

Wednesday, March 15, 2023
Season in Lent
Six O'clock in the Evening

The Worship of God

The Prologue

The season of Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Easter. It is a period of forty days – like the flood of Genesis, Moses' sojourn at Mount Sinai, Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb, Jonah's call to Nineveh to repent and Jesus' time of testing in the wilderness. (The Sundays in Lent are not counted in this reckoning of the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter, as every Lord's Day is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.) In the early church, Lent was a time of preparation for the celebration of baptism at the Easter Vigil. In many communities of faith, it remains a time to equip and nurture candidates for baptism and confirmation and to reflect deeply on the theme of baptismal discipleship.

Gathering Music

The Greeting

The Spirit of the still speaking God be with you.

And also with you.

The Call to Worship and Welcome.

The Music for Contemplation

The Opening Prayer

Let us pray to the Lord,

Gracious God, as beloved faith community we are grateful for this contemplative season we call Lent. We would ask that during these forty days we would be empowered to hold strong to the commitments and the convictions we have made as a part of our Lenten discipline. Whether we have promised to pray more, eat less, deny ourselves of excess, or give to those in need, our goal is to be faithful to you as we follow in Jesus' footsteps. In everything we say and do let our actions lead us to you, reminding us of your bountiful love for us.

Amen.

The Opening Hymn, No. 265

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart

MORECAMBE

The Litany

We are gathered here to remember the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth!

With our lives we honor the one whose life we celebrate and whose death we mourn!

Jesus' death reminds us of the deaths of many innocents, those who have stood fast against the forces of oppression, of hatred, and of evil!

May the story of Jesus' commitment to truth inspire in us to speak the truth in love and to dwell together in peace and harmony, helping one another!

(OVER)

The Confession in the Form of The Decalogue

God spoke these words, and said: I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

Honor your father and mother!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

You shall not kill!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

You shall not commit adultery!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

You shall not steal!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

You shall not covet!

Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this commandment.

Jesus summarized the Decalogue into two great commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it! You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets!"

The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart. The commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to our eyes.

Let us pray, Gracious Lord, through water and the Spirit you have made us your own. You forgive us and bring us to newness of life. Continue to strengthen us with your Spirit, and daily increase in us your gifts of grace. Fill us with a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of knowledge and the love of God, and a spirit of joy in your presence. All this we pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

A Reading from Scripture

The Meditation

The Closing Hymn, No. 512

The Benediction

The Music for Reflection

Accompanist, Linda Brainard

PSALM 23

Dale Bishop

SURSUM CORDA

When Aimless Violence Takes Those We Love