



**PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent  
Communion Sunday**

**March 7, 2021**

*Connecting with the Community,  
Growing Disciples, and Serving Jesus Christ*

*Our Worship can be viewed on our website  
[PantherValleyChurch.org](http://PantherValleyChurch.org)*

*FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH*

## PRELUDE

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Weary and overwhelmed, we gather.

**God's holy word revives us.**

Simple and confused, we yield.

**God's word gives us wisdom.**

Blind and uncomprehending, we await.

**God's word enlightens our eyes.**

More precious than gold is God's word.

**Sweeter than honey are God's commands.**

### **OPENING PRAYER**

The warmth

of the sun's embrace

the gentle breeze swept in

by incoming tide

the rhythm of seasons

of new birth

death and recreation

All these speak so clearly

of your love

your power

and your beauty

All are expressions

of your creativity

and more importantly of yourself

As an artist might share his personality

within each brushstroke

so within the myriad colours

of a butterfly's wing

you share the exuberance of your love

That we can glimpse you

within creation is a beautiful thought

but also tells us

that you desire to be seen

to be found and known

Open our eyes, Lord

as we walk through this world

feel the wind and sunshine

see the majesty of creation unfolding before our eyes

Help us

to see you

### **PSALM 19**

Heaven is declaring God's glory; the sky is proclaiming his handiwork.

One day gushes the news to the next, and one night informs another what needs to be known.

Of course, there's no speech, no words— their voices can't be heard— but their sound extends

throughout the world; their words reach the ends of the earth. God has made a tent in heaven for the sun. The sun is like a groom coming out of his honeymoon suite; like a warrior, it thrills at running its course. It rises in one end of the sky; its circuit is complete at the other. Nothing escapes its heat. The LORD's Instruction is perfect, reviving one's very being. The LORD's laws are faithful, making naive people wise. The LORD's regulations are right, gladdening the heart. The LORD's commands are pure, giving light to the eyes. Honoring the LORD is correct, lasting forever. The LORD's judgments are true. All of these are righteous! They are more desirable than gold— than tons of pure gold! They are sweeter than honey— even dripping off the honeycomb! No doubt about it: your servant is enlightened by them; there is great reward in keeping them. But can anyone know what they've accidentally done wrong? Clear me of any unknown sin and save your servant from willful sins. Don't let them rule me. Then I'll be completely blameless; I'll be innocent of great wrongdoing. Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to you, LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

Proverbs 1

Wisdom shouts in the street; in the public square she raises her voice. Above the noisy crowd, she calls out. At the entrances of the city gates, she has her say: "How long will you clueless people love your naïveté, mockers hold their mocking dear, and fools hate knowledge?"

You should respond when I correct you.

Look, I'll pour out my spirit on you. I'll reveal my words to you."

**MESSAGE** *Listening to Wisdom*

**HYMN** *How Great Thou Art*

## **PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE**

O God, the heavens declare your glory, and all creation reveals your surpassing wisdom.

We give thanks to you for those who reveal your riches to us and teach us in the way we should go.

We pray for all who are searching, that you would shine your light ahead of them and help all people rejoice in you.

We pray for those who struggle and suffer, especially those we have lifted up by name today.

Revive all our souls and refresh our spirits. Guide us in your service, because your will is the desire of our hearts. Let all that we say or do be acceptable in your sight, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Creator God, you knit all things together with your infinite wisdom. We confess that we are often foolish, yet believe ourselves wise. We ravage your creation, taking what we want without concern, searching for freedom and happiness, forgetting that our true purpose and joy is found only in you. We seek first our own good, heedless of our place as one strand in the carefully woven fabric of your world. Forgive us. Open our ears to hear you speaking, and our hearts to embrace your purpose. Amen. ~silence~**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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.**

From the very beginning, Vulnerable God, all creation has sung your glory:

goodness laughing from the mountaintops, beauty echoing in every valley.

You shaped us from creation, your Word calling us by name, your Spirit breathing life into us.

You set us free to live with you in that garden of delightful wonders, but we believed our thoughts were better than yours.

We shaped idols to look like our desires, and placed them in such a way that we would not see you.

There is nothing that stays hidden from you, so you saw how foolish we were.

Sin muddled our minds so that we could not listen to the prophets you sent, so Jesus came to show us your love which had never abandoned us.

With those who stood at the foot of Sinai,

with those who were astounded in the temple,

with those who have become foolish by following you,

with all your children of every time and in every place,

we lift our songs to your glory:

**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, God of grace and glory, and blessed is Jesus, the Christ, our Lord.

In him we see the fullness of your glory revealed in human form.

Born into poverty, he fulfilled his mother's song, that you would fill the hungry with good things, and send the rich empty away.

Declaring the nearness of your kingdom, he forgave sinners, cast out demons,

raised the dead, restored the blind and lame, visited the sick, the prisoners and the needy,

and gathered disciples to continue to declare the good news in word and deed,

transfiguring the world in the power of your Holy Spirit.

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

And so we remember 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 he 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 seek the strength to follow your Child, as we long to be as obedient as he was, we would speak of that mystery called faith:

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

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these your gifts, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ, that we may be one in ministry in every time and every place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world. Amen.

And now, as the beloved children of God, let us pray together the prayer...

### **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

For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior until he comes again.

### **COMMUNION**

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Let us taste and see that the Lord is good. (Psalm 34:8)

If you are worshipping at home with another, we invite you to serve one another saying:

The body of Christ given for you... Thanks be to God or Amen.

**Friends: This is the body of Christ given for us.**

And please do the same with the cup... serving one another saying:

The blood of Christ given for you... Thanks be to God or Amen.

**Friends: This is the blood of Christ given for us.**

### **COMMUNION PRAYER**

God of abundance, With this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ making us one with all your people.

Now, strengthen us in the power of your Spirit that we may proclaim your redeeming love to all the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **BENEDICTION**

And now as you move on into the world...

Hold that which is happening on the outside AND the inside dear.

Love what comes across your path for what it will teach you.

Cherish the struggle that stirs in your gut for how it will guide you.

And know that all people carry within them

the Essence of the Divine—a Holy Wisdom—given at birth.

Listen every day until we meet again.

Get quiet enough to hear the still small voice and to find your own.

And may the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be with you all.

## POSTLUDE

### **Credits:**

Today's Liturgy is adapted from: Call To Worship: Robert Blezard, Opening Prayer, John Birch, Prayer of Confession, Teri Peterson, Prayer of the People, Rev. Nathan Williams.

Prelude, I Am His

Postlude, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

Hymn, How Great Thou Art, CCLI #14181, Copyright 1949 and 1953 Stuart Hine Trust CIO Stuart K. Hine Trust

Images used in the worship service:

Still Life with Gingerpot 1, Guggenheim Museum, Public Domain

Still Life with Gingerpot 11, Guggenheim Museum, NY.NY. © 2007 Mondrian/Holtzman Trust

Detail of a 12<sup>th</sup> Century Manuscript of the Gospels of Luke and John, The British Library

We are grateful for the following people who made this worship service possible:

Diane Van Dongen our Music Director, Rick Wilson our Liturgist, and Pastor Ninabeth Metcalf.