

The message
of **THE CROSS**
is foolishness
to those who are
perishing,
but to us who
are being saved

IT IS THE POWER OF GOD

1 Corinthians 1:18

New Covenant Presbyterian Church
March 7, 2021 10:00am Service



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The Worship of God

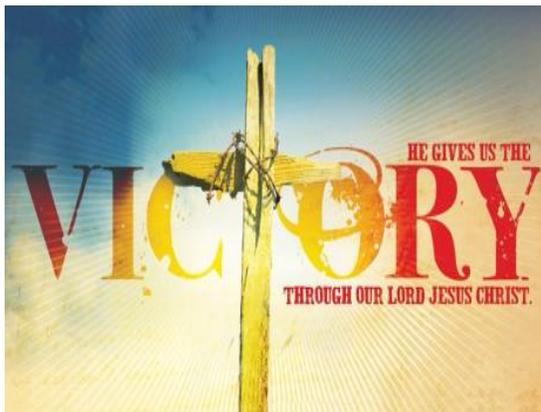
The Third Sunday of Lent

Welcome, Announcements and Sharing of Our Vision

Lay Leader:

Preparing to Meet God

Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Prelude...



The cross is not a sign of the church's quiet, suffering submission to the powers-that-be, but rather the church's revolutionary participation in the victory of Christ over these powers. The cross is not a symbol for general human suffering and oppression. Rather, the cross is a sign of what happens when one takes God's account of reality more seriously than Caesar's. The cross stands as God's (and our) eternal NO to the power of death, as well as God's eternal YES to humanity, God's remarkable determination not to leave us to our own devices. - Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*

We all recognize those blue handicapped signs marking reserved parking spaces for those with mobility issues. The handicap sign is getting a makeover. This reminds us of the importance of logos, signs and symbols. Christians have an important sign – the cross. Does it perhaps need a makeover too?

Call to Worship

- L: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
P: We gather together to sing our praise to God's glory.
- L: The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.
P: We gather with open hearts and souls, to receive the comforting presence of the Lord.
- L: The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever;
P: The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.
- A: O God, as we gather in gratitude, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, our rock and our redeemer. To you we lift our voices in praise this day!**

*Hymn of Praise # red 331

God of the Ages

*God of the ages, whose almighty hand,
 Leads forth in beauty all the starry band,
 Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies,
 Our grateful songs before thy throne arise.*

*Thy love divine hath lead us in the past.
In this free land by thee our lot is cast.
Be thou our ruler, guardian, guide, and stay:
Thy word our law, thy paths our chosen way.*

*From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be thy strong arm our ever-sure defense.
Thy true religion in our hearts increase.
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.*

*Refresh thy people on their toilsome way.
Lead us from night to never ending day.
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine,
And glory, laud, and praise be ever thine.*

Prayer of Confession

God of love, you gave us the covenant of the Law to guide us and to help us live with our neighbors in love. When we break you Law, we leave our neighbors hurt and bruised. Your Law is a gift to us., showing us how to keep our part of the covenant. Even through old pain and wounds, may we embrace the new life that Christ can provide. And now, holy God, we turn to you in silent prayer to share our concerns and to seek your forgiveness.....Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

- L: May the God of the Law guide us in living lives that keep the covenant of love.
P: May Christ's forgiveness grant us new life, even when we break God's Law.
 L: May the Holy Spirit of conviction lead us to confession and renewal,
P: That we would respond in love and thanksgiving to the God of covenant and change.

