



*The First Congregational Church  
of the United Church of Christ  
Stockbridge, Massachusetts*

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT  
*March 19, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.*

For those worshipping at home: you are invited to text the names of those attending to 413-644-6435 that we might welcome you. Please also include prayers of joys and concerns as we will name them in worship.

For those in church: Masks are optional, but masking is always welcome. The balcony and a section of the first floor are designated as masking required.

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

### GATHERING MUSIC

PRELUDE     *You Satisfy the Hungry Heart* by C. Callahan     Hui-Mei Lin, *organ*

FRAMING WORDS     Rev. Brent Damrow

## GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

### BRINGING IN OF THE LIGHT

INTROIT     *Down at the Cross* by John H. Stockton

\*CALL TO WORSHIP     Joshua Hall

One: We rejoice in the One who leads us beside still waters,

**All: and gives us refreshment of soul.**

One: Christ our Shepherd shows us the way we should go,

**All: so that the name of God will be glorified.**

One: Though all manner of evil befall us, we will not be afraid,

**All: for the Great Shepherd of our souls is with us.**

One: We are never away from the love and mercy of the Lord,

**All: who promises to be with us for ever and ever. Amen!**

~ from the Lectionary Sermons Worship Resources archive.

\*HYMN

PSALM 23

# 175 The Lord's My Shepherd, All My Need

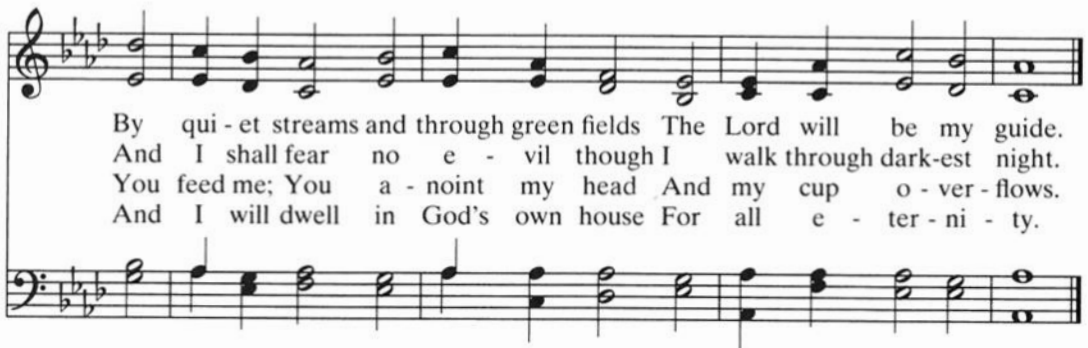
EVAN CM

Christopher L. Webber, 1986; alt.

William Henry Havergal, 1846



1. The Lord's my Shep-herd, all my need Will sure - ly be sup - plied;  
2. The Lord re - vives me, guides my feet On path-ways that are right,  
3. Your rod and staff, they com - fort me; In pres - ence of my foes  
4. Your good - ness and Your mer - cy, Lord, Shall sure - ly fol - low me,



By qui - et streams and through green fields The Lord will be my guide.  
And I shall fear no e - vil though I walk through dark - est night.  
You feed me; You a - noint my head And my cup o - ver - flows.  
And I will dwell in God's own house For all e - ter - ni - ty.

WELCOME

Rev. Damrow

TIME WITH CHILDREN *Shepherds and Sheep and Flocks*

PRAYER OF BLESSING

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

See insert

Elisabeth Bellows

Louis Forouhar-Graff

Doug Williams

CONFESSION (inspired by Psalm 23)

Don Eaton

~ by Rev. Emily S. Larsen, St. Andrews Presbyterian, Winston-Salem, NC

One: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

**All: But, O Lord, we are consumed with wanting more.**

One: He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.

**All: But, O Lord, other pastures seem greener.  
The waters aren't always still. Our souls still thirst.**

One: He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

**All: O Lord, we long to be led by you,  
though we may complain along the path.**

One: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me.

**All: And yet, O God, we do sometimes fear.  
May we feel your presence, your comfort and your forgiveness anew.**

One: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

**All: O God, sometimes we refuse to sit down at your table.  
Forgive us and help us to see your overflowing mercy.**

One: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

**All: Forgive us, God, and lead us into your house.**

*(time for silent prayers of confession)*

\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

\*SUNG RESPONSE *The Old Rugged Cross*, vs. 4

vs. 4 **To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,  
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
When God calls me someday to my home far away,  
There God's glory forever I'll share.**

refrain **So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,  
Till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
And exchange it some day for a crown.**

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

## OFFERING OUR GIFTS

SOLO                    *What Wondrous Love is This?* arr. Peter Frost    John Demler, *bass*

### CALL TO THE OFFERING

Remember to place your prayer tags in the offering plates if you would like them lifted. They will be read as written. You may also place your prayers directly on the prayer tree after worship.

