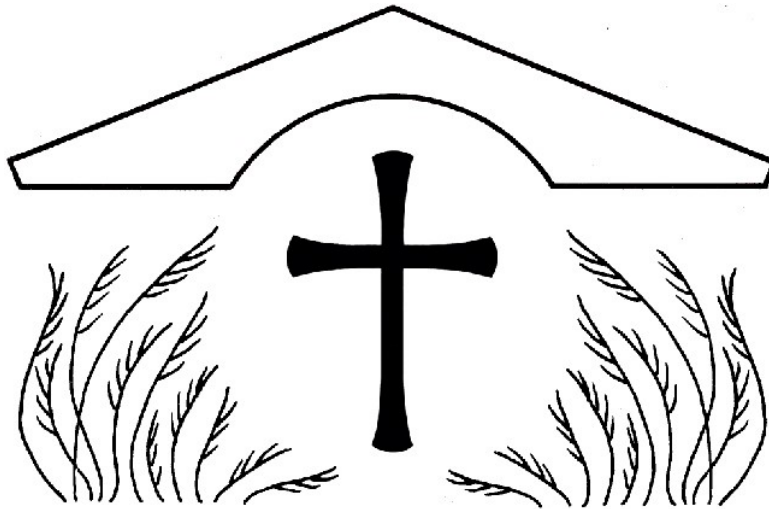


ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Third Sunday in Lent

March 3, 2024



Ministers

Rector

Deacon

Senior Warden

Junior Warden

Minister of Music

Cantor

Administrative Assistant

The People of the Parish

The Rev. Christy Laborda Harris

The Rev. Kate Sefton

Jean Farmer

Meg Nalley

Miles McKenzie

Kristina Ibarra

Jun Kim

Welcome to the holy season of Lent! Lent is the 40 day period from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday. Lent is a time of return, a time of refocusing our lives and hearts. It is a time of austerity with extra prayer and meditation to prepare ourselves to appreciate the full joy and glory of Easter and the good news of God's power over death. Traditionally we do not use altar flowers during this season, giving the altar a simpler and more sedate appearance. And we save our joyful shouts of "Alleluia" until Easter. We make these changes in order to set this time aside and mark it as different.

Many people think that Lent is a fearful dark time, but we need to remember that we know the end of the story. We are loved by the God who is stronger than death. There is nothing to fear! We are not observing Lent because we were bad or in order to make God love us. We are observing Lent because we love God and we want to experience God's love for us even more fully.

"Walking in the Wilderness" is a Lenten service written by Pat Bennett and published by the Iona Community.

The Gathering of the Community

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Be Still and Know

please stand

Be still and know that I am God. Be still and know that I

am. Be still and know. Be still. Be. Be.

As desired Final

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Presider Driven by the Spirit Jesus went out to inhabit a liminal place. For forty days and nights, homeless and weary, famished and footsore, he wandered and watched and wrestled ...

People **For forty days and nights, companioned and comforted by animals and angels, he traversed and tested and tempered... And then, knowing who he was, seeing where he must go, understanding what he should do, Jesus, filled with the Spirit, returned from the uncharted place to do the work of the Kingdom.**

Presider Jesus, by your example you challenge us to make this season a journey of discovery;

People **As we leave comforting landmarks behind to inhabit and explore our own uncharted places, help us to discern who we are and embrace what we might become.**

Presider Jesus, by your words and actions you show us how to watch and wait and wrestle;

People **As we listen now to those familiar stories and savor afresh your wit and wisdom, help us to recognize where we are and envisage where we need to move to.**

Presider Jesus, you offer us your company in the known and the unknown places;

People **As we touch hands with you now through story and song, and in bread and wine, help us to better understand the threads of our lives and see how to weave them with yours into the patterns of God's Kingdom.**

CONFESSION

Deacon God of the in-between thin places, you draw us into the quietness of the desert so that we can encounter ourselves...

People **But we confess that all too often we stubbornly cling to false images rather than face the necessity of change.**

Deacon You call us into the emptiness of the desert so that we can confront our desires...

People **But we confess that all too often we continue to choose our own comfort rather than serving the needs of others.**

Deacon You drive us into the dangers of the desert so that we can engage with your Kingdom...

