



Worship Bulletin **March 5, 2025 | 7:30 PM**

On this Ash Wednesday, we join Jesus as he “sets his face toward Jerusalem.” As Jesus makes his way toward Jerusalem, he is approached by people from local towns who promise to follow him. Jesus’ response is harsh, but urgent. He needs real commitment. He needs disciples who are willing to be rejected and persecuted—and who will embody hope, compassion, and peace along the way. It becomes apparent that these potential disciples aren’t quite ready for the task at hand. And so, as Lent begins, let us also ask ourselves: are we ready? Are we willing to be transformed? Will our actions reflect our best intentions?

Gathering Music | *Prelude in G* | J. S. Bach | Christopher Simon, mandolin

Welcome | Rev. SeongJae Jo

Call to Worship | Rev. SeongJae Jo

If you have days when you feel a little bit lost and a little bit found,
then you are in the right place.

If you have days when you are desperate for rest and eager to grow,
then you are in the right place.

If you have days when your prayers could be both shouts and silence,
then you are in the right place.

God meets us here, in the messy middle of our lives.

So may we bring our full selves into this service and into this season.

With God’s help, may it be so.

Let us worship our all-loving God.

Opening Hymn | *I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry* | FWS 2051 | John Ylvisaker
| led by Melissa Chavez

**[V.1] I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.**

**[V.2] I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;
In a blaze of light you wandered off to find where demons dwell.**

**[V.3] When you heard the wonder of the Word I was there to cheer you on;
You were raised to praise the living Lord, to whom you now belong.**

**[V.4] If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as
one, I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk 'till rising sun.**

**[V.5] In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.**

**[V.6] When the evening gently closes in, and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.**

**[V.7] I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.**

A Poem for Ash Wednesday | Rev. Pam Bentley and Rev. SeongJae Jo

It's one thing to speak of love.

It's another to hold a newborn in your arms, to sing someone to sleep,
to lean down and listen for their breathing.

It's one thing to speak of faith.

It's another to press your forehead to the floor, to cry out in prayer,
to ask the hard questions and still thank God for the meal.

It's one thing to speak of the Divine.

It's another to walk under a tunnel of wisteria, to stand barefoot at the edge
of the sea, to hear the birds sing as the sun returns and whisper,

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

It's one thing and another, so I pray,

Give me both, please. Show me both, please.

Prayer and Confession | Rev. Pam Bentley

Lent is a season that invites us to be intentional.
Lent asks us, how will you go deeper these next six weeks?
How will you grow closer to God and your neighbor?
What will you do to strengthen your faith?
Much like Christ, Lent invites us to go deeper.
Despite our best efforts,
that soul-tending work is often easier said than done.
However, instead of entering this season already feeling behind,
let us enter this season with honesty.
Let us enter this season aware of our hopes, and aware of the challenges.
Let us enter this season wrapped in God's grace.
Friends, join me in speaking honestly to God.
Join me in receiving mercy. Let us pray:

**Jesus said, "Follow me."
And I said, let me get ready. Jesus said, "Follow me."
And I said, just one minute! Jesus said, "Follow me."
And I said, I'll be there soon!
The invitation is simple, but the work is hard.
Jesus, forgive my delay. I want to follow you.
Turn my intentions into actions. Show me the way.
Amen.**

Lent asks,
"How will you go deeper? How will you follow Christ?"
Regardless of what that journey looks like for us,
regardless of what today, tomorrow, or the next day brings,
we are not alone.
We are seen and loved by God.
We are held in grace.

Thanks be to God for a love like that.

Passing of the Peace | Rev. Pam Bentley

Prayer for Illumination | Rev. SeongJae Jo

Holy God, Your invitation is simple. You lean in close. You say our name. With joy in your voice, you invite us to follow. But the noise of this world is distracting, and we are afraid, so we get stuck somewhere between our head and our heart. We get stuck somewhere between our intent and our action. So today, we pray speak to us again. Tell us the story. Invite us to follow. Speak once more of good news that will not leave us alone. Speak to us again, for we are listening. Amen.

Scripture Reading | Luke 9:51-62 NRSVUE | Rev. SeongJae Jo

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way, they entered a village of the Samaritans to prepare for his arrival, but they did not receive him because his face was set toward Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." And Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

This is the word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Message | Rev. SeongJae Jo

Affirmation of Faith | Rev. Pam Bentley

**We believe in Jesus Christ,
who said to ordinary people, "Follow me,"
and with his love, changed the world.
We believe in the Holy Spirit
who tethers us to all of creation,
nudging us toward deeper and more intentional faith.
And we believe in the Creator
who brings the sun over the horizon each morning,
allowing every day to be a new beginning.
So with this new day,
with Jesus' invitation ringing in our ears,
and the Holy Spirit's tethering love,
we realign our hopes with our words,
our dreams with our prayers,
our intentions with our actions.
Jesus, we believe. Guide our feet. Amen.**

Imposition of Ashes | Rev. Pam Bentley and Rev. SeongJae Jo

Music during Imposition of Ashes | *Kyrie* | by Andrea Klouse | Wesley Choir

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer | Rev. Pam Bentley

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass
against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine
is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Closing Song | *Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling* | UMH 348 | led by Melissa Chavez and Christopher Simon

**[V.1] Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
calling for you and for me;
see, on the portals he's waiting and watching,
watching for you and for me.**

Refrain:

**Come home, come home; you who are weary come home;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, O sinner, come home!**

**[V.2] Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,
mercies for you and for me? [Refrain]**

**[V.3] Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing,
passing from you and from me;
shadows are gathering, deathbeds are coming,
coming for you and for me. [Refrain]**

**[V.4] O for the wonderful love he has promised,
promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,
pardon for you and for me. [Refrain]**

Benediction | SeongJae Jo

Leaving Music | Meditation on BALM IN GILEAD | arr. Christopher Simon |
Christopher Simon, organ

Please leave silently during the leaving music.

Find this week's church news at herndonumc.org select "**Weekly eNews**" from the "**News**" menu. Information about this season is also available from herndonumc.org/lent-easter and the newsletter, available soon.