OFFERTORY    *Lonesome Valley/Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*  
(Two Spirituals) arr. by Peter Frost

\*DOXOLOGY Old 100<sup>th</sup>

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
One God, Triune, whom we adore.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

**God of the wilderness, your Spirit leads us to face the truth,  
unprotected and exposed: in all our times of life. In this moment we  
overcome the temptation to keep and instead give - giving both who  
we are and what we have.**

**Meet us here in the wilderness. Bless all that we present. Shine  
before us the light of Christ. Empower us with the strength of the  
Spirit. Bring us home to your loving arms. Amen**

### MINUTE FOR MISSION

*One Great Hour of Sharing & Church World Service*    Cindy Brown

## THE GIFT OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING    The Story of the Healing of the Blind Man (John 9:1-41)

REFLECTION                    *Holding On or Letting Go*                    Rev. Damrow

\*HYMN *We Limit Not the Truth of God* tune: Forest Green

**We limit not the truth of God to our poor reach of mind,  
to notions of our day and place, crude, partial, and confined:  
No, let a new and better hope within our hearts be stirred:  
O God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.**

**Who dares to bind to one's own sense the oracles of heaven,  
for all the nations, tongues, and climes and all the ages given?  
That universe, how much unknown! that ocean unexplored!  
O God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.**

**Eternal God, incarnate Word, Spirit of flame and dove:  
enlarge, expand all living souls to comprehend your love;  
And help us all to seek your will with wiser powers conferred:  
O God, grant yet more light and truth to break forth from your Word.**

## OFFERING OURSELVES

TIME OF SILENCE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER RESPONSE *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days* (St. Flavian)

## GOING FORTH INTO THE WORLD

\*INVITATIONS Rev. Damrow

\*HYMN *O Jesus Christ, May Grateful Hymns* See page 7

\*COMMITMENT Michael Deegan

**Almighty God, give us wisdom to perceive you,  
intellect to understand you,  
diligence to seek you, patience to wait for you,  
eyes to behold you,  
a heart to meditate upon you and life to proclaim you,  
through the power of the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

— written by St. Benedict (489-543)

\*BENEDICTION Rev. Damrow

## BRINGING OF THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD/TIME OF SILENCE



POSTLUDE

Toccata in C, by J. Pachelbel

Hui-Mei Lin, organ

### Music notes

For the offertory today I have arranged two African-American Spirituals together to form one anthem. When conceiving this work I wanted an anthem that could be used during Lent as well as for general use. I remember singing "Lonesome Valley" as a child in the children's choir, and I loved it then. Given the fact that this hymn works well during Lent, I set out to find a song to partner it with having a similar theme.

For me Lent is a time for reflecting on Jesus's life as well as on my own life. In addition I think it gives us the opportunity to reboot so to speak, and try once again to live by his example. This anthem begins: "Lord, I want to be a Christian, in-a my heart, in-a my heart," then transitions into: "Jesus walked this lonesome valley, He had to walk it by himself....Hopefully I have partnered these two beautiful songs together well. ~ Peter Frost

*Welcome! We are an Open and Affirming Church which means that we invite persons of every sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, racial and cultural identity, age, physical ability, economic circumstance, faith background and family structure to share fully in the ministry, leadership and fellowship of this congregation's life in Christ.*

The Rev. Brent Damrow, Pastor

Peter Frost, Minister of Music

Will Garrison, Administrator

Marion Pomeroy, Financial Secretary

Will Curtiss and Will Pohl, Livestream Technicians

(413) 298-3137 | office@stockbridgeucc.org | stockbridgeucc.org

All hymns reprinted under OneLicense.net A-723107

Matt. 23:37-39; Luke 13:34-35

Bradford Gray Webster, 1954; alt.



1 O Je - sus Christ, may grate - ful hymns be ris - ing, in ev - ery  
 2 Grant us new cour - age, nev - er proud, but hum - ble, strong in your  
 3 Show us your Spir - it, brood - ing o'er each cit - y, as you once



cit - y for your love and care; In - spire our wor - ship, grant the  
 strength to ven - ture and to dare; To lift the fall - en, guide the  
 wept a - bove Je - ru - sa - lem, Seek - ing to gath - er all in



glad sur - pris - ing that your blessed Spir - it rous - es ev - ery - where.  
 ones who stum - ble, seek out the lone - ly and God's mer - cy share.  
 love and pit - y, and heal - ing those who touch your gar - ment's hem.



*This text, written for a Convocation of Urban Life in America, was chosen by The Hymn Society for publication in Five New Hymns on the City. Bradford Webster, a Methodist minister, served churches in his native New York state for forty years.*

Tune: CHARTERHOUSE 11.10.11.10.  
 David Evans, 1927

# First Congregational Church: EASTER PLANTS

The sanctuary will be filled with beautiful pots of Tulips, Lilies, and Daffodils for Easter. You may order a plant in memory of or in honor of a loved one; the deadline is April 2. The recommended donation is \$20 per plant. You may use this form with a check to either the Church Office or the "flower box" in the J.E. Room, or order online.

We plan to deliver some of the flowers to members of our community and keep others for use during the Easter season. We welcome those who have ordered a plant to take it home after Easter service. If you plan to take a plant home, indicate and include your flower preference.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Plants: \_\_\_\_\_

Given in Memory of / in Honor of (circle one):

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*(This will be used to confirm your order as well as the name(s) of those  
you are honoring/remembering.)*

I would like to:

Allow the church to use the plant for worship or to send to a member of the community.

Pick up the plant after Easter worship.

(My plant preference is: \_\_\_\_\_)

If mailing this form, please send to:

Flowers at FCC, P.O. Box 825, Stockbridge, MA 01262