



**DOUGLAS UCC**  
A JUST WORLD FOR ALL

**Order of Service for Sunday, March 19, 2023**

## **Fourth Sunday in Lent**

**Thank you for joining us today.**

For Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Prayer List, [visit this week's E-Pistle here](#), where you can also subscribe to receive it by email, if you like.

**\*- stand if you wish to, and are able.**

**Congressional Responses in Bold**

**Prelude**     *The Gift*

**Peter Black**

(Please use this time for quiet reflection and preparation for worship)

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Lighting of Altar Candles & Ringing in the Hour**

Let us recognize the light of the world within us and ring in the hour of worship.

**Introit** (please stand)

*We Are Not Alone*

***We are not alone. We live in God's world. We are not alone. We live in God's world. We are called to seek out justice, to proclaim Christ, crucified and risen. Our light, and our hope. We are not alone. We are not alone. We are not alone.***

## **Call to Worship**

**Psalm 23**

**Reader: Eric Lejeune**

One: God is my shepherd, I shall not want.

***Many: God makes me lie down in green pastures.***

One: God leads me beside still waters.

***Many: God restores my soul and leads me in right paths.***

One: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;

***Many: For you, O God, are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me.***

One: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

***Many: You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.***

One: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

***Many: And, I shall dwell in the house of God my whole life long. Amen.***

### **\*Opening Hymn,**

There is a Balm

(Green Gather Hymnal No. 648)

(Find Music at the end of this program)

## **Unison Prayer**

***Loving God, the Psalmist sings, "I will lift up my eyes," reminding us of our spiritual vision. To "lift up" our eyes is to open them to comprehend your presence in all things, to see rays of hope and faith rather than shadows of doubt and fear. Let our eyes be opened to the light of your truth. Restore our vision and help us to see more clearly. Help us to see as you see and to love as you love. We seek to know of your perfect love, light, and vision. Let our eyes be opened now to your everlasting love and goodness. This we ask in the spirit of Jesus, our Way Shower. Amen.***

## **Assurance of Grace and Peace**

One: Peace be with you.

Many: *And also with you.*

One: Let us offer one another a sign of Peace.

## **Passing the Peace**      *Spirit of Life*

*Spirit of life come unto me.*

*Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.*

*Blow in the wind, rise in the sea.*

*Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.*

*Roots hold me close – wings set me free.*

*Spirit of life come to me, come to me.*

## **Words of Integration & Guidance**

Ed Taylor

During Jesus' lifetime, most people believed in miracles. Gods and demi-gods such as Hercules and Isis all reportedly healed the sick and overcame death. There were also myths about philosophers like Pythagoras calming storms at sea, chasing away pestilences, and being greeted as gods. The achievements of the first century Apollonius were so famous, and so similar to those of Jesus, that early opponents of Christianity used Apollonius' accomplishments to argue that Jesus was neither original nor divine. In the earlier synoptic gospels – Mark, Matthew, and Luke – Jesus refuses to use miraculous signs to prove his authority, but the miracles in later gospel of John are performed to confirm his divinity. John's gospel adds miracle stories that appear to have been unknown to earlier gospel writers; for instance, he tells about Jesus turning water into wine, restoring an invalid to wholeness, healing of a man who had been blind since birth, and raising Lazarus from the dead. To be considered a divine wise man during this time in history, the populous expected miracles and other wondrous acts to prove divinity. Some of the miracles of Jesus are similar to some of Buddha's: Jesus walked on the Sea of Galilee; Buddha crossed the River Ganges without a boat. Jesus by a word or the touch of his hand healed the sick; Buddha healed a sick woman by a single look. Jesus fed five thousand on five loaves and two small fishes; Buddha fed five hundred with no previous supplies. The similarities make me wonder: Did Jesus' miraculous acts really happen or were they attempts by the early Christian community to prove Jesus' divinity? Personally, I think Jesus would be amazed and even disturbed to hear the miraculous things he supposedly did during his life.

