

May the grace of Jesus Christ be with you ... **and also with you.** Welcome to worship at Knox Presbyterian Bayfield on the 26th of February.

Announcements

HYMN Praise God #306

CALL TO WORSHIP [responsive]

One: Let the faithful offer prayer and praise to God

All: God will teach us the way to go

One: God's steadfast love surrounds us

All: So let us be glad in the Lord and rejoice in worship!

Hymn He leadeth me #650

PRAYER OF ADORATION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON¹

Holy and awesome God, you challenge and encourage us, revealing our weakness yet offering us hope. We praise you for such gifts! Open us to the new possibilities you create within your beloved world. With the power of the Holy Spirit, energize us to embrace the future, trusting in the grace of Jesus Christ. Gracious God, you know the ways of good and evil. You know the things that tempt us and the things that give us life. You know our nakedness, and you know our sin. We confess that we disobey your word, denying your wisdom and rely on ourselves. Have mercy on us, we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Be glad in the Lord and shout for joy: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. May the peace of Jesus the Christ, which surpasses all understanding, be with you. **And also with you.**

To Hear The Word Of God

Prayer For Illumination and Scripture²

Your Word, O God, comes to us in the translation of ancient scripture. Send your Holy Spirit to open our minds with understanding and our hearts with wisdom in the name of Jesus Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

¹ PCC Worship Planner Advent December 2021 Year C

² Page #'s for pew bibles with Blue or White edged pages

Scripture³

Tanakh

Psalm 32

[B#506/W#559]

Epistle

Romans 5:12-19

[B#156/W#162]

May God bless our understanding of this, God's holy word. **The word of the Lord.**

Tempting

O holy One, by the power of your Holy Spirit at work in the word read and proclaimed, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you.

Amen.

It is difficult to imagine that three years ago we were not familiar with the concept of a pandemic; we could not have imagined the impact of shut downs, cancelled church services, or wearing masks everywhere. Yet, during the pandemic certain patterns changed and then became the familiar. The old patterns of socializing, of attending church on Sunday morning, of being in community, had been disrupted. Many continue to struggle with the complex effects of the pandemic. For some it is tempting to push away from the memory of the isolation, the many uncertainties, the financial instability, and the lasting impact of that experience. It is important to be mindful of what we've learned yet it is tempting to tuck it away, to not think on it. There are opportunities here, in this moment in time, to discover where God is leading us. How will we respond?

Discernment is an integral part of understanding how we are tempted and the ways in which we struggle. Do you listen for the quiet, still voice of God? Do you pause to listen for the Spirit to guide you? Will the voice of our desires and our yearning to fit within our culture drives our decision making. God speaks to us in many ways and then, God waits for us to understand. God waits with us in the struggle, in the conflicted internal debate that erupts within us.

The passages today speak of sin and temptation in the wilderness. It is a challenging concept in our time. Eckart Tolle wrote that Sin is a word that has been greatly misunderstood and misinterpreted. Literally translated from the ancient Greek ... to sin means to miss the mark. Think of an archer, with a bow and arrow, who misses the target. This image helps in our understanding that sin occurs when we miss the point of

³ Page #'s for pew bibles with Blue or White edged pages

human existence. In part, it means to live unskillfully and blindly and to cause suffering with your choices.

Tanakh* **Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–7 [B#2/W#2]**

Sin happens when we take control of our lives and try to push God away. To sin is to miss the mark or miss the point. It happens when we isolate ourselves from God and others. It happens when we turn away and try to fill the emptiness with behaviors and choices that are harmful to us and to others. The reading from Genesis speaks to our purpose within God's creation. God made humans as part of creation. We are to keep the gardens, to care for creation. This is accomplished by being in good relationship with God and with one another. This mission to care for God's creation is compelling and somehow we get distracted and miss the point. We seem to follow the familiar pattern set by Adam and Eve when they chose to turn away from God. When they turned away they found themselves in the wilderness. From this origin story the wilderness will become a familiar place in scripture. We are reminded of the continuity of God's message and that this message continues through the ages. Wilderness is a place of struggle that leads to new realizations. Abraham and Sarah left their community to follow God into the wilderness. Just as Moses fasted alone in the presence of God for 40 days & nights; Elijah fasted as he fled from persecution. Jesus faced temptation in the wilderness after fasting forty days and forty nights. In her book, *An Altar in the World*, Barbara Brown Taylor wrote, "The prophet Elijah gets lost in the desert while fleeing the fury of a queen named Jezebel, which is how he comes to hear the voice of God in the sound of sheer silence. The people spend decades in exile in Babylon—a cultural wilderness they might never have survived without their practice in the literal wilderness of Sinai. Much later, Jesus of Nazareth consents to becoming lost, to spending forty days in the Judean desert being tested by everything from wild animals to a scripture-quoting Satan."

