Rockville United Church!

We are glad you have joined us for worship this morning. We trust that you will find RUC to be a welcoming and engaging place to explore the life of faith within a community that honors each person's spiritual journey. We encourage you to ask questions, visit our website, and share your contact information at the welcome table near the front doors. I hope to greet you personally following worship, and invite you to contact me.

Blessings,
Rev. Jennifer Knutsen
jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org

Our complimentary Wi-Fi network is **RUC Mesh**. The password is **heavenly**.



Please Scan Me To Give To RUC.



Rockville United Church

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355 Linthicum Street, Rockville, Maryland 20851
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(Office Hours: Wed, Fri—10am to 3pm or by appointment)

Ecumenical † Just Peace † Open & Affirming † More Light