

**March 31, 2019 8:30 & 10:45**

**The Fourth Sunday in Lent**

Jesus begins his famous Parable of the Prodigal Son with the words, “*there once was a man who had two sons.”* These two sons represent two ways of living – the way of “self-discovery” (younger brother), and the way of “moral conformity” (elder brother). Both ways lead to spiritual disaster, and God calls both sons to return home.

**WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME …**

**Gathering Music Hymnal 133 Leaning on the everlasting arms** (seated) *Showalter*

**Greeting**

Leader: You who are righteous, rejoice in the Lord and be glad!

**People: All you whose hearts are right, sing out in joy!**  *Psalm 32:11 (CEV)*

**Announcements**

**Choral Introit**  10:45 *Hart Morris*

Be still and know, know that I am God.

 Know that I am the Lord thy God.

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**Call to Worship**

Leader: Shout out to God, all the earth! Break into joyful songs to the one true God! Sing of the glory due God’s name, and offer the most magnificent praises!

**People: All Your works are wonderful! The entire earth bows down to worship You, singing songs of praise and glory to Your name.**

Leader: Let us praise the One who gives us life and keeps us safe; who watches over us, and keeps our feet from stumbling.

**People: Amen. Let us worship God.**

*Based on Psalm 66*

**… TO GIVE PRAISE TO GOD …**

**Hymnal 579 Lord God, your love has called us here** (standing) *Carey’s (Surrey)*

**Opening Prayer (in unison)**

**Gracious and loving God, we have come to this place to be your faithful disciples. On this Lenten journey, help us to grow in our faith and in our relationship with you. Open our hearts to your love. Open our eyes to the light of your Son. Open our hands to the work of your Holy Spirit. Help us to share your grace and to follow the ways that lead to new life. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.**

**Silent Prayer**

**Worship & Song 3124 How shall I come before the Lord** (stanza 1, standing)*O Waly Waly* **How shall I come before the Lord and bow myself with heart outpoured?**

 **And shall I come with offering? What shall I give? What shall I bring?**

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 **… TO CELEBRATE THE FAMILY OF FAITH …**

**Open Our Hearts March Emphasis** Gifts UMCOR Sunday Video

 **Open our lives and freely give Silently now we wait for thee**

**So that your loved ones freely live. Ready our God your will to see**

**And as our gifts spread through all the Earth Open our lives, illumine us**

**May the receivers gain new birth. Spirit divine.**

**The Sign of Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

**Gathering Song**

 **This, this is where children belong,**

 **Welcomed as part of the worshiping throng.**

 **Water, God’s Word, bread and cup, prayer and song:**

 **This is where children belong.** WORDS AND MUSIC: James Ritchie ©1999 Abingdon Press

**Message for Young Disciples** Rev. Thomas Q. Strandburg

 (All children are invited. Please sing as children come forward.)

After the children’s message at the 10:45 service, children ages 3 - 3rd grade may attend **Kids Praise** in the Welcome Center. Children will be escorted to and from Kids Praise by teachers. They will return to the Sanctuary near the end of the service, and parents may meet them.

**Hymnal 115 How like a gentle spirit** (seated)*Sursum corda*

**… TO HEAR GOD’S WORD PROCLAIMED …**

Scripture Reading 8:30 Scott Miller 10:45 Bob Mallery

**A Lesson from the New Testament**

 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 The ministry of reconciliation

**Response**

 Leader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

 **People: Thanks be to God**.

**Pastoral Prayer**

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

**Good News Acclamation:** (standing) *James J. Chepponis*

Cantor sings first: **Praise and honor to you. Praise and honor to you.**

 **Praise and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

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Scripture Reading

**A Lesson from the Gospel**

 Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 Parable of the Prodigal Son

**Response**

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**.

**… TO OFFER OUR GIFTS AND TO DEDICATE OUR LIVES …**

**Offertory Anthem** 10:45 *text Gracia Grindal Welsh tune adapt. Thomas Keesecker*

 We sing to you, O God, the Rock who gave us birth,

 let our rejoicing sing your name in all the earth.

 To you, O God, let songs be raised in joyful hymns, our feast of praise.

 We wandered far from home out in a desert land,

 you shielded with you love our fearful pilgrim band.

 You kept us safe within your arms and sheltered us against the storm.

 You bear us through the world, an eagle to its young;

 you rise up on your wings and bear us toward the sun.

 We ride the vaults of light and air and trust in your unfailing care.

 O God, eternal God, we hide within your wings,

 the ever lasting arms to whom our praises ring.

 Your word is true, your way is just, you are the God in whom we trust.

