



*Lent 2023:
The Sharp-Edged Gospel
IV. The Mystery of God's Timing*

10:45AM
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT
SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023

WWW.BETHANYPRESBY.ORG/SERMONS

To trust in Jesus
To love like Jesus
To grow in Jesus
To bring others to Jesus

WORSHIP THE LORD

WE GATHER

Prelude

"What God Does is Always Right"

Johann Pachelbel

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Welcome

A Service of Diminishing Lights

During Lent, we remember the events that led up to the crucifixion. Jesus had come to bring hope and light to the world, but at every step there were those who could not accept the power of the light. He came to meet the people's needs, but there were those who misunderstood the kind of needs that Jesus meant to fill. Because he would not do what they wanted, they rejected him.

Responsive Song

"What Wondrous Love is This" v.4

No. 257

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And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on, and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on!
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be, and through eternity I'll sing on,
I'll sing on, and through eternity I'll sing on!

Call to Worship *(Please Stand)*

Pastor Ellen Dawson

Are you awake? Are you alert?

Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Are you watching the signs? Are you interpreting what is happening today?

Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Do you see opportunities for ministry?

Do you see the poor, the homeless, the hungry, the needy?

Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

Come, let us worship and let us work in the reign of God.

Christ has extended the invitation:

let us work together in the reign of God on earth.

Let us worship God!

Opening Prayer *(Please Stand)*

Hymn (Please Stand)

“This is My Father's World”

No. 21

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1 This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears all nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres. This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought of rocks and trees, of skies and seas-- his hand the wonders wrought.

2 This is my Father's world: O let us not forget that though the wrong is great and strong, God is the ruler yet. He trusts us with his world, to keep it clean and fair-- all earth and trees, all skies and seas, all creatures everywhere.

3 This is my Father's world:
he shines in all that's fair;
in the rustling grass I hear him pass,
he speaks to me everywhere.
This is my Father's world:
why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is King, let heaven ring!
God reigns; let earth be glad!

Call to Confession

Pastor Ellen Dawson

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Silent Prayer of Confession

Assurance of Pardon

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. May the God of mercy, who forgives you all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Praise God! Amen.**

Response (Please Stand)

“Gloria Patri”

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Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Since God has forgiven us in Christ. Let us be at peace with one another. The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all...**and also with you.**

The kids can come forward for the Children's Sermon as you all take a moment to share the peace of Christ with those around you.

WE LISTEN

Children's Sermon

Debby Hayes

Prayer of Illumination

Pastor Ellen Dawson

First Reading

Psalms 70 NRSV

Pastor Ellen Dawson

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me. O LORD, make haste to help me!
Let those be put to shame and confusion who seek my life.
Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire to hurt me.
Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!" turn back because of their shame.
Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you.
Let those who love your salvation say evermore, "God is great!"
But I am poor and needy; hasten to me, O God!
You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay!

Hymn (Please Stand)

"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

No. 248

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1 I want to walk as a child of the light; I want to follow Jesus. God set the stars to give light to the world; the star of my life is Jesus.

REFRAIN

In him there is no darkness at all; the night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the city of God: Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

2 I want to see the brightness of God; I want to look at Jesus. Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path, and show me the way to the Father. [Refrain]

3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ; I want to be with Jesus. When we have run with patience the race, we shall know the joy of Jesus. [Refrain]

Second Reading

Matthew 25:1-13 NRSV

Pastor Brian Janssen

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten young women took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those young women got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. Later the other young women came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ Keep awake, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

**Lent 2023: The Sharp-Edged Gospel
IV. The Mystery of God's Timing**

Pastor Brian Janssen

WE RESPOND

The Presentation of our Tithes and Offerings

The Offertory

**"Come, Thou Fount"
The Bethany Choir**

arr. Hal Hopson

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Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it. Mount of God's unchanging love!

Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by Thy help I'm come;
and I hope, by Thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, O take and seal it; seal it for Thy courts above.

The Response (*Please Stand*)

"Doxology"

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Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; Amen.

The Prayer of Dedication (*Please Stand*)

Announcements

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

WE ARE SENT

Hymn (*Please Stand*)

"Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above"

No. 56

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1 Sing praise to God who reigns above,
the God of all creation,
the God of power, the God of love,
the God of our salvation.
My soul with comfort rich he fills,
and every grief he gently stills:
to God all praise and glory!

