

Reflective Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Each stanza will end with, "Lord, hear our prayers"
The people will respond with, "**Again and again.**"

There will be a moment of silence following that and people may lift up prayers during this time.

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.

Closing Hymn: *I Danced in the Morning (vs. 1-3)* Hymn. 302

Lenten Blessing and Charge (Communal) Matthew Benz-Whittington

**As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.
May your arms hold those in need. May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God's grace.
And may this be your rhythm—
Again and again and again, Until God's promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself, Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace. Amen.**

Postlude *My Faith Has Found a Resting Place* Gretry / Labenske

Liturgy and artwork are from *A Sanctified Art* LLC which we will use throughout the Lenten Season.

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Highland Presbyterian Church Maryville, TN



**Sunday, February 21, 2021
1st Sunday of Lent**

Our Mission:
Highland Presbyterian Church seeks to be a diverse and inclusive Christian Community as we embody the love and forgiveness of Jesus by serving the community and the world, drawing people to Christ.

Prelude *His Eye Is on the Sparrow* Gabriel / Labenske

Welcome Rev. Matthew Benz-Whittington

Call to Worship (Responsive) Jamease Kowalczyk

One: God meets us in the night—
**All: Before the sun rises,
Before the wound heals,
Before there are answers,
Before there is closure.**

One: God meets us in the light—
**All: Where joy is effervescent,
Where laughter is contagious,
Where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
And where people gather around the table.**

One: God meets us at the threshold—

**All: At the edge of the water,
At the beginning of the wilderness, At the start of something new,
On the edge of faith.**

One: And if God meets us in all those places,
Then surely God meets us in between—
All: Staying with us through the wilderness.

One: We are not alone. God is all around.
All: Let us worship the God of the here and now.

Call to Confession

Rev. Matthew Benz-Whittington

Visual Prayer of Confession

Words of Forgiveness

Rev. Matthew Benz-Whittington

Lent Music

Jesus Remember Me

Sing a New Creation Pg. 143

Time for the Children

Matthew

***Opening hymn:**

God of the Sparrow (vs. 1,3,5)

Hymn. 272

Prayer for Illumination (Communal)

Jamease Kowalczyk

Holy God,
If I am honest, faith often feels like water in my hands.
No matter how hard I try to hold onto it, some of it always slips through— Like droplets of truth
running down my wrists, back toward my heart.
This human inability to hold onto you leaves me thirsty for more.

So as we prepare to read scripture,
I pray that once again, you would meet us here.

Meet us in our hope and our heartache.
Meet us in our fear and our joy,

Meet us in our cupped hands and clenched fists.

And even if the water keeps running,
And we do not have a sky-parting moment of clarity, Or a tangible sense that you are near;
Even if we do not hear the words, “This is my beloved,” Ringing in our ears,
We will trust that you are near,
Always and forever meeting us here,
Running toward our hearts.
Gratefully we pray,
Amen.

Scripture:

Genesis 9:8-17

Sermon:

Matthew Benz-Whittington

Special Music

Morning Has Broken

Affirmation of Faith (Communal)

Jamease Kowalczyk

**We believe in a God who is everywhere and right here,
Bigger than the sky and in the smallest details,
All at once and in every moment.**

**We believe that God meets us where we are—
In heartbreak and high hopes,
Around crowded tables and in quiet homes,
In joy and in suffering,**

**In loneliness and in connection, In sanctuaries and in living rooms, In marches and in waiting
rooms.**

**We believe that nothing we do or leave undone,
Can distance us from God’s love.
God is forever drawing us close and pulling us in.
Again and again,
God meets us where we are
And invites us into wholeness.**

Thanks be to God for a love like that.