

Prelude

Call to Worship

We follow Christ

who says, "Take up your cross."

We follow Christ

who bids us come and die.

We follow Christ

who summons us to new life.

The One who calls is faithful and will keep us.

Prayer of the Day

Risen Jesus, in your Gospel we discover such a clear hope.

It sustains faith even in situations where there seems to be no way out.

This hope reinvents the world.

Hymn

"The God of Abraham Praise"

#116 UM Hymnal

The Call to Confession

Trusting in God's promise of salvation let us confess our sin and repent.

The Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we claim to follow Jesus but have not taken his path of sacrificial love.

We profess to be disciples, but we are not willing to bear the cost of discipleship. We affirm the virtue of self-denial, but we indulge our selfish desires and seek earthly gain.

Forgive us, we pray. Free us for sincere repentance through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

the silence

The Words of Assurance

Hear the good news: God deems as righteous all who trust that Jesus has been raised from the dead for our salvation. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

The Hymn

"Where He Leads Me"

#338 UM Hymnal

Prayer of Illumination

Holy Spirit, open our hearts to receive your Word, reveal to us the good news, and enable us to trust in the promise of salvation in Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Psalter

Psalm 22:23-31

²³You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! ²⁴For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him. ²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him. ²⁶The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord. May your hearts live forever! ²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. ²⁸For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations. ²⁹To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him. ³⁰Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord, ³¹and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

The Gospel Reading

Mark 8:31-38

³¹Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." ³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Sermon

The Psalms express a wide range of emotions; this may be why we turn to them, in every season.

We find in them a voice for the depths of our sorrow and suffering, and also our rejoicing and thanksgiving. We are most accustomed to hearing Psalm 22 on Good Friday;

the words Jesus speaks from the cross, in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark;

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

From the beginning, we are drawn into a deeply personal relationship:

The Psalm begins by addressing God, not as some unknown, distant deity,

but as "My God." In those deeply personal words we experience all the more, the difficulty, the agony, of the Psalmist asking if God has now abandoned him or her, in this time of their greatest suffering.

"Why are you so far from helping me?"

I cry by day but you do not answer, and by night but find no rest."

Not only does God seem to be far away; but even those around the Psalmist mock and scorn them: "*They stare and gloat over me; they divide my clothes among themselves.*"

This prayer recounts the shame and humiliation that seems relentless.

We aren't told why God has acted in some way; or why the Psalmist thinks they have been abandoned. But even while they are asking if God is absent from them, we still hear a conversation that believes that God still hears, and that God is still holy, that God is above all:

"O Lord, do not be far away! O my help, come quickly to my aid! ...Deliver me, ...Save me..."

The Psalmist continues to cry out to God; continues to remember what God has done, and still, despite all, continues to seek God.

Today's scripture, picks up at the second half of this Psalm, and moves to a sudden reversal.

God has acted in some way, still unknown to us, and the psalmist sings, not only of thanksgiving, but also invites others to share in praise to God.

Even those who have been the persecutors, the ones doing the mocking and shaming, are invited to share in giving thanks.

Even they are portrayed as sufferers.

Whatever it is that God has done, has now opened a door, for inviting everyone.

First, the poor; and all who seek God; a description of the Psalmist themselves.

next, the people of every nation; all the ends of the earth.

and at last, all generations yet to come; a look to the future, which God continues to hold with care.

No one is left out. No one is excluded.

The invitation to enter into praise and thanksgiving to God continues to expand.

It is significant that the suffering and cries of this one person, and whatever they now experienced in God's answer, have something to do with all of us, with every human being, and with all of creation.

When we receive this Psalm, this prayer, as a whole, it is not only the cries of absence and struggle that we can relate to; we are also invited to enter into the thanksgiving that God indeed is present; that we are not abandoned or left alone.

Our relationship with God is not only one thing or another. There are times we may be angry with God; fearful; even feeling that God is not listening. That God has abandoned us.