Gospel **Matthew 4:1–11 [B#3/W#3]**

The devil tempts with power, he tempts with the power to be like God. The original Greek term for Satan is *diábolos*, a slanderer; a false accuser; unjustly criticizing to hurt and condemn, to sever a relationship. In the movie, *The Usual Suspects*, modern evil is described as, "The greatest trick the devil ever played was to make the world believe he doesn't exist."

Throughout scripture we discover individuals who were tempted. Eve & Adam, Aaron, Job, King David, Jesus and his disciples. The faithful struggled and failed and turned back to God. Our lives are filled with stories of the struggle to discern, the ways in which we are tempted, the ways in which we have failed, and the return to faithful relationship with God. Such moments may begin when we are tempted to believe that we are not enough or that we are better than others. Temptations happen we make judgement about choices that we do not understand. Temptation sneaks in when we turn away from those who cry out in need. When we feel threatened in our privilege and our wealth. Temptation flares in those moments when we allow our frustration, fear, anxiety, or a sense of emptiness rule our lives. Each of us has the capacity to act out in anxiety and fear. In our fear, we lose the ability to trust and may react with unwise choices. When we are afraid, tired, or hungry it is more difficult to make good decisions. And, there is the opportunity to trust in God and listen to the Spirit nudging us.

In her sermon, *The Wilderness Exam*, the Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor wrote, "What did that long, famishing stretch in the wilderness do to Jesus? It freed him--from all devilish attempts to distract him from his true purpose, from hungry craving for things with no power to give him life, from any illusion he might have had that God would make his choices for him. After forty days in the wilderness, Jesus had not only learned to manage his appetites; he had also learned to trust the Spirit that had led him there to lead him out again, with the kind of clarity and grit he could not have found anywhere else."

The reflection questions in the bulletin encourage you to consider how Jesus responded to temptation when he was tired and hungry. His choices guide us to live by the Word of God, seek reconciliation with God and others, and to worship God. Lent is a time to reconsider our relationships as we reflect on the challenges and the resiliency gained through the pandemic. Praise be to God for visions and the movement of the Spirit among us.

Hymn **O Love that wilt not let me go** **#209**

THE OFFERING OF OUR LIFE AND LABOUR TO THE LORD

Quote The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. Mahatma Gandhi – lawyer, anti-colonialist, political ethicist

Doxology We give Thee but Thine own, What e'er the gift may be; All that we have is
Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.

Invitation to the Table

We come to the table to remember our past, to be here in our present, and to be mindful of our future with Christ. We remember Jesus declared that people will come from east and west and north and south to sit at the table in God's kingdom.

Friends in Christ, Lent is not simply a time for temporary self-discipline.

It is time to re-form our relationship with God and to be re-formed by God's strength and grace. This meal is the gift of that strength and grace. It comes not as a whole loaf and bottle for each one to take away and relish in private. It comes in broken pieces and deep sips shared. We are reminded that there will always be enough for everyone who seeks a place at this table. So come, you who have much faith and you who have a little, you who have been here often and you who cannot recall this place. Our Saviour invites all people to share this feast as a foretaste of his kingdom. Remember – the Risen Christ has spread this joyful feast for you. Taste and see that God is good.

Hymn I come with joy (v 1-3) #530

Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed [in unison] **#539**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Story of the Table

When we gather at this table, we remember how this meal began, how it has promised hope and new life to those who follow Jesus from one generation to the next. We gather and we remember bread and wine shared around a table one solemn, holy night. We share in the elements provided whether bread and wine, grape and wheat, crackers and water. As we share in the elements in the name of our Risen Christ, may our eyes be

opened to recognize Jesus -present with us each day. And as Jesus offered thanks for the gifts of the earth, let us thank God for what we are about receive.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving [responsive] **#564**

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 God thanks and praise.**

Holy One, on this World Communion Sunday, we offer you our gratitude and praise with hearts full of love, for we have seen your grace and power, rolling away the stone of sorrow and despair, bursting from the tomb in the gift of new life. And so we join our voices with all your creatures, high and low, with all the saints before us and beside us, in heaven and on earth, to celebrate your resurrecting power. Therefore, with choirs of angels and archangels and with those of every time and place, we give you praise and glory. We join with the whole creation to lift our hearts in joyful praise.

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

Receive our praise and joy this day, O Christ. Your resurrection promises that there are new possibilities for us and our weary world. Even when we falter in discouragement, even if we hesitate at the news that your great love has come back to embrace us, You will not let us go.

You call us by name to assure us of your love. You open your arms to welcome us back to your side. You spread this table for us, offering us not only the bread and wine, but your very self, present with us here and everywhere.

In joyful anticipation of sharing these gifts, we proclaim our faith And so, remembering Christ's life, love, death, and resurrection, we proclaim the mystery of faith.

