

Wednesday Lenten Service ~ March 9, 2022

St. James United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz  
Pastor

Cindy Sohn  
Choir Director

Randy Sohn  
Organist

Meditative Music

Bells Ring Prelude

Gathering for Worship:

*Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*

**Call to Worship (responsively):**

L: Jesus began his ministry to the world, led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

**P: As we begin our Lenten journey, let us be led by the Spirit, even into the uncomfortable places.**

L: In those forty days, and in that place, Jesus was faced with hunger, doubt and temptation.

**P: As we seek to follow Jesus, we would be led, even into the uncomfortable choices.**

L: Jesus left the wilderness, faithful and obedient to God, rejoicing in the One in whom he trusted.

**P: As we continue on our path to faithfulness, we will be led by our Christ, rejoicing in the Lord our God.**

**Opening Prayer (together):**

O Lord, your word is very hard to hear sometimes, but we know such hard words are life itself. As we meet your word today, let your still small voice speak to us in the quiet of our hearts. Let your whispers be to our souls as your thunder cracks are to the mountaintops. Let your difficult words be to our spirits as your rains are to the dry ground. Deliver us from the hardness of heart, that we might find the hard way that leads to life. Amen.

**Hymn of Praise: (#287 Hymnal)**

*God of Grace and God of Glory*

**A Prayer of Submission:**

**We pour out our hearts before you, O God; you are our refuge and strength. Waves of doubt beat against us, weakening our faith. Tremors of discord shake our foundation. The winds of temptation drive us from course. Too often we rely on ourselves when wisdom is sought. Still the storms in our souls! Provide in Christ a haven of hope for our troubled and distracted spirits.**

**Words of Assurance (together):**

**Our Bible tells us that Christ is “a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.” He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him. He lives to make intercession for all. In Christ, our high priest; abides the assurance of the forgiveness we seek. Amen.**

**Song of Assurance: (Insert #552 Pilgrims People)**

*We Gather Together*

**Scripture Reading:**

Luke 4:1-13

**Message:**

*An Opportune Time*

*Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz*

**St. James Choir:**

*Pie Jesu*

**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:**

*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*

*~ The offering is brought to the altar ~*

**Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving (together):**

**Mighty God, as we remember the strength of Jesus facing the temptation offered by the devil, we remember too clearly how the temptations of food, of authority, and power have overcome us. We've been tricked to believe our wants were needs and more is always better. May we offer our gifts to you this day with generosity and gratitude; strengthen us to resist temptation that would present security or power in anyone but you. In Christ, we pray. Amen.**

**Silent Prayer & Lord's Prayer:**

“And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.” ...

**A Sending Forth Song: (#324 Hymnal)**

*Christ is Made the Sure Foundation*

**Benediction:**

Go now and be holy in the name of the Holy One. When you reap the harvest of your land, leave a portion of your bounty for the poor. When you speak the thoughts of your mind, let the truth of your words shame the false. When you deal with a sister or brother, let the rightness of your works humble the crooked. Go now, and love your neighbor as yourself, in the name of the One who loves the world.

**Postlude:**

*Hear Us, Dear Lord*

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**Luke 4:1-13 (NRSV)**

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"*

*Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil<sup>b</sup> said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"*

*Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"*

*Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.*