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**Hymnal 95 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow** (standing) *Old 100th* **Praise God, from whom all blessings flow**

 **praise God, all creatures here below;**

 **praise God above, ye heavenly host;**

 **praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Sermon**  “The Prodigal God” Rev. Thomas Q. Strandburg

**The Apostles’ Creed**

**I believe** in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe** in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe** in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen. \**The Apostles’ Creed (ecumenical version)*

**… TO GO REJOICING IN GOD’S NAME!**

**Hymnal 150 God, who stretched the spangled heavens** (stanzas 1-3, standing) *Holy Manna*

**Benediction**

**Hymnal 150 God, who stretched the spangled heavens** (stanza 4, standing) *Holy Manna*

**Today’s Services**

**The flowers on the altar** are given in loving memory of our friend Elizabeth Yost by Cindy and Kathleen.

**The flowers in the Chancel** are given in honor of the 15th anniversary of DIA (Dames in Action) and their faithful support of missions to the congregation.

**Special music for the 10:45 service** is provided by the Chancel Choir with pianist Cori DeLuca, a member of the church who teaches piano in the area.

**Acolytes** Abigail and Rachael Nagel **Cross Bearer** Tre Nagel

**Greeters 8:30** Fran Travis **10:45** Martha Banyas

**Worship options for children** We encourage children to participate in the **Children’s Sermon** at both services, and in **Kids Praise** during the 10:45 service. **Nursery services** are offered in Room 204 of the Education Building. Ask ushers or greeters and follow signs for direction.

**Today’s Scriptures**

**2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. 17So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 19that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 20So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

15Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. 2And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, ‘This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.’

3 So he told them this parable:

**The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother**

11 Then Jesus said, ‘There was a man who had two sons. 12The younger of them said to his father, “Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.” So he divided his property between them. 13A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. 14When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. 17But when he came to himself he said, “How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’ ” 20So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21Then the son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” 22But the father said to his slaves, “Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!” And they began to celebrate.

25 ‘Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. 27He replied, “Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.” 28Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29But he answered his father, “Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.30But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!” 31Then the father said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.” ’

**Keep in Prayer**

**Convalescing in Care Facilities**

Bonnie Amos, Providence Point

Ed Clarke, Asbury Place

John Katshir, Asbury Heights

Pat Seitz, Concordia

Olivia Woods, Baptist Manor

David Lewis, Jefferson Rehabilitation

**Convalescing at Home**

Bishop George Bashore, Jean Boyer,

Mary Caldwell, John Dean,

Joseph Festor, Leon Grant, Jr.,

Susan Lichtenfels, George Lindow,

Sara Mercer, Diane Shaw, Jinny

Sheppard, Ruth Seip, Carol Van Sickle,

Stephanie Lowe

**In the Military**

Jason Boyer, SPC Natalie Brown,

**Maj. Zachary Allen Finch, USMC,**James Iantelli, 1st Lt. Jaskiewicz,
S. Sgt. Keith Kimmell,

Sgt. Brendan Lamport,
Sgt. Matthew McConahan, Thomas Orda,
David Poncel, Sgt. Steven Reitz,
Capt. Scott B. Rushe, Pastor Rick Townes,
Maj. Azizi Wesmiller,

Maj. Matthew C. Wesmiller,
Sgt. Keith Scott Winkowski,

Sgt Michael Zimmerman

**Work with the Children of Weekday Ministries**

Weekday Ministries is looking for summer help. The work is from 25 to 40 hours per week, May 28 to Labor Day, if possible**.** Experience is helpful**. Please contact Mettelise Ziegler at 412-531-5790 or email** **mziegler@mlumc.org** **today for more information!**

**Camp AIM Counselors Needed**

**Camp AIM,** a YMCA sponsored camp for special needs children, is in need of counselors to work with the kids and have fun this summer! The counselor job is a paid position. The camp welcomes college students and older high school students as well as others who have experience or a strong desire to work with special needs children. Camp Aim is in session for 6 weeks, from June 10, through July 19 , 5 days a week from 8:30 am—2 pm. It is located at Carnegie Elementary School in Carnegie. Share your talents and love of children (and add to your references!) Join us this summer!

**Contact Paulette Colonna for more information, 412-628-1121.**

**CALENDAR – SUNDAY, MARCH 31 THRU SATURDAY, APRIL 6**

**SUNDAY 3/31**

8:30 am Worship Sanner Chapel

 9 am High School Sunday School Asbury Kitchen

 9:30 am Sunday School for All Ages/Coffee Café Various/Brookline Parlor

 10:45 am Worship Sanctuary

 11:50 am Youth Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

 4 pm Youth Group Pretzel Making Asbury Kitchen

 5 pm Youth Group Asbury

 7 pm Corner Stories Welcome Center

 7 pm Troop 23 Leadership Meeting Wesley

**MONDAY 4/1**

6:30 pm Annual Conference-Prayer Initiative Asbury

 7 pm Chapel Bells Rehearsal Bell Room

 7 pm Council Meeting Wesley

**TUESDAY 4/2**

 11 am Staff Meeting Welcome Center

6 pm Terrific Tuesday Asbury

 7 pm Boy Scout Meeting Wesley/107

 7:15 pm Zwickau Meeting Library

**WEDNESDAY 4/3**

 7:30 am Northside Lunch Prep Asbury Kitchen

**THURSDAY 4/4**

 8:30 Northside Lunch Prep Asbury Kitchen

 6:30 pm Promise Bells Rehearsal Bell Room

 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal Choir Room