

# WORSHIP

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Front Street United Methodist Church

4th Sunday of Lent

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## Opening Prayer

Everlasting God, because of your tender mercy toward all people, you sent your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon himself our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all should follow him in life and death with humility and grace. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of his patience and also be made partakers in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Psalter

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,

I shall not want.

In grass meadows He makes me lie down,

by quiet waters he guides me.

My life He brings back.

He leads me on pathways of justice

for His name's sake.

Though I walk in the vale of death's shadow,

I fear no harm,

for You are with me.

Your rod and Your staff —

it is they that console me.

You set out a table before me

in the face of my foes.

You moisten my head with oil,

my cup overflows.

Let but goodness and kindness pursue me

all the days of my life.

And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD

for many long days.

## The Word, Read & Proclaimed

John 9:1–41

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.”

Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

So the Pharisees said to the man, “Give glory to God! We know that this Jesus is a sinner.” He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”

The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could

do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that the Pharisees had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him.

Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

## Meditation and Offering

### Lenten Litany

God, in this season of Lent we quiet our souls,  
that we may see more clearly the one our hearts long for.  
We ask, seek, and knock,  
that our prayers may be answered  
and our longing fulfilled.

We acknowledge that so much of our faith life involves waiting,  
for the voice of God to speak,  
for the Spirit of God to move,  
for the fulness of your Kingdom to come,  
for Christ’s appearance on earth,  
for the world to be made new,  
for justice and peace to become ordinary,  
for love to become the world’s motivation.

We acknowledge that even as we wait, you are working:  
redeeming the earth,  
redeeming people,  
making all things new.

As Christ waited three days in a tomb,  
so do we in this season wait for resurrection life.  
We wait in faith, that you are even now giving us new life.  
We wait in hope for the Lord with all of creation.  
Amen.

### Prayers for Others & The Lord’s Prayer

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Guide the people of this land, and all of the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

And now with confidence as children of God, let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us...

## **Benediction**

"Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever." Amen.

Jude 24–25