People **But we confess that all too often we prefer the smooth roads of safety over the perilous pathways of justice.**

Forgive us, O God, wherever we have chosen to be, or do, or dare less than you have asked of us; and as we walk on in the desert with you, help us watch and wrestle with these things so that we might choose differently in future.

ABSOLUTION

God forgives you.
Forgive others;
Forgive yourself.

God strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in life eternal. **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

Lord of the overturning, your passion sweeps away the calculating religion, the pious profiteering which keep us safely outside the holy places: may we find our way through the debris of all that protected us to find your dangerous heart and our world upside down; through Jesus Christ, our exiled Lord. **Amen.**

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS (20:1-17)

please be seated

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 19

- 1 The heavens declare your glory, O God, *
and the firmament shows your handiwork.**
- 2 One day tells its tale to another, *
and one night imparts knowledge to another.**
- 3 Although they have no words or language, *
and their voices are not heard,**
- 4 Their sound has gone out into all lands, *
and their message to the ends of the world.**
- 5 In the deep you have set a pavilion for the sun; *
it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.**

- 6 It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens
and runs about to the end of it again; *
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.**
- 7 Your law, O God, is perfect and revives the soul; *
your testimony is sure and gives wisdom to the innocent.**
- 8 Your statutes are just and rejoice the heart; *
your commandment is clear and gives light to the eyes.**
- 9 The fear of you is clean and endures for ever; *
your judgments are true and righteous altogether.**
- 10 More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, *
sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.**
- 11 By them also is your servant enlightened, *
and in keeping them there is great reward.**
- 12 Who can tell how often one offends? *
Cleanse me from my secret faults.**
- 13 Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins;
let them not get dominion over me; *
then shall I be whole and sound,
and innocent of a great offense.**
- 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight, *
O God, my strength and my redeemer.**

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A READING FROM PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS (1:18-25)

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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING

John 2:13-22

please stand

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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 money changers 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 money changers 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 marketplace!" 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

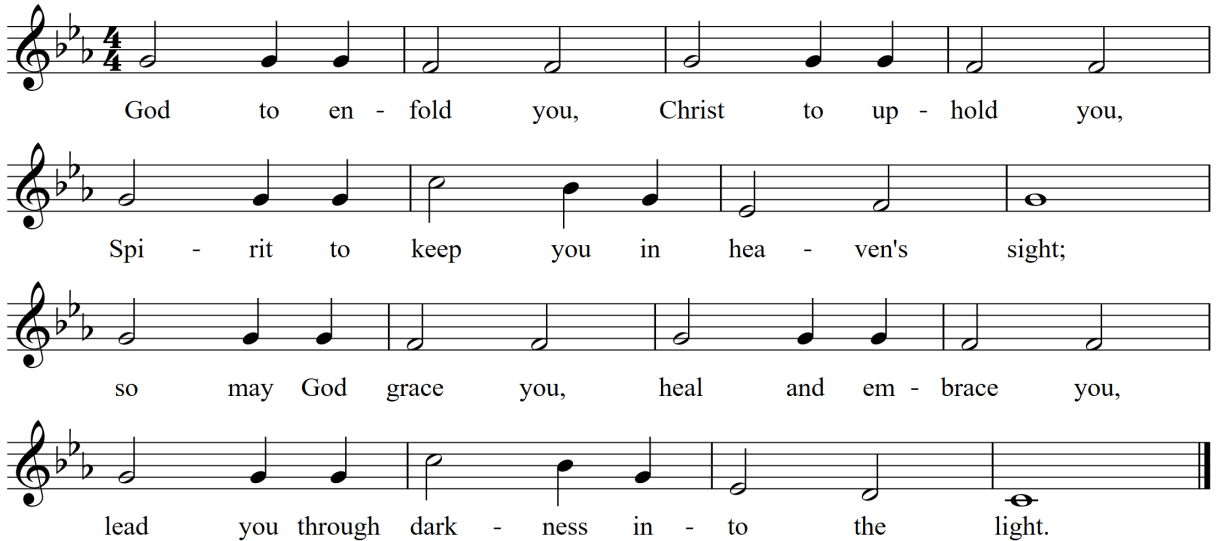
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

SERMON

The Rev. Christy Laborda Harris

please be seated

A period of silent reflection follows the sermon



God to en - fold you, Christ to up - hold you,
 Spi - rit to keep you in hea - ven's sight;
 so may God grace you, heal and em - brace you,
 lead you through dark - ness in - to the light.

