



Seventh & James Baptist Church
February 25, 2024 · 11:00 a.m.
The Second Sunday in Lent

Seventh & James Baptist Church
February 25, 2024 · 11:00 a.m.
The Second Sunday in Lent

Chiming of the Hour

Meditation

“Jesus Loves Me”

arr. Lorie Line
setting by Kevin McChesney

ADULT HANDBELL CHOIR

Welcome and Call to Worship

Erin Conaway

One: Child of God, you are welcome here...

Many: We give thanks to God for bringing us into this moment of worship.

One: Over and over again, Jesus tried to tell his disciples and followers who he was and what it meant to follow him.

Many: Take up your cross and follow.

One: Follow him to Jerusalem and be ready for the unexpected turn of events he kept telling us would happen.

All: Even today, we confess it is difficult to follow Jesus down this road. We say with the desperate father, “Lord, we believe! Help our unbelief!”

Choral Summons

“O Love of God Most Full”

John Purifoy

O love of God most full, O love of God most free,
Come warm my heart, come fill my soul, come lead me unto thee. Amen.

Processional Hymn, No. 58

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

Litany of God’s Faithfulness

David Morgan

One: Holy and sustaining God, we gather before you this morning having passed by countless examples of your grace and guidance.

Many: Faithful God, open our eyes to see your presence emblazoned across our world.

One: We remember fretting over closed doors and blocked paths and can now see you made a way for us to fill these pews and inhabit this space. Some of us are looking at the barriers around us and need to remember that we are in your guiding hands, we are your children, and we are loved and cherished beyond our wildest imagination.

Many: Faithful God, strengthen our courage to stand in faith and walk in your light.

One: We are fickle followers dropping so quickly from faithful thanksgiving into forgetful despair. We grow numb to the weight of your story across the ages and think it might change in our situation or on this day, but you remain God...present and pulling us ever closer to your heart where we belong.

Many: Faithful God, transform us even deeper into the followers you created us to be.

One: Buoyed by your consistency not only in our lives but in the lives of sinners throughout our history, we thank you for your unwavering love and the comfort it brings us when we choose to see it.

All: Let us walk this path as faithful ones—following the Way, sharing the Truth, and dancing in your glorious Life!

Prayer of Thanksgiving

David Morgan

Meditation

“Ah, Holy Jesus”

Susan Ullom Hungerford

ADULT HANDBELL CHOIR

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 41:10-13

Mike Jones

Epistle Reading

Philippians 2:4-11

Patricia Wilson

Hymn, No. 453

“Abide with Me”

Gospel Reading

Mark 9:14-29

Scott Turner

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

Many: Thanks be to God.

Prayers of God's People

Scott Turner

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.

Offertory

“Amazing Grace”

(NEW BRITAIN)
arr. Joel Raney

Carolien Tantra, *piano*

During the offertory, we invite you to prayerfully consider your stewardship of all the resources God is entrusting to you. The work of God at Seventh & James is dependent on the financial generosity and volunteer service of its members and friends. Offering plates are available at the doors of the sanctuary as you leave worship. Join us as you respond to God's call.

Doxology

(sung to O WALY, WALY, tune of “When Love Is Found,” No. 524)

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

Children's Sermon

Leslie Rosencrans

*All children are invited to come forward for the Children's Sermon.
Preschoolers [ages 4-kindergarten] may then go to Extended Session.*

Responsive Reading of Psalm 27:7-14

Daniel Farris

One: Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me!

Many: “Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!” Your face, Lord, do I seek.

One: Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

Many: If my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.

One: Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

Many: Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and they are breathing out violence.

One: I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

All: Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!

Anthem

“O Love”

Elaine Hagenberg

O Love, O Love, O Love that will not let me go,
O Love, I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thy ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.
O Joy, O Joy, O Joy that seeks me through the pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain, that morn shall tearless be.
O Love, O Love, O Love that will not let me go,
O Love, I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
And in Thy ocean depths its flow
Shall richer, fuller be, that morn shall tearless be.
O Love, O Love, O Love, that will not let me go.

Sermon

“I Believe...”
(Mark 9:14-29)

Erin Conaway

Silent Reflection

‘What we really believe is what our actions show that we believe.’ When we realize that faith is not what we believe but what we do, then we have to take some account of our actions. Given what we profess, we may just have to change how we live, and that may mean that faith, in this sense of doing, is costly and risky. If our faith demands high ideals, values, and beliefs that we respect and want for ourselves, then we will have to live into our beliefs, or live up to our faith. Faith is thus neither an abstraction nor a consent to a formula of convictions. Faith is the expression of a vision that we then act out.

— Peter J. Gomes, *The Good Life*

Hymn of Commitment, No. 295

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

*If you would like to make a public profession of your faith in Christ
or request membership in this congregation, our ministers
will greet you at the front of the sanctuary.*

Congregational Response

In response to your decision, we pledge ourselves to be the family of God for you in this place; we offer you our love, our care, our kinship, and our hopes; we hope to learn from you, give to you, and receive from you, by God’s grace. Amen.

Pastoral Blessing

Erin Conaway

One: Every step closer to Holy Week brings us that much closer to the darkness.

Many: Give us courage to walk this path with you.

One: We know even as the light grows dim, there is an increasing brightness behind the shadows.

Many: Fellow bearers of light...let us walk out together in hope and joy.

One: Go out into the world ready to receive unexpected grace and live into the high calling of Christ’s sacrificial love.

Choral Benediction

“The Servant Song”

arr. David Schwoebel

We are travelers on a journey, fellow pilgrims on the road.
We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.
I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

Postlude

“Immortal, Invisible”

Gordon Young
arr. Douglas Wagner

Today at Seventh

Adult Handbell Choir

Rosalie Beck
Sonia Belew
Linda Hynan
Pat Hynan

Donna Kennedy
Missy Kittner
Ann McGlashan
Bryce Shelton

Ann Sims
Carolien Tantra
Patricia Wilson

Our Pianist today is Carolien Tantra.

The Artwork on the Cover is by Rachel Farris.

The Rose on the Organ celebrates the birth of Henley Grey Hillier, born February 21. Henley is the great-great-niece of Marcia & David Whitten.

The Sanctuary Flowers are given by Reggie & Jim Williams in loving memory of her father, Joseph Reginald Mullis, born February 25, 1926.

Hearing devices are available at the sound booth for any who need assistance.

Permission to print music obtained from CCLI, license #1450684.