

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
Pastor Terry McDorman; 630-390-0414; accesstogodshouse@gmail.com
March 23, 2025 **Third Sunday of Lent**

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

You are given another chance! God has heard your cries. Turn again to the Lord. Find comfort and strength in God's eternal love for you. Be healed.

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

calling all that hear to experience knowing Christ

PRELUDE

GATHERING

Words of welcome and announcements



*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

***CALL TO WORSHIP (responsively)**

Wrap yourselves in the healing love of God!

We seek God's presence in our lives.

Know that God continually surrounds us with patience and persistence.

Even though we have not produced the “fruits” of hope that God seeks, yet God forgives and heals our weakness.

Rejoice! Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised!

We will turn our lives again to the Lord, to serve and seek God's presence.

Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

(UMH # 140)

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Open our eyes, our ears, our hearts and spirits this morning, Lord, that we may be healed of our faithlessness, freed from our fears and anxieties, and placed on the pathways that lead to peace and service to you. In Jesus' Name, we pray. 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

Genesis 45:3-11 (CEB)

Joseph said to his brothers, "I'm Joseph! Is my father really still alive?" His brothers couldn't respond because they were terrified before him.

Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me," and they moved closer. He said, "I'm your brother Joseph! The one you sold to Egypt. Now, don't be upset and don't be angry with yourselves that you sold me here. Actually, God sent me before you to save lives. We've already had two years of famine in the land, and there are five years left without planting or harvesting. God sent me before you to make sure you'd survive and to rescue your lives in this amazing way. You didn't send me here; it was God who made me a father to Pharaoh, master of his entire household, and ruler of the whole land of Egypt.

"Hurry! Go back to your father. Tell him this is what your son Joseph says: 'God has made me master of all of Egypt. Come down to me. Don't delay. You may live in the land of Goshen, so you will be near me, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and everyone with you. I will support you there, so you, your household, and everyone with you won't starve, since the famine will still last five years.'

*God sent me before
you to preserve for
you a remnant on
earth, and to keep
alive for you many
survivors.*



Genesis 45:3, NRSV

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

This is the season of turning. We are called on this journey to turn our lives to the Lord, to turn away from all those things which have harmed us and others; to separate ourselves from actions and attitudes that demean and destroy. It is far too easy for us to sink into the mire of self-pity and self-serving attitudes, wondering why everything isn't coming our way. We want comfort, contentment, no stress, no struggle. Yet our lives are filled with stress and discontent. We hurt, Lord. We hurt in our bodies and our souls. We hurt in our relationships with others. How we must try your patience! We don't want to be like this--we want to feel the warmth of your love, the freedom of your spirit, the joy of serving you. Forgive us for our selfishness and stupidity. Heal us. For we ask these things in Jesus' Name. Amen.

MESSAGE

"Love Is Scary"

Rev. Sally Hamon



HYMN

"I Love To Tell the Story"

(UMH # 156)

INVITATION TO SHARE

In this season of “giving up,” we are invited to generously give up to God so that the work of the Holy Spirit shall be prosperous throughout the earth.

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)

God of love and forgiveness, we offer our gifts this morning, knowing that we resemble those to whom Isaiah prophesied, “Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?” We have chased after things that we thought would bring joy, and then found them to be empty and unfulfilling. Lord, we long to return to you and invest ourselves in things that last and that bring lasting joy, as we seek you in every moment, with all we have and all we are. We pray this in Christ’s holy name. Amen

MUSICAL REFLECTION

CLOSING PRAYER (unison)

Psalm 63:1-18 (UMH # 788)

*CLOSING HYMN

“We Walk By Faith”

(FWS #2196)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

(Please be seated and silent during the Postlude)

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK: 37

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.

Thank you to Rev. Sally Hamon for filling the pulpit this morning. Pastor Terry will resume his normal office hours etc. starting Tuesday morning.

DVD BIBLE STUDY

The Adult Sunday School will be running a DVD Bible study during Lent. The study explores how the Old Testament Psalms predict Christ's ministry.

CHOIR PRACTICE

Choir Practice after church on 3/23, 3/30, 4/6, and 4/13 in preparation for Easter Service.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND SERVICE

Sun. Mar.23 11:00 am Choir Practice
Wed. Mar.26 6:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting; Pastor's Office
Wed. Mar.26 7:00 pm Administrative Council Meeting; Pastor's Office
Sun. Mar.30 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Mar.30 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun. Mar.30 11:00 am Choir Practice
Sun. April 6 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. April 6 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun. April 6 11:00 am Choir Practice

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

MISSIONS



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. Other items needed **by the end of this month** for Easter boxes are: pie fillings, Mandarin oranges, French style green beans, egg noodles, box Jello and pudding mixes, and any kind of box potato mixes. 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.