



## *Order of worship*

1st Sunday in Lent

**February 21, 2021**

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### **Call to worship** *(from Psalm 25)*

O God, we lift up our souls and put our trust in you.

**Make us to know your ways, O Lord;  
teach us your paths.**

O God, lead us in your truth, and teach us,  
for you are the God of our salvation;  
for you we wait all day long.

**God leads the humble in what is right,  
and teaches the humble God's way.**

### **Call to confession**

We come to our 40-day journey of Lent with penitence in our hearts. The polarization, enmity and fissures that have scarred our country and world are in us as well. We yearn for truth, peace and justice. Yet we know that we have not lived as those who are formed in the truth, peace and justice of Christ. We confess our sin, assured of God's mercy and empowering grace.

### **Prayer of confession**

Merciful God, we confess our complicity in the divisions that have wounded our country and our world. We have turned aside from your way. We have failed to love you and our neighbor, neglected justice and ignored your truth. Forgive us, and restore in us your Spirit of compassion and justice-seeking love. Amen.

### **Assurance of pardon**

God in Christ is steadfast in love and mercy. So friends, hear the good news of the gospel. In Christ we are forgiven and set free from the sins that bind and enslave us. We are empowered to love God with all of who we are, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Thanks be to God.



### **Prayer of illumination**

Gracious God, You are our way in the wilderness. Your Word will guide us through these 40 days of Lent so that we may reformed, restored, and renewed. Amen.

### **Scripture readings**

### **Sermon**

### **Affirmation of faith** *(from A Brief Statement of Faith)*

**In life and in death we belong to God.**

**Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit,  
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,  
whom alone we worship and serve.**

**With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that  
nothing in life or in death can separate us from the  
love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

### **Call for the offering**

In Lent, we remember the gifts of nourishment that God gives us during our wilderness journey. Let us now share our gifts in joyful response to God's sustaining grace.

### **Prayer of dedication**

O God, giver of all good gifts, may the gifts we offer here today bear the fruits of peace, love, and justice in our community and our world.

### **Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer**

Holy God, we pray that you would empower us with courage and faithfulness as we embark on this Lenten journey. We seek renewal and restoration during these 40 days. Help us to remember Jesus' faithfulness in the wilderness, tempted by Satan. Be with us in our temptation. Let your grace follow us and go before us in each step of this journey. Enable us to accept spiritual disciplines for this journey. Let us pray daily and be especially attentive to the needs of others, and to our own needs.

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God of the nations, we pray for peace with justice throughout the world, so that all your children may dwell secure, free of war and injustice. Move the hearts of leaders throughout the world to hear the cries of the poor and hungry, and to ensure a rightful share of the resources needed to sustain life.

And as we continue to grapple with overwhelming pandemic challenges, we pray that you would grant special measures of strength and endurance to healthcare workers and other essential workers who labor on the frontlines of this struggle. And we pray for all who are now facilitating vaccination and for those who are providing the vaccines. We pray for your comfort for all who are sick and for all who have lost loved ones. Grant us all wisdom and courage for the living of this hour. We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray, saying, *Our Father...*

### **Charge and benediction**

As we journey in Lent,  
let us be empowered to follow in the way of Jesus,  
who, though tempted, was steadfast in love and  
faithful in the way of justice.

So, let us lift up the brokenhearted and  
stand with the oppressed.

Let us love God with our whole lives and  
love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Roger Gench  
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