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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

In penitence and faith let us make our prayer, asking for mercy and grace, saying: God, revealed in the world, **Walk, watch, and wait with us.**

For people in all faiths, that they may triumph over evil and grow in grace, God, revealed in the world, **Walk, watch, and wait with us.**

For the leaders and citizens of the nations, that you will guide them in the ways of mercy and truth, God, revealed in the world, **Walk, watch, and wait with us.**

For all those in danger and need, the sick, the suffering, and the oppressed, that they may not be forgotten, and that we may see our way to reaching out in love and hope, God, revealed in the world, **Walk, watch, and wait with us.**

For the sick in body, mind and spirit, that they may know your power to heal, especially those we name now either aloud or in our hearts... God, revealed in the world, **Walk, watch, and wait with us.**

For those who have died and those who mourn, that they may rest in the assurance of your everlasting life and love, especially those we now name... God, revealed in the world, **Walk, watch, and wait with us.**

Presider Blessed are you, O Lord our God, who made us in your image, who gathers us in loving arms, and who placed your word on our lips and in our hearts. Receive the prayers we offer this day for all those in need in every place; grant us strength on our journey and breathe upon us with your Holy Spirit. We pray in the name of your son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

PEACE

May the peace of God, the comforting peace of familiar presence, the untamed peace of wilderness places, the challenging peace of watching and wrestling, surround and shape your journey onwards. The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

*You are invited to pass the peace
distanced and respectfully.*

The Holy Communion

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Spacious Firmament on High
*Words by Joseph Addison,
Music by Franz Joseph Haydn*

please be seated

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

please stand

*Ostinato Refrain



Turn our hearts to you, O God. With you there is heal-ing,
whole-ness and for-give-ness, free-dom from fear, last-ing peace.

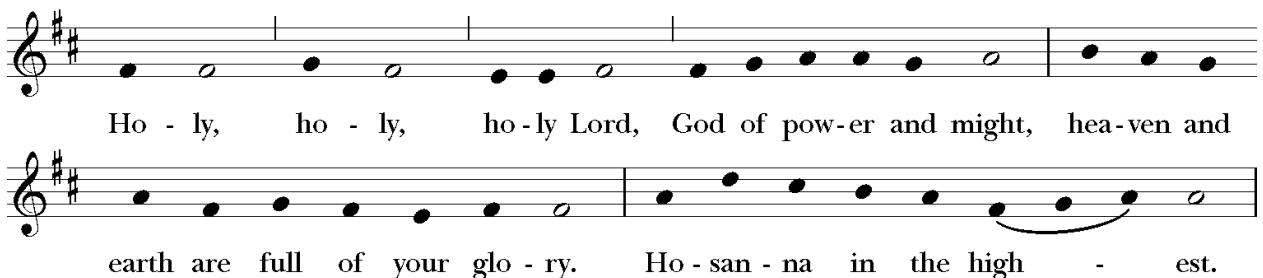
EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Presider The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Presider Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them to the Lord.**
Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord.
People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Like a tent in the wilderness the table of God stands open and ready as a place of sanctuary and safety, of hospitality and healing. So come, all you who are tired and travel-stained, footsore and famished; come with your fellow travelers and find companionship and comfort; for here, Jesus – who knows what it is to wander, watch and wrestle in desert places – waits to meet us and welcome us in, offering us rest and restoration, solace and strength, for the journey still to come.

Before going out into the wilderness of the Garden, Jesus sat down to eat and drink with his friends. To show them the challenge of the way ahead, and offer them gifts for that journey, he took bread – sustaining and wholesome – gave it to his friends and said, “Take, eat: This is my body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” He poured wine – earthy and warming – and said “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.” He shared these gifts as signs of his continuing presence with them throughout time to come.

