



4th Sunday of Lent
Getting Through the Dark Places by Looking Up
WHITNEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
March 14, 2021 10:00 a.m.
Rev. Christina Thompson

Make us to know your ways , O Lord;
 teach us your paths.
For all your paths are steadfast love and
 faithfulness. (From Psalm 25)

WELCOME

Welcome to worship at Whitney United Methodist Church. I am Rev. Christina Thompson . We are on a Lenten journey, seeking to know and walk the path of the Lord.

As we continue on this path, we will ponder how we get through the dark places by looking up.

I am so grateful that you have joined us on this journey.

LIGHTING THE CANDLE

We need light for any journey. So, as we begin walking this path with God, I invite you to light your candle knowing that the light of Christ will guide our way.

WHERE WE ARE STARTING FROM

We are a bit more than halfway through the season of Lent--the 40 days before Easter. Lent gives us the space and time to ponder who we are, who God is and our relationship with God. As we worship today will be offered the space to look at where we are starting from, to be reminded of who God is as we move to where God wants us to be.

TIME OF CENTERING

Covenant God, remember us.
Covenant God, teach us your path
Covenant God, make us to know your truth.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

This is the judgment, that the light has
come into the world,
for people loved darkness rather than light
because their deeds were evil.
Let us uncover our sin before the liberating
light of Christ.

Merciful God,
we confess the folly of our sin and the hypocrisy
of our complaints.

We grumble about the evils in our world,
even as we commit injustices and profit through deceit.

We fret about the scarcity of resources
while hoarding earth's goods and cheating the poor.

We protest the problems of our world,
but we do not actively work to address them.

Merciful God,
expose our sins before the light of your grace.

Heal our sin and free us from our foolish ways
that we me know the joy of eternal life in Jesus Christ,
in whose name we pray. Amen.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world
to condemn the world,
but in order that the world might be saved through him.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.

Reprinted by Permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion Year B*.
Copyright 2014

TIME OF SILENCE

EXPLORING WHO GOD IS

Our Opening Song is full of images and descriptions of who God is as well as our desire to follow God.

OPENING SONG

Andy and Svetlana Maddox

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light #206

CCLI Song # 89848 Kathleen Thomerson © 1970, 1975 Celebration
For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI License # 3183399 | Streaming License # 20112113

Verse 1

I want to walk as a child of the light
I want to follow Jesus
God set the stars to give light to the world
The star of my life is Jesus

Chorus

In Him there is no darkness at all
The night and the day are both alike
The Lamb is the light of the city of God
Shine in my heart Lord Jesus

Verse 2

I want to see the brightness of God
I want to look at Jesus
Clear Sun of righteousness shine on my path
And show me the way to the Father

Chorus

Verse 3

I'm looking for the coming of Christ
I want to be with Jesus
When we have run with patience the race
We shall know the joy of Jesus

Chorus

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Kimberly Gardner

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gena Waller

Almighty God,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
open your Word and illumine our darkened world,
that we may see clearly and live faithfully
by the light of your truth in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Reprinted by Permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion Year B*.
Copyright 2014

SCRIPTURE

Gena Waller

John 3:14-21

PASTORAL PRAYER

My fellow travelers on the path,
reconciled to God by the mercy of Christ,
we pray with confidence for the needs of the church and the world.

We pray for the people of this congregation . . .

For those who suffer and those in trouble . . .

For the concerns of our local community . . .

For our nation and the world, its peoples, and its leaders . . .

For the Church universal –its leaders, its members, and its mission.

For the concerns that we lift to you only in the quiet of our hearts

Through Christ you make us a new creation, O God,
for with him we pass from sin to the new life of grace.
Accept our prayers in the warm embrace of your compassion,
and welcome all people to the festive banquet of your table,
where we may rejoice in your love
and celebrate the inheritance you have given to us.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

(Prayer from Vanderbilt Revised Lectionary Website)

Let us pray together the prayer Jesus taught us to pray

LORD'S PRAYER

Rev Dewey Knowles

WHERE GOD IS LEADING US

SERMON

Rev Christina

How We Get Through the Dark Places on the Path

APPLICATION

Questions to ponder

- 1) What do you tend to complain about? What might you really be afraid of?
- 2) How might looking up and seeing Jesus lifted up on the cross help you to find the life that Jesus offers?
- 3) What is the life that Jesus offers you?

