



## Fourth Sunday of Lent: Transformative Joy

March 10, 2024 10:30 AM

### GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

RINGING THE BELL

WELCOME AND MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

PRELUDE

"When We Are Living"

Emma Lou Diemer

*(\* Indicates that all are invited to stand*

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (1)

When floods rise and fall, **we practice joy.**

When hope surprises us, **we practice joy.**

When God sets people free, **we practice joy.**

When Jesus heals us, **we practice joy.**

When we are called, **we practice joy.**

When we endure, **we practice joy.**

We practice joy together, **and God is with us.**

\*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN “Lift High the Cross” #198 *New Century Hymnal*  
(For full music, the *New Century Hymnal* is located in each pew rack)

**Refrain: Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim;  
Let all adore and praise that sacred name.**

**Come, Christians follow where our Savior trod,  
the Lamb victorious, Christ the Child of God. Refrain**

**Each newborn servant of the Crucified  
bears on the brow the seal of Christ who died. Refrain**

**O Christ, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
your death has brought us life eternally. Refrain**

**Set up your throne, that earth’s despair may cease,  
Beneath the shadow of its healing peace. Refrain**

**So shall our song of triumph ever be: praise to the Crucified for victory. Refrain**

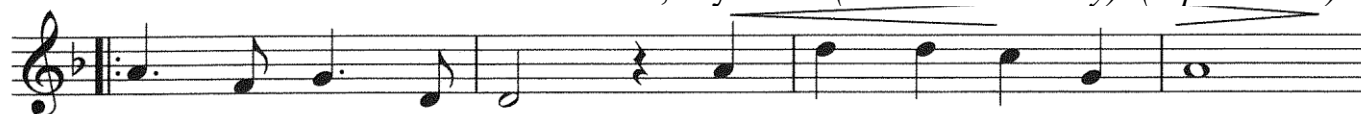
\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION (1)

God of abundant goodness, we confess we sometimes hurt those we love,  
**those far from us, ourselves, and your creation by what we do and by what we neglect.**  
We cling to disappointments, judgments, and failures and forget to enjoy what you give.  
**We ignore the gift of your presence in times both tragic and triumphant.**  
Forgive us for what we have done and for what we have failed to do.  
**Pour out on us the joy of your presence now and forevermore.**  
(*silent confession*)

\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Friends, receive these joyful words:  
We are loved and welcomed as God’s beloved children,  
Made new by God’s grace so that we might share its joy with God’s whole world.  
**Thanks be to God!**

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE “Bless the Lord, My Soul” (*Taizé Community*) (*repeat once*)



Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.



Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

\*PASSING THE PEACE

CONVERSATION WITH OUR CHILDREN

### LISTENING

*God speaks to us in the Word proclaimed.*

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Numbers 21:4-9    Pew Bible p.122

John 3:14-21      Pew Bible p. 864

A Word of God that is still speaking, **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

SILENT RELECTION

HYMN OF REFLECTION “As Moses Raised the Serpent Up” #605 *New Century Hymnal*  
(For full music, the *New Century Hymnal* is located in each pew rack)

**As Moses raised the serpent up, God’s Child is lifted high;  
And all who in that Child believe shall never never die.**

**For God so loved the world that God, all human life to free,  
Gave to the world God’s Child that all might live eternally.**

**That Child was sent into the world not to condemn but save;  
Now through Christ’s name all are redeemed--what wondrous love God gave.**

### RESPONDING

*We respond to God’s Word through our prayers and our gifts.*

LENTEN AFFIRMATION (2)

For each step that we might take, **be our guide, O Lord of life.**

For each load that we might bear, **be our strength, O Lord of life.**

For each mountain we might face, **be our power, O Lord of life.**

For each river that might impede, **be our safety, O Lord of life.**

For each place where we might rest, **be our peace, O Lord of life.**

For each sunrise and sunset, **be our joy, O Lord of life.**

NAMING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER: "Take, O Take Me as I Am" #698 *Glory to God Hymnal*  
(repeat once)

Take, O take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall  
be; set your seal up-on my heart and live in me.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Take, O Take Me as I Am". It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment line on a bass clef staff. The key signature has four flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, D-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: Psalm 107: 1-3, 17-22

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.**

OFFERTORY "Chorale Prelude, on the tune "Bevan" Healey Willan  
(Offer to God and then use this time for prayer. A QR code at the end of the bulletin is available for online giving).

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE "We Give You But Your Own" #785 *New Century Hymnal*  
**We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;  
All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**SENDING**

*With God's blessing, we are sent forth to follow Christ in the world.*

\* COMMISSIONING HYMN "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" #23  
*New Century Hymnal*

*(For full music, the New Century Hymnal is located in each pew rack)*

**There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea;  
There's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty.  
There's no place where earthly sorrows are more felt than in God's heaven;  
There's no place where earthly failings have such kindly judgment given.**

**For the love of God is broader than the measures of our minds;  
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.  
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's word;  
And our lives would show thanksgiving for the goodness of our God.**

\*COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION "A Clare Benediction"                      John Rutter

POSTLUDE                      "Tell Out, My Soul"                      J. Wayne Kerr

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*Thanks to God, we at Hope United Church of Christ have good news to share.  
And we should feel compelled to share it, because there are people in St. Louis  
who are looking for a progressive and loving faith community.  
When we share Hope, we make it easier for them to find us!*

Worship Endnotes:

(1) *The Seed of Joy*: © 2023 Barn Geese Worship. Used by permission

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***March 10, 2024 Worship Leaders***

Pastor: Sarah Fredriksen McCann

Organist: Jim Threlkeld

Liturgist: Paul Conner

Ushers: Representatives from the Environmental Justice Team

YouTube: Andy Karcher

Tech team: Jim Richmann, Jack Jennings, Ron Geisel,

Kristine Wentzien, Kathleen Mees

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*Thanks for your contribution to  
the ministries of Hope UCC!*

***Hope United Church of Christ Statement  
of Welcome and Mission***

No matter where you are on life's journey, you are invited to enter the big red doors of Hope United Church of Christ. We are an open and affirming congregation. We believe that every person is a child of God and all are welcome, regardless of race, economic background, marital status, gender, gender identity(ies) / expression(s), sexual orientation, age, physical or mental ability, nationality or faith history. It is our mission, inspired by God's Holy Spirit, to engage persons in living out the gospel of Jesus Christ. Please come, for all things are ready.

***Adopted by Hope UCC Congregation August 29, 2010***