Meeting God in the Word

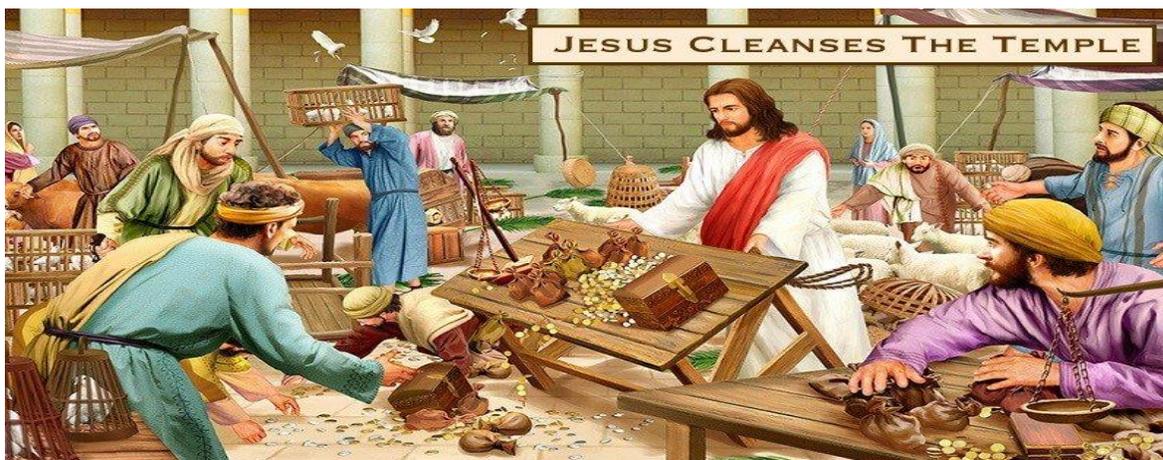
Children's Message

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson

John 2: 13-22

Jesus Cleanses the Temple



The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the moneychangers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the moneychangers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!' His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 1: 18-25

Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God



For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Sermon

The Symbol of the Cross

Responding to the Word

*Hymn # 293-red

Loving Spirit
(sung to tune of *The Servant Song*, #727 red book)

*Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,
You have chosen me to be,
You have drawn me to your wonder,
You have set your sign on me.*

*Like a mother you enfold me,
Hold my life within your own,
Feed me with your very body,
Form me of your flesh and bone.*

*Like a father you protect me,
Teach me the discerning eye,
Hoist me up upon your shoulder,
Let me see the world from high.*

*Friend and lover, in your closeness,
I am known and held and blessed:
In your promise is my comfort,
In your presence I may rest.*

*Loving Spirit, loving Spirit,
You have chosen me to be,
You have drawn me to your wonder,
You have set your sign on me.*

***Affirmation of Faith**

L: The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;

P: *The command of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eye.*

L: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

P: *The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever;*

L: The ordinances of the Lord are true, all of them just.

P: *Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.*

L: They are more precious than gold, than a heap of purest gold;

P: *Sweeter also than syrup, or honey from the comb.*

A: *Lord, you have the words of everlasting life, and for that, we praise you and give you thanks.*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Cares Chorus:

*I cast all my cares upon you.
I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.
And anytime I don't know what to do,
I cast all my cares upon you.*

The Call to Celebrate Our Gifts

The Invitation *You are invited to place your offering in the basket in the back of the sanctuary.*

Prayer of Dedication We give our gifts mindful of the countless blessings that have come our way in the week gone by. In this time of worship, loving God, we have been awakened to the glory of your world through the beauty of music. Our minds have been challenged by the reading of scripture and our souls have been touched by the preaching of your Word. We have affirmed our faith and spoken honestly to you in times of prayer. In gratitude for all that has been given to us in our time together, we respond with generous hearts and hands as we dedicate our offering to you. Amen.

Going Out to Serve God

* Hymn # red 494

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

*Jesus, thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou fount of life, thou light of all,
From the best bliss that earth imparts,
We turn, unfilled, to heed thy call.*

*Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on thee call;
To them that seek thee thou art good,
To them that find thee, all in all.*

*We taste thee, O thou living bread,
And long to feast upon thee still;
We drink of thee, the fountainhead,
And thirst our souls from thee to fill.*

*Our restless spirits yearn for thee,
Where'er our changeful lot is cast,
Glad when they gracious smile we see,
Blest when our faith can hold thee fast.*

*O Jesus, ever with us stay;
Make all our moments calm and bright.
O chase the night of sin away;
Shed o'er the world, thy holy light.*

* Blessing

L: As we go forth from this place on our Lenten journey, let us be mindful that the cross of Christ calls us to rise to our greater selves.

P: *We will pick up the cross and follow faithfully this week in the footsteps of the One who has gone before -*

L: The One who is – who was – and who forever shall be – CHRIST THE LORD!
And may the blessings of God ...

*Response

*He Is Lord
He is Lord, He is Lord!
He is risen from the dead and he is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess,
That Jesus Christ is Lord.*

