

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 19, 2023

9:00 a.m.

+ Indicates those times when all who are able may stand.
Bold indicates congregational response.

Ringing of the Bell

Pastor's Welcome

Prelude "The Name of Jesus" arr. Rasley

Call to Worship

Kindred of God, a new vision of leadership is called forth and God calls upon the least likely, the unheard of, and the humble of heart to assemble to receive anointing.

In peace, we anoint the forgotten, the youngest, smallest, and unlikeliest of siblings whom God has raised up to serve.

Though the call may involve risk and danger, we are called to listen, obey, and live a love unwavering.

In peace, we anoint the disinherited and dismissed.

God's call does not depend on our outward appearance or our earthly achievements.

In peace, we anoint neighbor and kin alike, knowing God looks upon the heart.

Let us open our hearts to God this day.

Gathering Prayer

Let us pray:

Anointed One, your love comes peaceably into our lives if we will but let it. We are so fixated on the gold standard, the familiar, and the safe choice that we often lose sight of what you are raising up right in our very midst. Enliven us with your Spirit this day so that we might get a glimpse of your peace. Take what we might imagine as too small for your kin-dom and use it to open the world to your overflowing abundance and provision for all that you have created. In the name of Jesus, the Christ we pray. Amen.

First Reading of Scripture

John 9:1-41 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

+ Opening Hymn No. 458 "O Jesus I Have Promised"

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

God of surprises, we know that we do not often perceive the world as you do. We look to the flashy fame, the grand gestures, optimal achievements, and unreachable standards. Yet, in spite of our misguided reach towards perfection, you give us glimpses of your grandeur and grace.

Surprise us yet again this day, O God, that in our complacency which allows us to drift towards the same old ways of faith that we may be transformed anew. Provide us with a new cup of oil that we may be anointed by your love so that we may set out into your world to bless and anoint others. In the name of the One whose love and peace make all things new we pray. Amen.

Silent Prayer

Assurance of Grace

Friends, receive the anointing of God's tender love and forgiveness this day. For God's care and compassion for you abides in your heart today and always.

We rise and set out restored and renewed. Amen.

Announcements

Giving from Our Hearts



It is the generosity of the friends and members of this church which supports this ministry. Over 95% of our budget is directly supported through our offering. While the ministry at Zion is sustained by more than dollars and cents, the monetary giving is vital to the work we do. We give thanks for all who have supported Zion over the years. For those contributing financially:

There is an offering plate just outside the sanctuary or you can donate online through the online giving button at zionunion.org.

+ Doxology

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. Amen.

+ Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, you remind us that you “anoint our heads with oil” and that our “cup overflows” with your abundance. We do not take for granted all that you provide. Take these gifts and use them for the healing and tender care of your hurting world. May your cup of love overflow and abide with the hurting and heartbroken, forgotten and despised, so that we may all be made whole. Amen.

Second Reading of Scripture

1 Samuel 16:1-13 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

Anthem

“It Is Well with My Soul”

arr. Rice

Kirk Hancox, soloist

Sermon

Pastoral Prayer and The Prayer of Our Savior

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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

+ Closing Hymn No. 559

“Here I Am, Lord”

+ Benediction

Postlude

“Lift Up Your Songs of Praise”

Saint-Saens

Today’s liturgy was written by Rev. Dr. Chad Abbott, Conference Minister for the Indiana Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ and resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.
<https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/lent-4a-march-19/>

We commit ourselves...

to worship God

to form faithful followers of Jesus

and to care for our wider community.

We care as Christ cares.



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Zion United Church of Christ

Union, Missouri