Reflection: Even Then, Grace

*But God, who is rich in mercy,
out of the great love with which God loved us,
even when we were dead through our trespasses,
made us alive together with Christ.*

- Ephesians 2.4-5a

Even when we were dead, Paul writes.

Even when we turned away from the One who had created us.

Even when we lived in the grip of what drew our gaze from God.

Even when we were oblivious.

Even when we followed a path fashioned of nothing
but our own desires.

Even when we wandered far and willfully away.

Even when we forgot to look past our own feet and to see
the wonders not of our making.
Even when we failed to stand in awe, to breathe thanks,
to lean into the love that had waited long for us.

Even when, Paul writes.

Even when,
even then:
grace.

~ written by Jan L. Richardson, and posted on **The Painted Prayerbook**. <http://paintedprayerbook.com/>

OFFERING

People of God, let us offer our sacrifice of thanksgiving,
telling of God's deeds with songs of joy.

The ways to give to the church are listed there on your screen.
You can mail a check to the church or give electronically through
our website. Let us now pray of the offerings that will be collected.

Merciful God, we thank you for your wonderful works among
humankind. Accept this offering with the dedication of our
lives and help us be for the world an emblem of your steadfast
love, in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Reprinted by Permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion Year B*.
Copyright 2014

DOXOLOGY

Andy & Svetlana Maddox

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow – UMH #95

CCLI Song # 56204 CCLI License # 3183399 | Streaming License # 20112113
Louis Bourgeois | Thomas Ken © Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain
For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father Son and Holy Ghost **Amen**

May we shout to the north and the south and sing to the east and the
west that God love us all.

CLOSING SONG

Six Ways to Sunday(Band)

Shout to the North

CCLI Song # 1562261 Martin Smith

© 1995 Curious? Music UK (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)

For use solely with the SongSelect® [Terms of Use](#). All rights reserved. www.ccli.com CCLI License # 3183399 |

Streaming License # 20112113

Verse 1

Men of faith rise up and sing
Of the great and glorious King
You are strong when you feel weak
In your brokenness complete

Chorus

Shout to the north and the south
Sing to the east and the west
Jesus is Savior to all
Lord of heaven and earth

Verse 2

Rise up women of the truth
Stand and sing to broken hearts
Who can know the healing pow'r
Of our awesome King of love

Verse 3

Rise up church with broken wings
Fill this place with songs again
Of our God who reigns on high
By His grace again we'll fly

Bridge

We've been through fire
We've been through rain
We've been refined
By the pow'r of His name

We've fallen deeper
In love with You
You've burned
The truth on our lips

Ending

Lord of heaven and earth (X3)

GOING OUT INTO THE WORLD TO APPLY WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

SENDING FORTH

Church, may we lift up our heads to be reminded that Christ is with us and has freely given us life. May we go into the world to live into that life that Christ offers us now.

PASSING THE PEACE

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you
And also with you

INVITATION TO NEXT WEEK

I invite you to join us next week on the 5th Sunday of Lent as we explore the promises that we encounter on the path.

After worship, you are invited to join us for fellowship time on Zoom. The link to join us is in the email you received with the links to this service. There are also instructions on this screen. We will gather about 10:45

You are also invited to join us on our Facebook Group Whitney United Methodist church group to chat about the service. You can join the conversation anytime.

Our radio program Reach Out and Trust broadcasts on KBXL 94.1 FM on Sunday morning at 7:30 am and 11:30 am. One of my recent sermons will be broadcast on that program.

May God be with us until we meet again