



# SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

PEWEE VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT – March 17, 2024  
10:30 A.M.

**Bold text** is read or sung by the congregation.

**\*Please rise in body or spirit.**

PVPC welcomes children and encourages them to participate in our entire worship service. There is a special place for them and their parents in the front of the sanctuary, please join us.

This Lent, we welcome you to the journey. As we enter our sanctuary for the worship services of Lent – from Ash Wednesday through six Sundays and Maundy Thursday – we will be stepping into the **Wilderness** to be led by the Spirit of God, gentle and restless. Through liturgy, prayers, sermon, scripture, and song we will find ourselves shaped and formed for Easter morning and all that lies beyond.

AS you prepare your heart for worship this morning, consider:

What seeds planted in your wilderness have grown into a garden? What are the seeds you are planting even now that you pray will one day bloom?

After James Manley completed his first draft, he felt the “prodding and pushing” of the Holy Spirit as both a “comforter and challenger.” We use this refrain to begin our worship this year. How, and where, is the Spirit “prodding and pushing” you?

## GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

### The Wilderness is a Place of New Life – Resilient Life

a Poem by Sarah Are

I used to think the wilderness would never end. I called my mom and asked “Does time really heal all wounds? Do the pieces ever fall back into place? Does the wilderness go on forever?” So she told me about the horizon. She said, “There is an edge, where the earth meets the sky. And when you’re there, you will see daisies in the sidewalk and the sun after the rain.”

I asked her to draw me a map and she cried, because she knew this road was mine to walk, but she promised to wait for me, day in and day out, for as long as the wilderness raged. So I walked ...

Until one day, I realized – The earth always kisses the sky. And this wilderness has turned into a garden, and I have made it out alive. And my mother hugged me, there at the earth’s edge. And she whispered in my ear, that God was that gardener, and that I had nothing to fear.

So if you ever ask for a map, know that God and I will be planting seeds, hoping to turn your wilderness into a garden. For as long as the wilderness rages on, I will never stop looking for you where the earth kisses the sky.

## THE RINGING OF THE BELL and A TIME OF SILENCE

### A LENTEN INVITATION

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness (refrain only)

Refrain

Spir - it, spir - it of gen - tle-ness, blow through the  
wil - der-ness, call - ing and free. Spir - it,  
spir - it of rest - less - ness, stir me from plac - id-ness,  
wind, wind on the sea. Fine

*In a plea for forgiveness (Kyrie Eleison), Norwegian composer, Ola Gjeilo's "The Spheres" weaves together ethereal harmonies, evoking a sense of wonder and celestial beauty.*

*During the Prelude on the six Sundays of Lent, meditate on the "Lenten Poem" and how you may more faithfully engage the world in your Easter life to come.*

*Few Welsh hymns are as well-known or loved as this 18<sup>th</sup> century text that did not gain its popular tune until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In both its original text and in English translation, it is a stirring hymn of pilgrimage filled with vivid imagery from Hebrew Scripture.*

*In the presence of the Holy God, we become aware of the ways we fall short of God's best hopes for us, and the ways we have hurt others. We turn to God in prayer, asking for forgiveness.*

*We sing of the mysterious Grace of God, of forgiveness and new life. During the Lenten season we remain seated, aware that the only adequate response to this "wondrous love" is to "sing on."*

*We express gratitude that through God's grace and Christ's giving of himself on the cross, we are forgiven and restored to God and one another.*

*"The Holy Heart" is a sacred song that invites listeners on a journey into the heart of Christ's mercy and grace. This arrangement skillfully transitions from whispered silence to soaring crescendos of praise, beautifully capturing the essence of devotion and spirituality.*

# PREPARING OUR HEARTS

## PRELUDE "The Spheres"

OLA GJEILO

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Linda Heleringer

Leader: We have been in the wilderness—  
People: Discerning and working, seeking and dreaming.  
Leader: We have been in the wilderness—  
People: Grieving and wondering, praying and hoping.  
Leader: We have been in the wilderness, but we have not been alone;  
People: For God walks with us, every step of the way.  
ALL: LET US WORSHIP THE GOD OF OUR DARKEST NIGHTS  
AND BRIGHTEST DAYS.

## \*OPENING HYMN NO. 65

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

CWM RHONDDA

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: As we confess before God and one another, we pray ...