# Open Our Eyes

## **The Words of Holy Scripture**

One: A Reading of Scripture from Ephesians 5:8-14

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

*Many: Thanks be to God.*

## **The Gospel Lesson**

One: The Holy Gospel according to John 9:1-30

*Many: Glory to you, O Christ.*

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

*Many: Praise to you, O Christ.*

## **Homily**

“A New Vision” Rev. Salvatore Sapienza

## **Offering & Offertory**

*Healed*

**Stan Greene and Peter Black**

Composers: Kevin Stokes & Joel Guinness

## **Joys & Concerns/Tibetan Prayer Bell**

One: Thanks be to God!

**Many: Alleluia!**

One: O God,

**Many: Hear our prayer.**

## **\*Doxology**

*Grateful*

*Grateful for the life you give us, thankful for your Holy Son,*

*Joyful in your Spirit flowing over all O God of Love.*

*Grateful for the bread of heaven, thankful for your holy word,*

*Joyful in your mercy flowing, we will praise you.*

**\*Celebration of Holy Communion**

One: God be with you.

**Many:** *And also with you.*

One: Lift up your hearts.

**Many:** *We lift them up to God.*

One: Let us give thanks to God.

**Many:** *It is good to give God thanks & praise*

**\*Creation's Praise** *Holy, Holy (St. Anne)*

*Holy, Holy, Holy God of Hosts.*

*Heaven and earth are full of your glory.*

*Hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.*

*Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.*

*Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.*

*(Please be seated)*

**Breaking of the Bread** *Let Us Be Bread*

*Let us be bread, blessed by the Lord,  
broken and shared, life for the world.*

*Let us be wine, love freely poured.*

*Let us be one with the Lord.*

**Sharing of the Bread & Cup**

(grape juice only on both sides of the aisle)

Receive the Bread of Life. **Amen.**

The Cup of Love, the Drink of Compassion. **Amen.**

## **\*The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Mother/Father, always and everywhere, 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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the  
glory forever. Amen.*

## **\*Hymn of Sending**

*You Are Mine*

(Green Gather Hymnal No. 649)

(Find Music at the end of this program)

## **Benediction**

## **Postlude**

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

Peter Black

Keep up with the Douglas UCC community  
and the work of our service groups here:

[www.douglasucc.org](http://www.douglasucc.org)

<https://www.youtube.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.facebook.com/douglasucc>

<https://www.instagram.com/douglasucc>

## 648 There Is a Balm in Gilead

Refrain



There is a balm in Gil-e-ad To make the wound-ed whole,

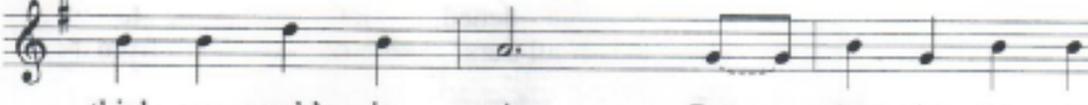


There is a balm in Gil-e-ad To heal the sin-sick soul.

Verses



1. Some - times I feel dis - cour - aged And  
 2. If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, If you  
 3. Don't ev - er feel dis - cour - aged, For



think my work's in vain, But then the Ho - ly  
 can - not pray like Paul, You can tell the love of  
 Je - sus is your friend; And if you lack for



Spir - it Re - vives my soul a - gain.  
 Je - sus, And say, "He died for all!"  
 knowl - edge He'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

D.C.

Text: Jeremiah 8:22, African-American spiritual

Tune: BALM IN GILEAD, Irregular; African-American spiritual; acc. by Robert J. Batistini, b.1942, © 1987, GIA Publications, Inc.

## You Are Mine 649

## Verses



1. I will come to you in the si-lence,  
 2. I am hope for all who are hope-less,  
 3. I am strength for all the des-pair-ing,  
 4. am the Word that leads all to free-dom, I



I will lift you from all your fear.  
 I am eyes for all who long to see. In the  
 heal-ing for the ones who dwell in shame.  
 am the peace the world can-not give.



You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice, be  
 shad-ows of the night, I will be your light,  
 All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and  
 I will call your name, em-brac-ing all your pain, stand



still and know I am here. (To verse 2)  
 come and rest in me. (To refrain)  
 all will know my name. (To refrain)  
 up, now walk, and live! (To refrain)

## Refrain



Do not be a-fraid, I am with you. I have called you each by



name. Come and fol-low me, I will bring you home; I



love you and you are mine.

D.C.

4. I

