

Macon United Methodist Church
190 W Bell Street, Macon, IL 62544; (217) 764-5133
Pastor Terry McDorman; 630-390-0414; accesstogodshouse@gmail.com
March 30, 2025 UMCOR Sunday Fourth Sunday of Lent

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“Self-denial means knowing only Christ, and no longer oneself. It means seeing only Christ, who goes ahead of us, and no longer the path that is too difficult for us.... Self-denial is saying only: He goes ahead of us; hold fast to him.”
—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

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)**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Everyone joined to Christ is a new creation.

The old has passed away, and the new has come.

All this is done by God, who through Christ changed us from enemies into his friends and gave us the task of making all people his friends as well.

We are ambassadors for Christ. God makes his appeal through us to the world.

***OPENING HYMN “Love Devine, All Loves Excelling” (UMH # 384)**

OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Gracious God, we gather before you this day for many reasons. Some of us seek no more than the peace and the fellowship of this sanctuary. Some of us are looking for encouragement as we walk the path that you set before us. Others of us are hoping for a word from you--some wisdom--some sign that will help us through a period of affliction or show us how to deal with a problem that we have. Still others of us are here because we know that it is the right thing to do--that it helps us and helps our families to grow together in love and understanding. Many

are the reasons we have for coming before you at this time O God. We ask your blessing upon us--and pray that you will answer the need that is in us through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Let us lift our prayers in thoughts of praise.

SILENT PRAYER

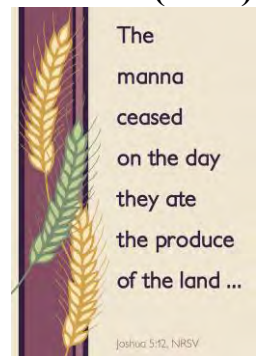
Let us share our doubts with God.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (all)

SCRIPTURE READING

Joshua 5:9-12 (CEB)

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." So the place was called Gilgal, as it is today. The Israelites camped in Gilgal. They celebrated Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the plains of Jericho. On the very next day after Passover, they ate food produced in the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain. The manna stopped on that next day, when they ate food produced in the land. There was no longer any manna for the Israelites. So that year they ate the crops of the land of Canaan.



PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Christ, our life, through baptism we were buried with you and rose to life with you, may we walk today in newness of life. Lord, you have brought blessings to all mankind, bring us to share your concern for the good of all. May we work together to build up the earthly city, with our eyes fixed on the city that lasts forever. Healer of body and soul, cure the sickness of our spirit, so that we may grow in holiness through your constant care.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 15:1-3; 11b-32 (CEB)

All the tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus to listen to him. The Pharisees and legal experts were grumbling, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Jesus told them this parable: Jesus said, "A certain man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the inheritance.' Then the father divided his estate between them. Soon afterward, the younger son



gathered everything together and took a trip to a land far away. There, he wasted his wealth through extravagant living.

“When he had used up his resources, a severe food shortage arose in that country and he began to be in need. He hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. He longed to eat his fill from what the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything. When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have more than enough food, but I’m starving to death! I will get up and go to my father, and say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son. Take me on as one of your hired hands.”’ So he got up and went to his father.

“While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. His father ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him. Then his son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quickly, bring out the best robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet! Fetch the fattened calf and slaughter it. We must celebrate with feasting because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life! He was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his older son was in the field. Coming in from the field, he approached the house and heard music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what was going on. The servant replied, ‘Your brother has arrived, and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he received his son back safe and sound.’ Then the older son was furious and didn’t want to enter in, but his father came out and begged him. He answered his father, ‘Look, I’ve served you all these years, and I never disobeyed your instruction. Yet you’ve never given me as much as a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours returned, after gobbling up your estate on prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.’ Then his father said, ‘Son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found.’”

MESSAGE

“Changing the Standards”

Rev. Terry McDorman

HYMN

“My Life Flows On”

(FWS #2212)

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)**

Creator and Redeemer, through Christ you have reconciled us to you. You are willing to look beyond our disobedience and disloyalty and have opened your arms wide in welcome, when, in our repentance, we return to you. May the giving we do this morning be a pledge of our desire to make your redeeming, reconciling love known to others who believe they are not worthy or beyond your reach. May our offering be used to empower that good news. We pray in the name of Christ, our rock and our salvation. Amen

MUSICAL REFLECTION**Alayna and Aubrey Bickel****CLOSING PRAYER (unison)**

Loving Father of mine, I feel the pace quicken, the time draw near. I am filled with joy as I move toward Easter and the promised reconciliation with you. Teach me to follow the example of your Son, to be worthy of being called one his people: a Christ-ian. Help me to live each day as he did turning hatred to love and conflict to peace. I await the new life with eagerness, faith and a deep gratitude.

CLOSING HYMN**“What Wondrous Love Is This?”*****(UMH# 292)****BENEDICTION****POSTLUDE****(Please be seated and silent during the Postlude)****ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:****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.

UMCOR SUNDAY

Today is UMCOR Sunday. Please consider giving generously to our offering for all the work UMCOR does throughout the world. There is a special envelope for this if you need one.

CHOIR PRACTICE

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

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND 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
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 Worship and Zoom Service
Sun. April.13 11:00 am Choir Practice

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Apr 2	Joe and Lynette Puckett	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. 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.