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Gracious God, You invite us to plant a garden of love and harmony, but we grow weeds of prejudice and hatred. You invite us to sow joy and gratitude, but we scatter seeds of greed and envy. You call us to tend the soil of fear and denial, but instead we close our eyes and let the earth suffer. Forgive us. You invited us to plant a garden, and we lost ourselves in the wilderness. Clear our hearts. Breathe life into these weary bones and grant us a fresh start. hear now our silent prayers of return ... (*a time of silence for personal confession*)

## SUNG RESPONSE, Hymn No. 215 (*first stanza, seated*)

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss  
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,  
To bear the heavy cross for my soul!

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Our hearts are washed anew in the healing waters of God's love.

**For the steadfast love of God endures forever ...**

Through the Holy Spirit, God nourishes us into life.

**For the steadfast love of God endures forever ...**

**WHAT A WONDROUS LOVE THIS IS, INDEED.**

# HEARING GOD'S WORD

## SACRED SPACE: A Time for Our Younger Disciples

## MUSICAL OFFERING

The PVPC Men's Quartet

"The Holy Heart"

*In the Presbyterian Church, a sermon based on the Scripture(s) read in worship, proclaims the good news of the risen Lord, equips us to follow him more faithfully, and inspires us to proclaim the gospel to others through our own words and deeds.*

*Unlike many hymns on the theme of healing, this text includes the ministry of medical personnel as instruments of God's healing activity. It also acknowledges that illness includes mental, emotional, and spiritual, not just physical.*

#### **THE IONA COMMUNITY**

*The Iona Community is an ecumenical Christian community that is committed to seeking new ways of living the Gospel in today's world. It was founded in 1938, the community now has over 250 members, women and men, lay and ordained, from many backgrounds and different church traditions. At the three residential centers –on Iona and on the Ross of Mull – guests are welcomed from March through October and over Christmas.*

*Do you remember the first time you heard the Lord's Prayer?*

*Most of us can't only not remember when we first heard this prayer, we can't remember when we memorized it, because memorizing wasn't a conscious effort. Lent is an appropriate time to consider the prayer Jesus taught us to pray in a careful way. As you pray this season, try "embodying" the prayer by following the liturgist in the front of the sanctuary. In any case, don't just "recite" the prayer this Lent, **think** about the words so you may experience it anew.*

*The offertory is an original Swedish hymn entitled "O Store Gud" written in 1885 by Carl Boberg. In a nationwide poll done by Christianity Today, the hymn was the second most popular hymn after "Amazing Grace."*

**SCRIPTURE LESSON** John 11:1-26 (27-44)

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** INTO THE WILDERNESS: A Place of Resilience Rev. Joel Weible

## **RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**\*PROCLAMATION HYMN NO. 796**

"We Come to You for Healing, Lord"

LAND OF REST

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (*unison*)

from THE IONA COMMUNITY

We believe that God hopes and works for a world where all shall be included in the feast of life and that in Christ we see how costly it is to bring that world about.

We believe that God of all the earth is at work beyond the churches as well as within them, working for justice, so that all may have a say in what happens to them.

We long for the time when all who hunger and thirst for justice shall be satisfied and we believe that despite the persistence of evil, now is always the time when more good can be done and we *can* make a difference. Amen.

**TIME OF GIVING THANKS**

CELEBRATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER** (*unison*)

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.

**PRESENTATION OF GIFTS, TITHES, AND OFFERINGS**

**OFFERTORY** "How Great Thou Art"

arr. DALE WOOD

*Doxology literally means "words of glory." Doxologies have long been used by Jews and Christians to praise God. Here we honor and thank God "from whom all blessings flow."*

## \*DOXOLOGY



## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*unison*)

God of all true power and glory, we thank you that once again we travel with Jesus toward Jerusalem, not with a sword to challenge the powers of this world, but with Love to transform them. May these gifts be a sign of the offering of our whole selves in this season. Amen.

## \*CLOSING HYMN NO. 378

"We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom"

MERLE'S TUNE

## \*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Reverend Joel Weible

## \*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

## THE RINGING OF THE BELL

## POSTLUDE "An Irish Blessing"

JAMES MANSFIELD

*Whether you're drawn to the mystical allure of Celtic melodies or appreciate the artistry of organ postludes, James Mansfield's original composition of "An Irish Blessing" invites reflection, gratitude, and a sense of connection to something greater.*

**PLEASE NOTE:** Food and drinks are not allowed in the Sanctuary

### *IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...*

All elements of recent services may be heard on our website;  
transcripts, videos, and audio podcasts can also be found:

**PeweeValleyPresbyterian.org**

PVPC proudly introduces our *Pray-ground* in the front of the Sanctuary: a flexible seating space geared toward families with children that offers us the opportunity to teach children how to worship in age-appropriate ways as they grow in their discipleship. All who desire are invited to "come forward!"