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

Spirit of Life, rising in us and around us, breathe upon us now and upon this bread and wine. May they be for us Christ's body and blood, gifts of new life, with the power to make us whole. As this bread and wine become a part of us, may we become a part of you, Jesus, united with you and with each other in love. Dare us to live for justice and joy, trusting that all things will work together for good through the power of love that raised

you from the dead, the power of the love we share in your name. And all the people say,
Amen

We boldly lift our voices to pray: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallow'ed 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Words of Institution and Invitation

Jesus, in the night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said,

'This is my body, which is for you: do this in remembrance of me.' [eat]

In the same way, he took the cup saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood: as often as you drink of it, do this in remembrance of me.' [drink]

We break this bread, the communion in Christ's body once broken. We drink this cup, communion in Christ's blood once shed. These are the gifts of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Prayer after Communion

Eternal God, we thank you for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us and we praise you for breaking into the world. Send us out in peace for we have seen, have heard, and been fed by your grace. Keep us faithful and alert for signs of Christ's coming and lead us to live lives marked by truth and light.

We are so grateful for the gifts you have shared with us. Send us out in the strength of the Holy Spirit, unafraid of the cost to us. Giving, life-giving God, with our gifts this day, receive our thanks and praise for the hope rising within us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Bless the gifts we offer with your Holy Spirit so that they will bring hope to raise the hearts of those to whom we reach out in Jesus' holy name.

Loving God, by your Spirit, surround us with strength and love. Equip us to offer support for those who are near to us. God of light and love, draw near to those who must confront illness, loss or changing circumstances. We are thankful for healing and we are thankful for the end of suffering. God of compassion, we lift up Deb and her family as they travel the long journey of grief mourning Lyle's death. We lift up Jan and family as they mourn

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the loss of Danielle. God of hope, we ask you to linger with Ruth Talbot, Brian Talbot, Brenda and family; Stephani, Judith & Gerry; Rob; Stephanie and family; Betty Lou, Ruth George, and, Grace & Rudy. We lift up all those who are on our hearts as they face immense challenges. Where new life is beginning and hope dawns; where there is laughter and joy, healing and positive change, where there is good news to celebrate, send your Spirit with rejoicing and gratitude. Joined together in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all majesty and honor are yours, Holy One, forever and ever.

Before we call, you answer, God. Before we speak, you know our voices. Hear our prayers. Let there be joy in Jerusalem and peace among all nations. Let the wolf and the lamb live in peace. We pray in the name of Christ, Amen

Hymn Now Let Us From This Table Rise (v 1, 2) #556

To Go Forth In God's Name Commissioning and Benediction

Fulfill your holy calling by serving God and serving neighbor without thought of reward. And hope always in God, through whom all things are possible. May God restore the path before you that leads to grace, mercy, and peace. May Christ fill you with the treasure of faith and love. May the Holy Spirit help you to live in hope. Now and forevermore. Amen

Postlude Amen

64 Be still and know

Be still and that I am God x3

I am the Lord that health thee x3

In thee, O Lord, I put my trust x 3

306 Praise God

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures high and low;

Praise God in Jesus fully known; Creator, Word and Spirit, One.

209 O Love that wilt not let me go

O Love that wilt not let me go, I can rest my weary soul in thee; I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way, I yield my flickering torch to thee; my heart restores its borrowed ray, that in thy sunshine's blaze, its day may brighter, fairer be.

O joy that seekest my through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee; I trace the rainbow through the rain, and feel the promise is not vain that morn shall tearless be.

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Resources include: PCC Worship Planner, <https://www.workingpreacher.org/> Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, and Feasting on the Word Companion, NRSV Bible

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O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee; I lay in dust life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red, life that shall endless be.

650 He leadeth me

He leadeth me: oh blessed thought! oh words with heavenly comfort fraught! Whate'er I do, where'er I be still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

He leadeth me! He leadeth me! By his own hand he leadeth me! A faithful follower I would be, for 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom, sometimes where Eden's flowers bloom, by waters still, o'er troubled sea, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!

Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, nor ever murmur nor repine, content, whatever lot I see since 'tis my God that leadeth me!

And when my task on earth is done, when by thy grace the victory's won, e'en death's cold wave I will not flee, since God through Jordan leadeth me.

530 I come with joy (v 1-3)

I come with joy, a child of God, forgiven, loved and free, the life of Jesus to recall in love laid down for me, In love laid down for me.

I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed, the new community of love in Christ's communion bread, in Christ's communion bread.

As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each proud division ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and strangers now are friends, and strangers now are friends.

The Spirit of the risen Christ, unseen, but ever near, is in such friendship better known, alive among us here, alive among us here.

Together met, together bound by all that God has done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the love that makes us one, the love that makes us one.

556 Now let us from this Table Rise

Now let us from this table rise Renewed in body, mind and soul; With Christ we die and live again, Whose selfless love has made us whole.

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BAYFIELD

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With minds alert, upheld by grace, To spread the Word in speech and deed, We follow in
the steps of Christ, At one with all in hope and need.

To fill each human house with love, It is the sacrament of care; The work that Christ
began to do We humbly pledge ourselves to share.

Then give us grace, companion-God, To choose again the pilgrim way, And help us to
accept with joy The challenge of tomorrow's day.

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