



TRUST like Ruth
PROTECT like Rahab
LEAD like Deborah
FIGHT like Esther
PRAY like Hannah
REJOICE like Mary

Wednesday, March 1, 2023
St. Mark's United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Ann Rodewald, Organist Kathy Jurk, Choir Director
Greeters: Colten Sommer, Sierra Bramstedt
Reader: Reid Vandoske

Meditative Music

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship:

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Call To Worship:

L: Throughout all our lives God is with us.

P: Praise be to God for God's mercy and love.

L: Even when we are faced with difficult decisions, God's presence is near.

P: When we don't know which way to go, God will guide and lead us.

L: Open your hearts today to God's gentle leading.

P: We open our lives to God, that we may faithfully serve God all our days.

Prayer:

Lord, we gather here this evening in praise and thanksgiving for all the wonderful things you have done for us. Help us to be faithful disciples in all that we think, do and say, that your great love may be revealed and offer healing to all people. Amen.

Hymn of Praise: (#80)

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Prayer of Confession:

How often, O Lord, have we believed that the greatest commandment is our love for ourselves solely. We have not heard the cries of those in need; we have turned our backs on opportunities to serve you by serving others. Many times, we have thought only of our own wants and desires and ignored the needs of others. Help us to truly understand the commandments to love you with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. Let us care for our neighbors both far and near. Bring us back to your loving light. For we ask these things in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Brief period of silence

Words of Assurance:

In the midst of our darkness and ignorance, the bright light of God's love shines through, healing our anguished souls. Rejoice, beloved of God, for God's love and forgiveness are given to you this day. Amen.

St. Mark's Choral Anthem:

The Way of the Cross Leads Home

Psalm 23

This "Psalm of trust and confidence" in the Lord has been a favorite of God's people for generations. When we know God, we can rest assured that our needs will be taken care of ... and we will find rest...

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Hymn: (#449)

Day by Day

Scripture Reading:

Ruth 1:1-18

Message:

Trust like Ruth

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

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:

God So Loved the World

~ The offering is brought to the altar ~

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

Majestic Lord, transform our simple gifts in a way that will inspire all people to proclaim your everlasting message of love. Strip away our biased convictions so that through our selfless giving we can gaze clearly on your vision for our lives. In the name of your Son, the Beloved One, we pray. Amen.

Prayer of the People and the Lord's Prayer:

Lord, we have a tendency to wander in wildernesses of our own creating. When opportunities to serve you and to make commitments to your service are given, we consult our calendars to see if there is anything else we have to do. We place our needs and our schedules before our service to you. Help us to reorder our priorities. Help us to look again at the wonderful opportunities you give us to be of service to you by working with others; reaching out to heal and help. Bring us to the light of your love once again. Heal our wounded souls. Let us love you truly with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. Give us courage and persistence as disciples that your great love and glory may shine through our deeds of loving kindness. In Jesus' Name, we pray the 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 and ever. Amen.

Hymn of Sending: (#461)

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Benediction:

The pathway is open before you. It is a path of peace and hope, brought to others by God's mighty love and wondrous blessings. Go in peace, bringing hope to all that you meet. Go, blessed ones, to love and serve the Lord in all that you do, in all that you are, and in all you will be. To the glory of our God's kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven. *Amen.*

Postlude:

Mosso Moderato

Ruth 1:1-18

In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me." Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you." And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

Services are recorded and available on our church YouTube channel:

St. Mark's & St. James UCC

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Check out our Website: www.stmstjucc.org

Join our prayer team; contact Karen in our Church office: stmstjoffice@gmail.com