

Fifth Sunday in Lent
April 6, 2025

Prelude

Nenad Ivović

Welcome

Rev. Susan Murtha

Announcements

***Call to Worship**

Leader: O God, we trust in Your power,

Community: even as it is often found in weakness.

Leader: We trust in Your wisdom,

Community: even as it is expressed in seeming foolishness.

Leader: We trust in Your wholeness,

Community: even as it comes to us amid brokenness.

All: We come this morning to worship together.

Kids' Church Children are welcome to meet in the entrance area of the sanctuary for Kids Church in the Parish House. Forest Vandeflor

***Gathering Hymn** *Rejoice, You Pure in Heart* #55 Black Hymnal

Rejoice, you pure in heart; lift praises to the sky;
your festal banner wave with joy, the cross of Christ raise high!

[Refrain] Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and sing.
Rejoice, rejoice.

Bring youth and seasoned age, strong souls and spirits meek,
raise high your free, exulting song, God's wonderous praised speak. *[Refrain]*

With voice as full and strong as ocean's surging praise,
send forth the hymns the saints have loved, the psalms of ancient days. *[Refrain]*

Yes, on through life's long path, still chanting as you go,
from youth to age, by night and day, in gladness and in woe. *[Refrain]*

Praise God, who rules all worlds, the risen Christ adore,
praise God the Spirit, Holy Fire, one God for evermore! *[Refrain]*

***Passing the Peace**

Scripture *1 Corinthians 1:18-25* (pg. 991 in your pew Bible)

Rev. Dr. Mark Heim

Sermon *The Right Side of the Cross*

Service of Prayer

Joys and Concerns / Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer and Silent Prayer

Lord's Prayer (debts)

Offering

Call to Offering

Our ancient curse, we could not see, making our peace in crowds of violent harmony.
For thus since Eden's fall victims unite us all.
No more of this, no more of this, remember me.

So Satan's rule made doubly sure, Who sows our discord and in turn its bitter cure.
For every hopeless strife some scapegoat pays the price:
no more of this, no more of this, remember me.

When guilt's assigned, and lots are cast, no one is safe, either among the first or last.
Look in the victim's face. We could be in that place:
no more of this, no more of this, remember me.

Around the cross, we join the throng, whether from hatred or from fear, the common wrong.
This reconciling way has endless cost to pay:
no more of this, no more of this, remember me.

At table late, he broke the bread and told us in your need you shall do this instead.
For mercy needs no blood, God is a God of love:
no more of this, no more of this, begin anew

In upper room, he took the wine, poured out his death to show all victim's blood is thine.
My peace I leave to you, not as you've learned to do:
no more of this, no more of this, begin anew

Like Isaac saved from sacrifice, the Lord is risen from the dead with words of life.
The cross that should not be, reversed by God's decree:
no more of this, no more of this, remember me.

At altars bare, we live this claim to substitute the Spirit's grace for blood exchange,
to keep an empty cross, with no betrayer's kiss:
Christ took our place, Christ bore this sin, no more of this.
Come take the bread, come drink the cup, no more of this.

***Doxology**

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; (or) Praise God, from Whom All blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise God for all that love has done;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Praise Creator, Christ, and Spirit One.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Closing Hymn** *When I Survey the Wonderous Cross* #224 Black Hymnal

When I survey the wonderous cross, on which the Christ of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all of my pride.

Forbid it, then, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most I sacrifice them to Christ's blood.

From sacred head, from hands and feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

Benediction

Threefold Amen

Postlude

Juliana Philipp

*Please rise in body or in spirit



Lenten Program 2025
a 2-part series
led by Rev. Dr. Mark Heim

Saved from Sacrifice:
Two Sides of the Cross



The cross is the central symbol of Christianity. Some say Christianity would be better off without it. Others say the faith that Christ died for us *is* Christianity. This conflict reflects a paradox embedded in the gospel narratives themselves: Jesus' death saves the world, and it ought not to happen. There is a saving act of God in the cross, and there is a sinful human act. These two are so close together that it's easy for them to get mixed up in our understanding and practice. In these sessions, we will explore two sides of the cross, in hopes of deepening our Lenten journey.

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall
Lunch will be served
Childcare will be available

**** April 6: Paradox in the Cross**

What's Behind the Cross? Exploring the Biblical Context
Sacrifice: The Good Bad Thing

“These are obviously troubled texts, but what troubles them is the truth.” – Gil Bailie

**** April 13: The Cross and New Community**

What Comes After the Cross? Looking for the Christian meaning
Substitutes for Sacrifice

“Like the light, it is at once the thing that we need to see,
and the thing that permits us to see it.” – René Girard



Welcome our Lenten Program Leader: S. Mark Heim

Mark is the Samuel Abbot Professor of Christian Theology at Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School. He has studied, taught, and written extensively on comparative theology, religious pluralism, atonement, ecumenical relations, and science and theology, receiving numerous awards. An ordained American Baptist minister, Mark has served on the World Council of Churches and on many ecumenical commissions.

In the spring of 2024, Mark and his wife Melissa walked a portion of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, and in the fall, they spent 6 weeks in Rome where Mark taught at the Gregorian University in a program that brings together Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians to study each other's traditions. Mark also co-teaches a course on theology and medicine with Prof. Benjamin Doolittle from Yale School of Medicine; they are currently completing a book on the interface of faith and medicine. Mark and Melissa live in New Haven and especially delight in time with their two grown children and two grandchildren in Washington, DC and Philadelphia.



EASTER FLOWERS

If you would like to donate an Easter Plant to decorate our Sanctuary for the Easter Service, please fill out the form below and return it with your check made out to the **First Church of Christ and include "Easter Plants" in the memo.** Mark below which plant you would like and the name of the person it is in memory of or in honor of. The list of donations will appear in the Easter bulletin. Please print the necessary information. **All forms and checks must be received in the church office by April 8th for the order to be placed.** Remember to check if you want to take the plant.

Easter Lily \$16.50 each _____ Tulip \$15 each _____ Daffodil \$15 each _____

Total Enclosed _____

GIVEN BY _____

IN MEMORY/HONOR OF (CIRCLE ONE)

I will take the plant after the Easter Service. _____ The plants will be left to decorate the church. _____



HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, April 13

10:00 a.m. worship service
(in the sanctuary & via Zoom)

Palm Parade led by the children + Kids' Church

11:15 a.m. Lenten Program: *Two Sides of the Cross*
Lunch & childcare

Maundy Thursday, April 17

7:00 p.m. worship service in the sanctuary
Communion

Maundy Thursday scripture readings

Good Friday, April 18

The sanctuary will be open from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m.
for personal prayer and reading of scripture

Easter Sunday, April 20

10:00 a.m. worship service
(in the sanctuary & via Zoom)

Children's Message + Kids' Church

Easter Reflection: *God Has Moved On!*