

**March 8, 2020 8:30 & 10:45**

**The Second Sunday in Lent**

Real fasting isn’t about putting on a religious show or losing a few pounds. It’s about aligning ourselves with God and God’s purposes. Real fasting helps us to recognize our own needs and the needs of others, turning us toward the things that matter to God. It’s not about merely abstaining from food but sharing it with the hungry, providing hospitality to the poor, clothing the naked, and not neglecting the needs of one’s neighbors (v. 7).

**WE GATHER IN GOD’S NAME …**

\*Asterisk indicates to rise in body or spirit

**Gathering Music** **Hymnal 452 My faith looks up to thee** *Olivet*

**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**

\*10:45 **Introit**  John 3: 16 *Karle Erickson*

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,

 so that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

**\*Call to Worship**

Leader: Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the Lord!

**People: God has blessed us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!**

Leader: Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

**People: Let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts;**

Leader: Let them return to the Lord.

**People: Let them return to the Lord. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

 **… TO GIVE PRAISE TO GOD …**

\* **Hymnal 103 Immortal, invisible, God only wise** *St. Denio*

**\*Opening Prayer (in unison)**

**Almighty and everlasting God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
you created us for yourself,
so that our hearts are restless until they find rest in you.**

**Grant to us such piety of heart and strength of purpose
that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing your will,
and no weakness from doing it.**

**In your light may we see life clearly
and in your service find perfect freedom;**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Silent Prayer**

\***Worship & Song 3119 Take, O take me** *Take, O take*

 **Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;**

 **set your seal upon my heart and live in me.**

John Bell © 1995 The Iona Community, admin. GIA Publications Inc.

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

**\*The Sign of Peace** *Please pass the peace to your neighbors as a sign of reconciliation and love.*

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

 **People: And also with you.**

10:45 Gathering Song *James Ritchie*

 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. James Ritchie ©1999 Abingdon Press

10:45 **Message for Young Disciples**

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.

**Hymnal 142 If thou but suffer God to guide thee** *Wer nur den lieben Gott*

**… TO HEAR GOD’S WORD PROCLAIMED …**

Scripture Reading 8:30 Liz DiPietro 10:45 VeraJane Cornes

**A Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures**

 Isaiah 58:1-8 Fasting from injustice

**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:**             *James J. Chepponis*

  **Praise and honor to you. Praise and honor to you.**

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

\*Scripture Reading

**A Lesson from the Gospels**

 John 3:1-17 Jesus and Nicodemus

**Response**

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**.

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

10:45 **Offertory anthem** *English folk tune, arr. Linda Cable Shute*

 Lord, who throughout these forty days for us didst fast and pray,

 teach us with thee to mourn our sins, and close by thee to stay.

 As thou didst hunger bear and thirst, so teach us, gracious Lord,

 to die to self, and chiefly live by thy most holy word.

 And through these days of penitence, and through thy Passiontide,

 yea, evermore, in life and death, Jesus! with us abide.

\***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** “God’s Fasting Plan” 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 369 Blessed Assurance** (stanzas 1-2)*Assurance*

\***Benediction**

\***Hymnal 369 Blessed Assurance** (stanza 3)*Assurance*

**Today’s Services**

**The flowers on the altar** are given by Ruth Ann and John Esaias in honor of their twin great nephews, Andrew and Thomas Rankins, who are being baptized today in the Larchmont Avenue Presbyterian Church, Larchmont, NY.

**The flowers in the chancel** are given in loving memory of Neil Birks, a loving husband, father, and grandfather.

**Greeters 8:30** Joe Catalano **10:45** Jane Casey

**Special Music at 10:45** is provided by the Chancel Choir, conducted by Ryan A. Keeling.

**Acolytes** Jacob Lowe and Grace Giles **Cross Bearer** Xavier Sanchez

**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**

**Isaiah 58:1-8**

58Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. 2Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.

3“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. 4Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. 5Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? 6Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? 7Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

8Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

**John 3:1-17**

3Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” 3Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 4Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” 5Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 8The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 11“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. 12If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 16“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. 17“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.

**Podcasts of Sunday Sermons**  Catch up on messages from MLUMC with a podcast of Pastor Tom’s and others’ Sunday sermons. Sermons can be found at http://mlumc.buzzsprout.com or navigate to the site from the link on our webpage, [www.mlumc.org](http://www.mlumc.org). Sermons also will be posted to iTunes. Full recordings of the service are available upon request.

**Honor or remember a loved one with a flower donation.** The flowers that grace the sanctuary each week are generously donated by our church family members. This is a great way to honor or memorialize a special person, event, or milestone in your personal life or in the life of the church. If you are interested in donating flowers on a particular Sunday, contact Lizzie Diller , 412-860-3614. The cost is $33 for the altar, narthex, or columbarium, and $66 for the chancel.

**Interested in Church Membership? Questions about *The Gathering?*** The church is organizing its next new members’ orientation class. If interested, please send an email to Pastor Strandburg at tstrandburg@mlumc.org .

Questions about our new service, ***The Gathering?*** Contact Pastor Scott Miller at smiller@mlumc.org

**Keep in Prayer**

**Convalescing in Care Facilities**

Bonnie Amos, Providence Point

Ed Clarke, Asbury Heights

May Frederick, Baptist Home

John Katshir, Asbury Heights

Woody Kimmel, Providence Point

Pat Seitz, Concordia

Doris Trimble, Providence Point

Olivia Woods, Baptist Manor

Anne Hoffman, Friendship Village

Dave Lewis, Manor Care Whitehall

**Convalescing at Home**

Bishop George Bashore,

Jean Boyer, Mary Caldwell,

Joseph Festor, Ezra Gibson,

 Steve Howard, Susan Lichtenfels,

George Lindow, Carol Van Sickle,

 Arlene Stewart, Peyton Wisterman

**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,

Matt Lewis, USMC,

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

**CALENDAR – SUNDAY, MARCH 8 THRU SATURDAY, MARCH 14**

**SUNDAY 3/8**

8:30 am Worship Sanner Chapel

 8:30 am The Gathering Asbury

 9:30 am Sunday School Various

 10:45 am Worship Sanctuary

 10:45 am Kids Praise Welcome Center

 11:45 am Youth Choir Choir Room

 5 pm Youth Group Wesley

**MONDAY 3/9**

7 pm Chapel Bells Rehearsal Bell Room

**TUESDAY 3/10**

10 am Weekday Ministries Chapel Saner Chapel

6 pm Terrific Tuesday Asbury

 6:30 Family Promise Board of Directors Library

 7 pm Boy Scout Meeting Wesley

 7 pm Board of Reviews Network

 7 pm Cub Scout Committee Planning Meeting Epworth

**WEDNESDAY 3/11**

 2 pm Small Groups/Gifts of the Spirit(John Esaias) Brookline Parlor

 7 pm Small Groups/Gifts of the Spirit(Clark Remington) Brookline Parlor

 7 pm Finance Committee Meeting Welcome Center

 7 pm Bear, Lion, Webelos, Tiger, & Wolf Den Meetings Various

**THURSDAY 3/12**

9:30 am UMW Executive Board Meeting Network

11 am UMW Meeting Wesley

6:30 pm Promise Bells Rehearsal Bell Room

 7 pm Education Committee Meeting Brookline Parlor

 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

**FRIDAY 3/13**

 7 pm PK870 Arrow of Light Epworth