

Welcome to
WILSON MEMORIAL UNION CHURCH
A Member Congregation, International Council of Community Churches



“River of Grace” by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

February 18, 2024

First Sunday in Lent

10:00 a.m.

7 Valley Road, Watchung, NJ

Phone: (908) 755-5020

Website: www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org

Email: admin@wilsonmemorialchurch.org

FEBRUARY 18, 2024

First Sunday in Lent

10:00 AM



Please rise as you are able, in body or in spirit
Bold print indicates a unison reading.

PRELUDE

Various Melodies

Ricky Francese

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

We light this Candle this morning as a light to guide our Lenten journey.



HYMN MEDLEY

Bless That Wonderful Name/ There is Power/ When the Saints Go Marching

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Michael Droege

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist, Carolyn Musacchio

Come in.

Feel your feet on the floor.

Settle your worries.

Take a deep breath.

Dust the cobwebs from your ears. Relax the tension in your jaw,

for Christ is here.

God never stops seeking us.

We have been found.

Let us find God in return.

Let us worship the God of deep waters. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Creator God,

You hear everything. You hear the rush of the wind through the trees. You hear a baby's first cry. You hear the crickets chirping, our silent prayers, and laughter around tables. You hear it all! We don't need that same capacity, but we do need to hear your Word, O God, for we cannot live on bread alone. So today we pray: give us the ability to truly listen. Give us the ability to listen with our hearts, and may the truths revealed today change us. With hearts full of gratitude, we pray. Amen.

SONG

Promises



PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

(All who wish are invited to participate verbally in our prayer of reconciliation.)

Loving God, You call us by name. You join us in the deep waters of life. You invite us to drop our nets and follow you, and yet, more often than we'd like to admit, we are like Peter. Over and over again, we stand slack jawed and surprised to find you in our midst.

Forgive us for drowning out your voice with our own.

Forgive us for assuming that we can tackle deep waters by ourselves.

Forgive us for forgetting that you will never stop climbing into our boat.

Turn our hearts, our minds, and our spirits toward you, for you are the Lord our God, and it is in your name that we pray. Amen.



ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: Peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

CONTEMPORARY TESTIMONY

written by: Rev. Sarah Speed

All this time

I put my headphones in.

I walk quickly.

I look toward the ground.

I create one million barriers of independence,

but *still* God seeks after me.

God leans a rainbow over the sky.

God sends sun after the rain.

God blankets the earth with wildflowers. God allows music to carry
and laughter to rise,

all so that I might notice.

And when I do notice,

the unfurling that begins in my soul

is slow and holy and burning.

I am not alone.

God has been chasing after me all this time.

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

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 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

 **DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
praise him all creatures here below; praise him above, you heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

 **PRAYER OF GRATITUDE****SCRIPTURE**

Luke 5:1-11

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.”

When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’s knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” For he and all who were with him were astounded at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

 **GLORIA PATRI**

**Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.**

SERMON

“Careful Who Gets in Your Boat”

Rev. Dr. Michael Droege

ANTHEM

Revelations 19

 **BENEDICTION**

I believe in a God of abundance—

**a God who sees possibilities where I cannot,
and who holds onto hope when I am at the end of my rope.**

I believe in a God who comforts—

**a God who says, “Do not be afraid;”
a God who joins me in life’s deep waters.**

I believe in a God who invites—

**a God who says, “Follow me,”
and, “You will be fishers of people.”**

I believe in a God who seeks after me relentlessly and persistently—

**a God of second chances and boundless mercy; a God who calls us by name.
We believe.**

Help our unbelief.

In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Various Melodies

Ricky Francese

How to Support the Work of Wilson Memorial Church

In Service: You are invited to place your offerings in the plate at the back of the Sanctuary.

By Mail: Gifts can be sent to the office at:
7 Valley Road
Watchung, NJ 07069

Online: Use our secure giving portal by clicking the “Giving” link on our website; www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org

Text-to-Give: Text WILSONCHURCH to (908) 460-8818 and follow the setup prompts for your first time. Once set up, you can simply text the gift amount to the above number.

Follow us on social media @mywilsonchurch

How to reach Pastor Michael: You can schedule an appointment online at calendly.com/michaeldroege or call the office for assistance at (908) 755-5020. In any kind of crisis, you can always call Pastor Michael at (908) 755-5589

Rev. Dr. Michael Droege, Pastor
Timothy Walton, Director of Music & Worship Arts
Ricky Francese, Accompanist
Jacob Feldman, A/V Specialist
Tina Kelly, Administrator
Harold Kreis, Sexton
The Rev. Barbara Peters, Pastor Emerita
Lisa Renaud, Frippery (908)625-5042

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

For Prayer: For peace • Joe Higgins • The family of Betty Jean Aldrich

Soup Supper Sundays: Feb. 25, March 3, 10, 17 @ 4:30 in Fisher Hall.

If you are able to attend the soup suppers, please consider a food pantry donation for the Blue Bin and Star Fish.

Open Sanctuary during Lent: Tuesdays from 8:30am -1pm
Feb 20, 27 March 5, 12, 19

Boy Scout Sunday: On Sunday, Feb.25th, the boy scouts will join us in Worship and provide a lovely brunch for all the Wilson members.

Planning meeting: Come and be. Part of planning the wonderful events Wilson will be offering this year! Thursday, Feb. 22nd at 6:30 pm.

WoW: Next meeting is March 7th at 11:30 am. Wow is planning to meet at a showing of the new “Cabrini” movie on March 8th in honor of International Women’s Day.

Wilson University is here!

A new semester of education is available.

Find the full course list online or in the narthex.