And there may be times when we need to voice all of that in our own prayers.

But also to know that is not all there is. To know that others have experienced this cry of absence as well.

It is unknown to us how God acted in the life of this person; how God spoke to the Psalmist; only that God has indeed acted.

A mother and son wrote a book together, "Under Our Roof" about their family's struggle with addiction, and were recently interviewed. The mom, Madeleine Dean, is now a member of the House of Representatives, and the son, Harry Cunnane, is now in the eighth year of his recovery. Their story and witness sounded like an echo of Psalm 22.

They each spoke of their experiences, of despair, shame, loneliness, the judgement of others; but also of a turning point for their own family.

Harry said, when he speaks with others experiencing addiction, as part of his own recovery, he shares what is possible through recovery; about the joys that are possible. and Madeline, spoke of reaching out to another mother in her neighborhood to ask for help; and finding many people who were willing to help when she asked. She concluded by saying, "There is always hope."

It is that hope that we all need.

That hope which carries us through great struggles, fears and turmoils.

Hope that allows us to continue to call upon God, even when it seems as if God is absent.

This prayer tells us that the movement from suffering to praise, is not a denial of the Psalmist's agony, or for us, the difficulties that life can bring.

The turning from complaint of God's absence, to prayers of thanksgiving does not diminish the reality of grief. Instead, it is a prayer that we know well; a prayer of our own cries, of our own afflictions, and an affirmation that God is indeed always present, even when we are not aware of God's presence.

This prayer on Jesus' lips from the cross, is a prayer for each of us when we are going through difficulties, and also a prayer to trust in God's presence.

This prayer reflects Jesus' very life, gathering the poor, the outcast, and embracing those who were suffering, knowing that the power of God is greater than the power of suffering and death.

This prayer tells us that

We too, are among those who are embraced and gathered in.

We too are invited to come and give thanks.

And too, we are among those who extend that invitation to others.

Alongside Jesus, Let us make this prayer a guide for our lives, give ourselves, in trust, into God's care and joy.
Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Invitation to our Offering

With all humility let us make our offering to God, trusting not in worldly gain,
but in God's sustaining grace.

Offertory Music

The Doxology

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Accept these offerings with the dedication of our lives, that we may be for the world a sign of your
abiding love and a testament to your enduring promise.**

**In Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours,
Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn

"Living For Jesus"

#2149 Faith We Sing

Benediction

Go now, and live before God in openness and integrity.

Set your minds on the ways of God, not clinging to your own life,
but taking up your cross and following Jesus.

And may God give you a share in the eternal covenant;

May Christ Jesus be proud of you when he comes in glory;

And may the Holy Spirit make you grow strong in faith
and lead you in the ways of righteousness.

My Peace

Postlude

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Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

*The mission of the United Methodist Church
is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."*

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Lent 2021 Psalm Readings

February 28, Second Sunday in Lent: Psalm 22:23-31

March 7, Third Sunday in Lent: Psalm 19

March 14, Fourth Sunday in Lent: Psalm 107:3, 17-22

March 21, Fifth Sunday in Lent: Psalm 51:1-12

PEOPLE TO KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Ruth Fuss, Richard Mezera, Greg and Claudia Manow, Ed and Georgeen Slee,
Prayer Shawl and Prayer Bear Recipients; **Past and Present** Servicepersons

Ruth Fuss is in Palos Heights Rehabilitation, 13259 S. Central Ave, Crestwood IL 60418

Take Up Your Cross

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Mark 8:34b (NIV)

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
T	L	R	W	C	M	H	Q	K	D	G	P	S	Z	B	E	I	U	Y	J	A	V	O	X	N	F

