

First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ

6915 York Road - Baltimore, MD 21212 (410) 377-5224

www.first-ststephens.org

Ministers
Interim Pastor
Consistory President
Music Director
Administrative Assistant
Sextons

Every Member of the Congregation
The Rev. Linda McFadden
Alex Vishio
Jeffery Beyers
Joyce Kruse
Sam and Grace Marshall

An "Open and Affirming" Congregation

February 21, 2010

First Sunday in Lent

10:30 a.m.

Order for the Service of Worship
(*Indicates all those who are able may stand)
(Plain text indicates Leader, **Bold** text indicates Congregation)

SILENT GATHERING PRAYER

All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.

Julian of Norwich, 14th Century

WE GATHER TOGETHER

PRELUDE

SHARING OUR UNITY

MOMENTS WITH THE CHILDREN

***CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT**

"Gathered Here"

NCH 742

***CALL TO CELEBRATION**

Our souls are created to be God's dwelling place,
and the dwelling place of the soul is God.

As we worship, we experience God, who dwells in us.

Through our worship, we dwell in God.

As we make the Holy One our dwelling place, no evil shall overtake us.

Come, live and love in the shelter of the Most High and say,
"God is my refuge and fortress in whom I trust."

**Through our worship, we love God who dwells in us,
and in whom we dwell.**

God is our refuge and our home.

***OPENING HYMN**

"All Beautiful the March of Days"

NCH 434

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND THE 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.

CALL TO CONFESSION

LITANY OF CONFESSION

God did not say, "You shall not be tempted; you shall not be troubled; you shall not be distressed." God did say, "You shall not be overcome."

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit,

was led into the wilderness, where he was tempted.

Sheltering God, Guiding God,

as you were present with Jesus in his wilderness experience,

so you are present with us:

you have urged us to trust you:

"Love me and call upon me, and I will answer you,

I will be with you in trouble, and will honor you."

We have felt discouraged,

and at times even abandoned and betrayed by you, O God,

when all manner of things have not gone well with us.

Lord, have mercy.

Instead of following where you lead, O God,
at times we follow a tempter who shows us a vision of the world
that is a mere counterfeit of what you desire for us.
At times, O God, we are deceived and enticed
by imitations of love, abundance, and joy.

Christ, have mercy.

O God, when you have not answered in the ways or in the time we desire,
we have been tempted to lean on our own understanding
and not acknowledge you in all ways.

We so often have sought to control our lives and order our own steps,
often ignoring your wisdom and pushing your guidance aside.

Lord, have mercy.

Help us to trust you to journey with us and to guide us.

Help us to rest in your promise to never leave us or forsake us. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

***RESPONSE OF PRAISE**

"Gloria"

NCH 754

TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

ANTHEM

COLLECT

**Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness;
give us grace to direct our lives in obedience to your Spirit; and as you
know our weakness, so may we know your power to save;
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who is alive with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God now and for ever. Amen.**

***HYMN**

"O Love, How Vast, How Flowing Free"

NCH 209

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 4:1-13

Christian Testament, Page 61

PSALTER LESSON

Psalms 91:1-2, 9-16

NCH 681-682

SERMON

"In the Wilderness"

John R. Deckenback

***HYMN**

"Lord Jesus, Who through Forty Days"

NCH 211

LITANY FOR COMMISSIONING THE PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

Invitation (members of the committee come forward)

President: There are different gifts.

People: But it is the same Spirit who gives them.

President: Each one is given a gift by the Spirit.

People: To be used for the common good.

Address to the Committee Members:

Sisters and Brothers, you have committed yourselves to a significant leadership task on behalf of the entire congregation. In recognition of the importance of your work, we pause to express our gratitude and to remind ourselves that you do not undertake this task alone; you will be guided by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, the prayerful support of the members of this church, and the assistance of the United Church of Christ through the Association and Conference.

Covenant

Committee Members:

We, who are serving on the Search Committee for First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ, promise to perform faithfully the vital task of searching for a new pastor. We pledge, with God's guidance and your prayers, to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in all we do, say, and decide.

We will endeavor:

to establish a harmonious working relationship within our committee;
to maintain consistent attendance at our Search Committee meetings;
to be open and patient listeners to each other and to the congregation;
to listen carefully to your hopes and dreams as we consult with you, the members,
in the development of a description of our church community and the style of
pastoral leadership we seek;

to maintain strict confidentiality in all we read, say, and hear—protecting both the privacy of each other and of potential candidates; to review all profiles with open minds and hearts, treating all candidates fairly and justly; to seek decisions not made by majority rule, but by the coming together of minds, hearts, and souls in a consensus that will build a firm foundation for the effective future mission and ministry of this church.

People:

We pledge, as a gathered community of faith, to be patient with you and to respect your need to be confidential in your task. We recognize that the work of our search committee is a difficult assignment and will take much effort. WE pray for you and offer our support and words of encouragement throughout this time.

These things we promise in the hope and belief that you will be obedient to the guidance of the Spirit as you seek a new pastor to minister with us.

Prayer

AND RESPOND IN LOVE

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

L: God be with you.
C: **And also with you.**
L: Let us pray

CONGREGATIONAL CHORAL RESPONSE

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand" (V.1) **NCH 472**

BRINGING FORTH OF TITHES AND OUR OFFERINGS AND PLEDGES (Please sign the friendship pad and pass to those next to you, then leave the pad in the pew.)

***DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.*

NCH 778

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Thank you, O God, for loving us and laboring with us as we seek you and as we help others in their seeking. Bless these offerings which we return to you, that in our seeking and our serving, our light might illumine someone's path. Guide us in your wisdom and love that we may use these gifts to manifest your presence in the world in all that we do. Amen.

***RECESSIONAL HYMN**

"Take My Life, God, Let it Be"

NCH 448

***THE BRINGING OF THE LIGHT OUT OF THE SANCTUARY**

***PASSING THE PEACE**

(The pastor will greet the first person in each row with "May the peace of God be with you." Please respond by saying, "...and with your spirit." Then greet the person next to you with "May the peace of God be with you," etc.)

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *"We Are Marching in the Light of God"* (refrain)

NCH 526

(Sing through once—the organ will play during the Benediction—then sing again with spirit.)

***THE BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**