

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
Pastor Terry McDorman; 630-390-0414; accesstogodshouse@gmail.com
April 6, 2025 **Fifth Sunday of Lent**

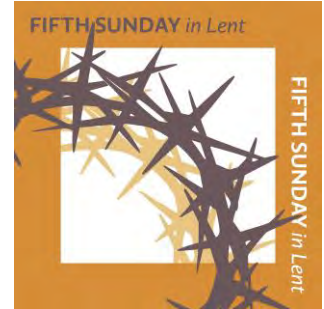
THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Let go of your fears. God has forgiven you and offered to you God's healing love. Accept this free gift, for it is given for you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

calling people both near and far to hear the story of Jesus Christ.

PRELUDE



GATHERING **Words of welcome and announcements**

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

As we resolve to follow the path that Jesus walked, let us offer one another the sustaining power of Christ's peace.

***CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)**

We come to worship, remembering God's goodness that has carried us and sustained us to this present moment.

We remember the days when God covered us in love and filled us with joy.

We come to worship, weary from stress, heavy with grief, and wondering when relief will come.

We long for the days God covered us in love and filled us with joy.

We come to worship to remember and remind one another that God's love has never left us, and God's joy cannot be extinguished.

God, restore us that we know your love and your joy once again.

We come to worship to remember and become the Body of Christ, a community called to restore the world around us.

God, empower us to be your restoration people who fill the world with love, laughter, and abundant life. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** *"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"* **(UMH # 298)**

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Come to this sanctuary, this house, this home, Holy Christ, and let us receive you with lavish welcome. You are the Restorer of our fortunes, the Promise of new life--We pour out our praise to you. Fill this room with your Spirit: the sound of wind, the warmth of flame, the scent of perfume and fill our hearts with your compassion, not just in this time and place, but in all times and in all places, so that as we celebrate the great things you have done for us, we may also embody the love you give to all. Amen.

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Let us lift our prayers in thoughts of praise.

SILENT PRAYER

Let us share our doubts with God.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (all)

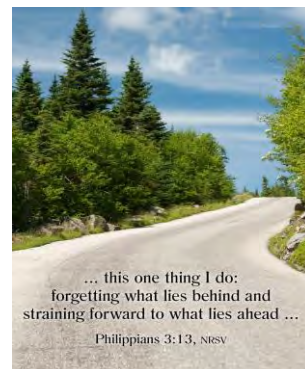
SCRIPTURE READING

Philippians 3:4b-14 (CEB)

“though I have good reason to have this kind of confidence. If anyone else has reason to put their confidence in physical advantages, I have even more: I was circumcised on the eighth day. I am from the people of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin. I am a Hebrew of the Hebrews. With respect to observing the Law, I’m a Pharisee. With respect to devotion to the faith, I harassed the church. With respect to righteousness under the Law, I’m blameless.

These things were my assets, but I wrote them off as a loss for the sake of Christ. But even beyond that, I consider everything a loss in comparison with the superior value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have lost everything for him, but what I lost I think of as sewer trash, so that I might gain Christ and be found in him. In Christ I have a righteousness that is not my own and that does not come from the Law but rather from the faithfulness of Christ. It is the righteousness of God that is based on faith. The righteousness that I have comes from knowing Christ, the power of his resurrection, and the participation in his sufferings. It includes being conformed to his death so that I may perhaps reach the goal of the resurrection of the dead.

It’s not that I have already reached this goal or have already been perfected, but I pursue it, so that I may grab hold of it because Christ grabbed hold of me for just this purpose. Brothers and sisters, I myself don’t think I’ve reached it, but I do this one thing: I forget about the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me. The goal I pursue is the prize of God’s upward call in Christ Jesus.”



PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Like Judas, God of new things, we like to complain about your generous ways, rather than living in your grace. The poor are always with us, we believe, which justifies our ignoring them. In our memories, we focus on a perceived golden past, and so we ignore the new things you do in our midst. We are so enamored with our achievements that we are not willing to throw them away in order to follow Jesus. Forgive us, Restoring God, and help us to notice the kingdom springing forth in our midst. By your grace, may our fears turn to faith, our seeds of grief produce a bumper crop of joy, and our tears turn into torrents of tenderness as we journey with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, to Jerusalem.

