



God of Second Chances

-Luke 13:1-9



SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 2022

BUILDING FUND SUNDAY

St. Mark's/St. James United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz
Reader: Sandy Perronne

Organist: Kathy Jurk/Randy Sohn
Choir Director: Cindy Sohn

Meditative Music
Bells Ring Prelude

Gathering for Worship:

St. Mark's: *Cleansing Fountain*

St. James: *Mighty Are Thy Works, O Lord*

Call to Worship: (responsively)

L: A great teacher once said, "When Jesus Christ calls us, he bids us come and die" (*Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship*). We are the people who have responded to this call.

LEFT SIDE: Through Christ, we want to die to the fears that keep us from loving.

RIGHT SIDE: Through Christ, we want to die to the stubbornness that keeps us from sharing our gifts.

LEFT SIDE: Through Christ, we want to die to seeking our own success and salvation in disregard for the good of all God's children.

RIGHT SIDE: This is God's promise, that if we die with Christ, we will also rise with Christ.

ALL: God be praised for the glorious promise of new life in Christ. Alleluia.

Opening Prayer:

O God of everflowing grace, you fill our every need and satisfy our every hunger. As we come before you to feast on your goodness our mouths are filled with praise for your wonderful Name. Fill us with the Holy Spirit and may we bring great joy in our praise and worship. *Amen.*

Hymn of Praise: (#287 Hymnal)

God of Grace

Young At Heart:



Prayer of Confession:

Faithful and loving God, we have tried to live without you amid the idols we have created. We have closed our minds and hearts to your presence and invitation. We have built a prison around ourselves with walls high and thick around us. Yet, now we realize these walls prevent us from knowing you more deeply and richly. They prevent us from being about the business of building your kingdom here on earth. Lord, can you forgive us?

Words of Assurance:

God does not always chide, nor remain angry forever. God does not deal with us according to our sins and repay us according to our iniquities. Bless the Lord who forgives us, who heals us, and redeems our lives from the pit. God is merciful and gracious. His steadfast love frees us from the bondage of sin and gives to us our freedom. *Amen.*

Affirming Our Faith:

Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell:

The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:

I believe in the Holy Spirit: The One Holy Universal Christian Church: the communion of saints: The forgiveness of sins: The resurrection of the body: And the life everlasting. *Amen.*

St. James Choir Anthem:

Cornerstone

Scripture Reading:

Luke 13:1-9

Message:

If It Bears Fruit

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

Hymn of Assurance: (#2 Binder)

Amazing Grace

Offering

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take on-line offerings through the website (stmstjucc.org).

Offertory Music:

St. Mark's: *Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee*

St. James: *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

~ The offering is brought to the altar ~

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving: (all together)

Patient and merciful God, we bring our offerings humbly on this day, hoping they will bring fruit to the ministry of your church on earth. We ourselves have not always set our priorities on bearing good fruit, and yet you are a patient gardener. You have sent saints into our midst to make the soil richer, yet like the stubborn fig tree, good fruit has been scarce. May our journey this Lenten season feed our spirits to bring forth the fruit you desire. We pray in the name of our savior and redeemer, Jesus the Christ. *Amen.*

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

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.*

Hymn of Sending: (*#204 Insert from Pilgrims People*)

Because He Lives

Benediction: (responsively)

O God in Christ you remind us that every place is your temple, every day your sabbath, every person your beloved. Let us, by our care for your earthly temple, our respect for your daily sabbath, and our concern for your truly beloved, bear witness to the sublimity of your presence and to the sanctity of our existence. Go to love and serve our Lord; build his kingdom here on earth. *Amen.*

Postlude

St. Mark's: *Exalt His Name*

St. James: *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*

Luke 13:1-9 ESV

There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

Website: www.stmstjucc.org email: stmstjoffice@gmail.com ; phone: 920.693.8361

Messages are uploaded to YouTube: St. Mark's & St. James UCC

If you or a family member are in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Patrick at 920-693-2858 or leave a message on the church's answering machine at: 920-693-8361



This week's celebrations:

BIRTHDAYS:

March 22nd – Charles Kolb

23rd – Gary Kaestner, Cynthia Klapperich

24th – Corra Gumm

26th – Todd Binversie

No Anniversaries this week

WELCOME!

To the parents of young children:

Relax! *God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress those wiggles in God's house.*

- ❖ *Consider sitting toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to engage.*
- ❖ *Quietly explain the parts of the service and the actions of the pastors, musicians and leaders.*
- ❖ *Sing the songs, pray and voice the responses. Children learn behaviors by mimicking you.*
- ❖ *If you have to leave the Worship Center with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me."*

LOOKING AHEAD... NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 27th ...

*St. James: 9:00am Worship
9-10am Sunday School*

*St. Mark's: 10:30am Worship
9-10:00 Sunday School*

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TODAY!

****Mission Trip Fundraiser Soup Cook-Off!**

11am to 1:30pm, Laack's Hall in Johnsonville, Cost: \$10

Vote for your favorite soup with cash!

There will also be a bake sale & a variety of raffles!

****HS YOUTH MEET AT ST. JAMES, 5:30PM**

Be sure to read the email Mrs. Schultz sent you. Thank you, Nancy Nye, for providing the meal for our gathering!

CONFIRMATION CLASS– Wed., March 23rd **at St. James**

LENTEN WORSHIP – Wednesday, March 23rd, 7pm
at St. James

ST. MARK'S CHOIR REHEARSAL –Thurs., Mar. 24th, 7pm

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE – Thursday, March 24th. Email them to Karen at stmstjoffice@gmail.com

NEXT WEEK SUNDAY, MARCH 27TH, No Sunday School at St. Mark's

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GPS

Grow – deeper in our faith and relationship with God.

Pray – pray daily for family, neighbors, and others.

Study – read the Bible, pray over what we read, ask questions.

Additional Text: Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; 1Cor 10:1-13

Messiah and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gathers us to him invites us to a life of fruitfulness. That is the call within our scripture reading this morning (LK 13:1-9) The conversation begins with a bleak picture: “*There were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices?*” (LK 13:1) This question alone tells me more of the character of Pilate. He has put Galileans to death. Seemingly without hesitation. So different from the picture painted at Jesus’ arrest when Pilate is reluctant to carry out the desire of the people in crucifying Christ. In fact, he so resists the idea that he washes his hands of the whole thing. Could this be Jesus’ direct impact on Pilate? An encounter with Christ, no matter the circumstances will change a person dramatically?

While the conversation starts out with that bleak picture and questions centering on blame, Jesus wants to redirect to something more meaningful. Like a poem from Mary Oliver, he is asking us, “Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious

life?” (Mary Oliver, “The Summer Day”

http://www.phys.unm.edu/~tw/fas/yits/archive/oliver_thesummerday.html.)

We all want our lives to amount to something. Jesus gives us that sense of purpose and direction. We are called to bear fruit. Of course, this needs to be explained further. What is fruitful? What kind of fruit? Who benefits from this fruit? But that’s part of the exercise: to learn to understand and experience our own fruitfulness.

Prayer: Lord, lead us in your way that we might bear fruit for you.