And now, remembering that moment, and recognizing that its promise is also for us in this time and place, we too break bread and pour wine to share with one another. And in that action, we recognize and affirm with joy that Christ is present with us now, and throughout time to come; and we join our voices with those of all creation in the unending song of praise:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, hea - ven and
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

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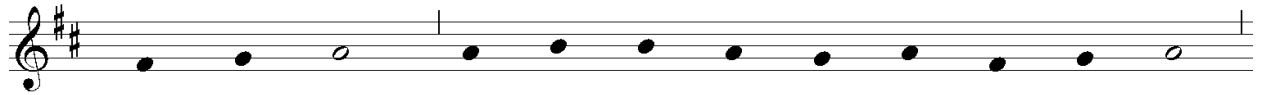
God of the thresholds, of in between times and spaces, send down upon us now, and on these gifts of bread and wine, that same Spirit who drove Jesus into the desert, that we too may be tempered and strengthened by your Presence and refreshed and renewed through your love.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

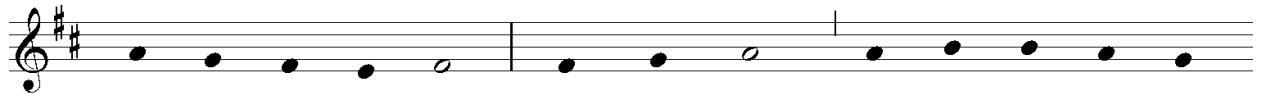
As Christ teaches us, we pray,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

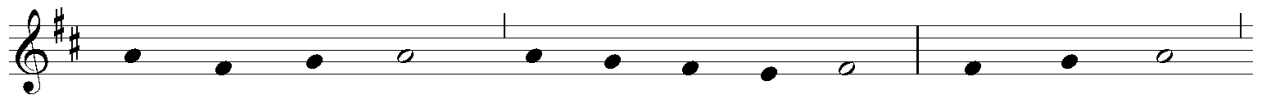
BREAKING OF THE BREAD



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:



have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

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The tent side is open, the table is set, and God waits for us to come in from the desert for a while and be refreshed. Wherever you are on your journey of faith,

You are welcome at this table.

All are welcome at the Lord's table. You are invited to come forward when the ushers indicate and stand or kneel at the communion rail. Please extend your hands together to receive the bread. Our bread is gluten free.

To receive the chalice, please help guide it to your lips. We are no longer intincting (dipping the bread). If you do not wish to receive the chalice, cross your arms and the chalice bearer will still say the words but not expect you to sip. If you prefer not to receive either bread or wine and would like a blessing, please cross your arms across your chest.

COMMUNION HYMN

Come now, O Prince of Peace



1. Come now, O Prince of Peace, make us one bod - y,
2. Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y,
3. Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior,
4. Come, Hope of u - ni - ty, make us one bod - y,

Korean: O - so - so o - so - so, pyong-hwa eui im - gum



Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec-on-cile your peo - ple.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec-on-cile your peo - ple.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec-on-cile all na - tions.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec-on-cile all na - tions.
U - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - so.

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COMMUNION HYMN

God the Sculptor of the Mountain

Music on opposite page

1. God the sculp-tor of the moun-tains, God the mil-ler of the sand,
 2. God the nui-sance to the Pha-raoh, God the cleav-er of the sea,
 3. God the un-ex-pect-ed in-fant, God the calm, de-ter-mined youth,
 4. God the dress-er of the vine-yard, God the plant-er of the wheat,

God the jewel-er of the heav-ens, God the pot-ter of the land:
 God the pil-lar of the dark-ness, God the bea-con of the free:
 God the ta-ble turn-ing pro-phet, God the res-ur-rect-ed Truth:
 God the reap-er of the har-vest, God the source of all we eat:

you are womb of all cre - a - tion, we are form - less; shape us now.
 you are gate of all de - liv' - rance, we are sight - less; lead us now.
 you are pres-ent ev-ery mo - ment, we are search-ing; meet us now.
 you are host at ev-ery ta - ble, we are hun - gry; feed us now.

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We thank you God for nourishing us.

God has called us to journey for a season through the wilderness places; And so, as Jesus did before us, we will set out once more to wander in an uncomfortable landscape and wrestle with its challenges, that through the tempering action of the Spirit, we may emerge ready to do the work of the Kingdom. Amen.

BLESSING

Look with compassion, O Lord, upon this your people; that, observing this holy season, we may know you more fully, and to learn to serve you with a more perfect will; and the blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECESSIONAL HYMN

372 Praise to the Living God

please stand

DISMISSAL

Let us go forth into the world, journeying with the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