Making a way through all the foolishness and mistakes of our lives, God leads us into new life, where we are restored to grace, to hope, and to peace. Do we notice what God has done for us, what God is doing in us? This is good news for everyone. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Six days before Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, home of Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Lazarus and his sisters hosted a dinner for him. Martha served and Lazarus was among those who joined him at the table. Then Mary took an extraordinary amount, almost three-quarters of a pound, of very expensive perfume made of pure nard. She anointed Jesus' feet with it, then wiped his feet dry with her hair. The house was filled with the aroma of the perfume. Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), complained, "This perfume was worth a year's wages! Why wasn't it sold and the money given to the poor?" (He said this not because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief. He carried the money bag and would take what was in it.)

Then Jesus said, "Leave her alone. This perfume was to be used in preparation for my burial, and this is how she has used it. You will always have the poor among you, but you won't always have me."

John 12: 1-8 (CEB)

*You always have
the poor with you ...
but you will not
always
have
me.*



Mark 14:7, NRSV

MESSAGE "How Much Is It Worth to You?"

Rev. Terry McDorman

HYMN

"The Gift of Love"

(UMH # 408)

INVITATION TO SHARE

We are always invited. We are invited to know God, to love Jesus and to accept the Holy Spirit. We are also invited to share with others so that they too may know, love, and serve. Let us share abundantly.

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

(UMH # 94)

(during the singing, please raise your hands to God in thanksgiving and praise)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)**

Loving God, source of all joy, we come before you with hearts full of gratitude. As Mary poured out her love for Jesus with costly perfume, so we pour out our gifts before you, seeking to honor you with all that we have. During this reflective Lenten period, may our offerings remind us of the abundance you've poured into our lives. Help us to give extravagantly, not out of duty, but from hearts filled with joy and gratitude. Bless these gifts and use them to bring your hope to the world. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (responsively)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.



It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth.
Before the mountains were brought forth, or you had formed the earth,
from everlasting to everlasting, you alone are God.
You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.
You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.
When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.
You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.
And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ,
in whom you have revealed yourself, our light and our salvation.
You sent a star to guide wise men to where the Christ was born;
and in your signs and witnesses, in every age and through all the world,
you have led your people from far places to his light.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."
When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."
And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.
By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.
Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (*God*), now and forever.
Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

(All are invited to come forward to partake in the sacrament. If you wish that the elements be brought to you, please advise the usher. All of the bread is gluten free.)

MUSICAL REFLECTION

CLOSING PRAYER (unison)

Lord God, how extravagant your love for us is! You continually pour upon us blessing upon blessing--in the lives of people near and dear to us, in the beauty of creation, in the skills and abilities you have given to us. There is so much for which we are thankful. Yet in the midst of this thankfulness, there lurks the demons of demand and confusion. We want you to be in control of taking care of all the things that threaten us. We want you to prevent us from facing times of confusion and doubt. Actually, we want to have a more complete faith. Like Judas, who misunderstood Jesus' intention, we wonder about the anointing of Jesus--about the perceived waste of materials. How hard it is for us to see that we need to take some time to honor and praise Christ instead of continually asking for Christ to do things for us. We have a lot to learn. Lord, teach us! Open our hard hearts to the healing words you have for us. Give us patience and persistence in our service to you. And when we stumble and thrash around faithlessly, bring us back to your presence; that we may find healing and hope. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *"Precious Lord, Take My Hands"* (UMH# 474)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (Please be seated and silent during the Postlude)

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK: 42

ATTENDANCE GOAL: 70

Our sincere appreciation to all those that contributed to this worship experience!

Be certain to check the church website, <https://maconilumc.net/> for updated information about the church, events and news. Please use webmaster.maconumc@gmail.com to submit updates or additions to the church website.

CHOIR PRACTICE

Choir Practice after church on 4/6, and 4/13 in preparation for Easter Service.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND SERVICE

Sun. April 6 11:00 am Choir Practice

Sun. April 13 8:00 am Men's breakfast; Fellowship Hall

Sun. April 13 9:00 am Sunday School

Sun. April 13 10:00 am Palm Sunday Worship and Zoom Service

Sun. April.13 11:00 am Choir Practice

Thur. April.17 6:00 pm Holy Thursday Soup Supper/Worship
Fri. April.18 Good Friday—Church Office Closed
Sun. April 20 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. April 20 10:00 am Easter Sunday Worship and Zoom Service

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 6 Jimmy Hinkle Apr 7 Vicky Hilvety
Apr 10 Debbie Stewart

MISSIONS



Items requested by the food pantry are: Items requested by the food pantry are: Any kind of cereal, cereal bars and/or oatmeal, canned fruit, **canned soup**, canned pasta, shampoo, bar soap and toothpaste. Cash donations are always welcome.

The Pantry is looking for volunteers to help with the Central Illinois food bank deliveries on the first and third Mondays of each month at 9:00 am.