1. 10-16-25-19 _____
2. 20-16-13-18-13 _____
3. 13-21-22-16 _____
4. 4-23-3-2-10 _____
5. 13-18-26-26-16-3 _____
6. 2-17-26-16 _____
7. 13-23-18-2 _____
8. 11-21-17-25 _____
9. 1-21-9-16 _____
10. 7-17-6-13-16-2-26 _____
11. 1-16-21-5-7 _____
12. 5-3-23-13-13 _____
13. 26-23-2-2-23-4 _____
14. 2-23-13-16 _____
15. 26-23-3-26-16-17-1 _____

SAVE	TAKE	SOUL	DENY	HIMSELF
WORLD	CROSS	FOLLOW	JESUS	LOSE
FORFEIT	GAIN	TEACH	LIFE	SUFFER

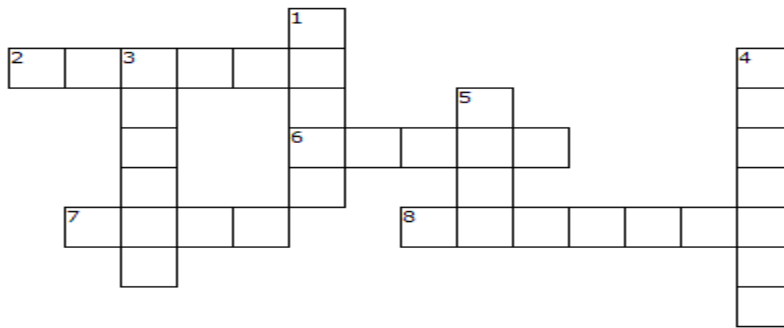
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R	H	T	A	E	D	O	R	C	P	JESUS	QUESTION	JOHN	CHRIST
A	E	C	N	U	O	N	E	R	H	STRICT	SUFFER	ELDERS	DEATH
N	C	W	S	A	T	A	O	A	S	CROSS	PROPHETS	RENOUNCE	LIFE
A	C	R	O	S	S	P	J	E	S				
T	H	H	I	L	H	I	R	S	U				
A	C	R	S	E	L	D	E	R	S				
S	H	I	T	E	E	O	F	E	N				
C	E	S	T	F	S	U	F	F	H				
W	N	O	I	T	S	E	U	Q	O				
O	L	L	O	F	S	U	S	E	J				

Take Up Your Cross

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Mark 8:34b (NIV)

Based on Mark 8:27-38



ACROSS

2. To experience injury, pain, or death
6. The evil enemy of God; the leader of the fallen angels
7. The spiritual part of a person which exists after death
8. The expected savior of the world

DOWN

1. The object upon which Jesus was crucified
3. To take someone as our leader or model
4. A person who speaks for God
5. To keep something from harm or loss

SUFFER	SATAN	SOUL	CROSS
MESSIAH	PROPHET	FOLLOW	SAVE

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O C I G P R O P H E T S B R N
 F Y V I L L A G E S Y I F C Z
 A S L S O U L I D D G S G H V
 C R O S S S D W L A B C U O R S
 A H R G T M R G J M L F R I J
 L A F E Q O B L O H L F I S X
 D O J O W F E H I S U E S T Q
 S I S A R R B U I F P R E U K
 D A S E F F R D S Q E E Z E I
 E S T C A O E Q A A I F L N L
 N F E A I K L I V A V Z S X L
 Y U W V N P S L T H V E Q G E
 C N M H I W L L O O O N V T D
 B Y G A I N D E I W T E A C H
 E H A A F E T A S D W O E Z P

WORLD	CHRIST	LIFE	TEACH	DISCIPLES
DENY	KILLED	SOUL	FOLLOW	SATAN
FORFEIT	VILLAGES	LOSE	GOSPEL	GAIN
PROPHETS	SUFFER	SAVE	RISE	CROSS

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MARCH BIRTHDAYS



- 4 Bob Izydorek
- Ysabelle Galsim
- 7 Lydia Rupisan

- 8 Bill Moore
- 10 Ruth Fuss
- Lara Batchelor

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS



- 20 Roberta Vogeltanz
- 27 Elmer Nelson
- 30 Lee Harwig



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