

**MARCH 29, 2020**  
**5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN LENT**

**FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**  
WEST WAYNE STREET



**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE** Amazing Grace

setting by Dale Wood

**GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

We have been in the wilderness—

**Discerning and working, seeking and dreaming.**

We have been in the wilderness—

**Grieving and wondering, praying and hoping.**

We have been in the wilderness—

**Longing and running, creating and waiting.**

We have been in the wilderness, but we have not been alone; for God walks with us, every step of the way.

**So let us worship the God of our darkest nights and our brightest days.**

Let us worship the Holy God.

**SPECIAL MUSIC** All My Trials

American Folk Song, arr. Ruth Elaine Schram

*Jennifer Poiry, Soprano, Vaughn Roste, piano*

If religion was a thing that money could buy,  
The rich would live and the poor would die.

All my trials, Lord, soon be over.  
Too late my brothers! Too late, but never mind.  
All my trials, Lord, soon be over.

Oh, I have a little book that sets me free!  
My Bible, it spells “liberty,”

All my trials, Lord, soon be over.  
Too late my brothers! Too late, but never mind.  
All my trials, Lord, soon be over.

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

In the season of Lent we are invited to consider how we live as followers of Christ – to look at our decisions and our actions straight on, to hold them up to the example of Christ, and to make amends. In this time of silence, and in our prayer together, let us look at our lives. We pray, first in silence.

*\*SILENT PRAYER*

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Gracious God, you invite us to plant a garden of love and harmony, but we grow weeds of prejudice and hatred. You invite us to sow joy and gratitude, but we scatter seeds of greed and envy. You call us to tend the soil of fear and denial, but instead we close our eyes and let the earth suffer. Forgive us. Clear our hearts. Breathe life into our weary bones and grant us a fresh start. Gratefully we pray, Amen.**

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Friends, hear the Good News: God so loved the world that God sent Jesus to us, not to condemn the world but in order that we might be saved, healed, and forgiven through him.

**Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.**

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

## HEARING THE WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

### NEW TESTAMENT READING

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

John 11:1-45, p. 104-105 (NRSV)

### SERMON

*Dwelling in the Tomb?*

Rev. Dr. Anne B. Epling

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a wilderness God—

**Who breathed life into dust, turned seeds into flowers, and flooded the sky with stars.**

We believe in a wilderness God—

**Who went hungry in the desert, walked barefoot on the water, and taught from the mountainside.**

We believe in a wilderness God—

**Whose love could be described as nothing short of wild.**

So with confidence and hope, we long to follow our wilderness God who walks with people on their darkest nights,

**Who sings hope into places of grief, isolation, and suffering, and who exists in the form of untamed joy, wildfire love, and impossible hope. Step by step, may it be so. Amen.**

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

**ANTHEM** Children of the Heavenly Father

Karolina Sandell Berg, arr. Eric Nelson

*Jennifer Poiry, Cassandra Petrie, and Srikanth Sriramula, soloists*

*Vaughn Roste, accompanist*

Children of the heav'nly Father

Safely in His bosom gather;

Nestling bird nor star in heaven

Such a refuge e'er was given.

God His own doth tend and nourish;

In His holy courts they flourish;

From all evil things He spares them;

In His mighty arms He bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever

From the Lord His children sever;

Unto them His grace He showeth,

And their sorrows all He knoweth.

Praise the Lord in joyful numbers:

Your Protector never slumbers;

At the will of your Defender

Every foe then must surrender.

No more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home.

Children of the heav'nly Father

Safely in His bosom gather;

Nestling bird nor star in heaven

Such a refuge e'er was given.

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE 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.

**SENDING**

**CHORAL BENEDICTION** The Lord Bless You and Keep You

Peter Lutkin

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord lift His countenance upon you; and give you peace, the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. Amen.

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** Great Is Thy Faithfulness

setting by David Cherwien

*Thank you for joining us today, we welcome you to join us again via live stream next Sunday, April 5.*

*We invite you to mail in pledges and offerings to  
First Presbyterian Church 300 W. Wayne Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802,  
or go online and give at [www.firstpresfortwayne.org](http://www.firstpresfortwayne.org),  
where you can also find update information on our events.*

***Assisting with Worship:***

Rev. Anne B. Epling, pastor/head of staff  
Rev. Ann Pitman, parish associate for pastoral care  
Dr. Vaughn Roste, interim choral director  
Kathryn A. Miller, organist

***Special Music Notes:***

*The origins of this song remain shrouded in mystery: as best as anyone can reconstruct it, it seems to have originated in pre-Civil War America, after which it emigrated to the Bahamas and was forgotten in America. No record of its publication exists prior to Bob's Gibson's (1931-1996) 1956 debut recording "Offbeat Folksongs." The piece has since been recorded by many artists, including Harry Belafonte, Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, Peter, Paul and Mary, and Paul McCartney. Other arrangements of this piece include many more verses, some of which refer to crossing the River Jordan as an allegory for death, for example, locating this piece squarely within the tradition of the African-American spiritual.*

***Anthem notes:***

*Karolina W. Sandell-Berg (1832-1903) published this poem in 1855 in the original Swedish – she was only 23 at the time. It did not explode in popularity, however, until it was translated into English by Ernst W. Olson in 1925. Since then it has appeared in at least 42 different hymnals, primarily in Lutheran and United Methodist editions. Eric Nelson's delicate arrangement, so well crafted that one can notice a single note out of place, quotes a line by the men near the end from the hymn "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" by Issac Watts, written in 1719.*