

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



“Beseeching” by Hannah Garrity

March 10, 2024

Fourth Sunday in Lent

10:00 a.m.

7 Valley Road, Watchung, NJ

Phone: (908) 755-5020

Website: www.wilsonmemorialchurch.org

Email: admin@wilsonmemorialchurch.org

MARCH 10, 2024

Fourth 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

The Candle this morning shines to remind us of God's guidance into a new season.



HYMN #258

At the Cross

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Michael Droege

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist, Dick Hill

On our worst days,

God is good.

On our best days,

God is good.

When life is consistent,

God is good.

And when life turns on its head,

God is good.

Day and night, Monday through Sunday,

God is good. God is here. God is love.

Hold tight to that good news. Let us worship God!

OPENING PRAYER

Listening God, if we could attach ourselves to you, we would. We would scribble your words of love onto our tender hearts. We would weave your good news into the fiber of our being. We would bind ourselves to you, but instead, we wander. Instead of attaching ourselves to you, we find ourselves swept up in the business of the day. Like a seesaw of faithfulness, we move back and forth, up and down, constantly trying to find you in the midst of it all.

So, speak clearly to us now. Quiet the distractions long enough for us to affix ourselves to your good news. We are listening.

We are hungry.

We are hopeful.

Amen.

HYMN #384

Rock of Ages



PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

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

Holy God, some days, we are quick to declare your goodness. Like Peter, we see you in our midst and we are confident in our faith. Other days, we are distracted and uncertain, desperate for answers.

Forgive us for losing sight of you.

Some days we are quick to trust your blessings—trusting that we are called, that we can make a difference. Other days, our praise falls silent and doubt creeps in.

Forgive us for losing sight of ourselves.

We know that fear and doubt are part of the journey of faith. But for the days when we are far from you and far from ourselves, we ask for your tender grace. Pull us closer toward you. Remind us of the mountaintop moments of our faith. 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

Open Hands

We are born with the ability
to wrap our fingers around another,
to hold tight to what we know.

Maybe that's where the instinct comes from— this clinging,
this sinking,
this holding on.

Maybe that's why Peter cries, "Never!"
when Jesus must leave.

From the very beginning
we've known how to hold tight.

So I pray:
open up my hands.

Uncurl my fingers
one by one.

Loosen the grip
that I hold unyielding.

Remind me that birds must fly
and children must grow
and leaves must fall.

And even though
we are born with the ability
to hold tight,
we can learn how to love
with open hands

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

CONGREGATIONAL ANTHEM

Just as I am



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

Matthew 16:21-23

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me, for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

 **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

Holding on too Tight

Rev. Dr. Michael Droege

ANTHEM

Holy Water

 **BENEDICTION**

Jesus asked the disciples, “But what about you? Who do you say that I am?”
Church, what do you say?

**Jesus is a hand reaching out in the storm,
the voice of truth spoken over us,
and love without walls.**

**Jesus is justice for the weary,
healing for the hurt,
and welcome for the stranger.**

**Jesus is teacher, Messiah, and friend— with me on the mountain
and beside me in the valley.**

**Jesus is a star in the night,
and the love that knows my name.**

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

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

Please consider a food pantry donation for the Blue Bin and Star Fish.

For Prayer: For peace • Joe Higgins • Peter Della Ventura

Palm Sunday: Join us on March 24th for brunch, easter egg hunt and palm crosses after Worship.

Executive Board Meeting: Monday, March 11th at 7pm.

Wilson University Weekly Reflections:

THE THEOLOGY OF GROWING UP with Rev. Dr. Michael Droege

“Thought provoking initial discussion on the current state of “the church” with basic but important exploratory questions we can pose to help shape the future growth and spirituality of our community and beyond.”

Dennis Bakos

“Michael presented some very good questions. Some that were not so easy to answer. I enjoyed the discussion very much.”

Al Ellis



Use the QR code for full course list. There is still time to register!