2 What God's almighty power has
made,
in mercy he is keeping;
by morning glow or evening shade
his eye is never sleeping.
And where he rules in kingly might,
there all is just and all is right:
to God all praise and glory!

3 We sought the Lord in our distress;
O God, in mercy hear us.
Our Savior saw our helplessness
and came with peace to cheer us.
For this we thank and praise the Lord,
who is by one and all adored:
to God all praise and glory!

4 Let all who name Christ's holy name
give God the praise and glory.
Let all who know his power proclaim
aloud the wondrous story.
Cast every idol from its throne;
the Lord is God, and he alone:
to God all praise and glory!

Benediction (*Please Stand*)

Pastor Brian Janssen

Postlude

"Lift High the Cross"

Gordon Young

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PASTORAL CONCERNS

Kitty Rackley, Maddie Smith

**The flowers this morning are presented
to the Glory of God by**
Bob, Katherine, Charlotte and Lucy Joesbury

NEWS FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST

A special thank you to Guest Organist, Dr. Wayne Earnest, for leading our music this morning.

WORSHIP AND WONDER – children 4 years old through 3rd grade are welcome to follow the Worship and Wonder teachers to the classroom (rm 234) after the children's sermon each week during our 10:45am service. Teen helpers 6th grade and older may attend if they have registered with Debby Hayes first.

PROGRAM AND EVENT NEWS

A NEW MEMBERS CLASS will be meeting again in our Youth Lounge at 9:30AM. If you are interested in joining Bethany Church, but are unable to attend today's class, please contact our membership team at membership@bethanypresby.org

SAVE THE DATE & PLAN AHEAD A Blood Drive will be held here on April 30th

MISSION NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

PRAYERS FOR OUR MISSIONS – The Fellowship of Prayer is targeting prayers each month for missions we support. For the month of March, please pray for Pastor Pierre Vaugelas and the LaCroix Mission in their work of providing quality education to the children of Haiti; and for Guardian Angel Service Dogs Organization, who rescues, raises, trains and donates medical service dogs.

SARRIS CANDY – Proceeds from Sarris Candy sales in the month of March will go to Living in Liberty.

JOIN US FOR SEVEN WEEKS & SEVEN ACTS OF MERCY: A LENTEN JOURNEY OF DISCIPLESHIP AND SERVICE. WE WILL BE COORDINATING LEARNING AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES BASED ON MATTHEW 25: 31-46.

Week 5 - *Shelter the Homeless* - We need a small group of people to help do some yard work at a neighbor's home. Times TBD, and weather permitting. Please sign up in the Welcome Center or contact Dave Colton or Pastor Ellen if you'd like to offer a hand.

This week, you're encouraged to learn about the many ministries our region has to help the homeless: Washington City Mission (one of our mission partners), Operation Safety Net, Light of Life, etc.

Week 6 - *Visit the Imprisoned* by hearing from Rev. Charissa Clark Howe, Director of Chaplaincy Services for Foundation of HOPE program serving the Allegheny County Jail. Join us for a light lunch at the church at 12:00pm on Monday, March 27th.

This week, consider how you can support the Foundation of HOPE program or one of the many national programs that minister to children and families of people who have been incarcerated.

Week 7 - *Visit the Sick* during Holy Week by signing up to deliver a prayer shawl to one of our church members who may be homebound, in the hospital, or in a nursing home. We will pair people up and will ask you to coordinate with the person you will be visiting. Contact Pastor Ellen or sign up in the Welcome Center.

This week, you can learn how to make a prayer shawl by looking up a pattern online (if you knit or crochet), or go to a local hospital, rehab center, or nursing home, park your car, and pray for the people inside.

MISSION TEAM COLLECTION FOR FAMILY GUIDANCE PROMISE CAMP- Family Guidance is a non-profit organization that has a goal of transforming the lives of youth from underserved neighborhoods through intentional relationships and the promise of Jesus Christ. They have a camp, called Promise Camp, in Clinton in Beaver County and they have several camping sessions for these underprivileged youth ages 7 to 17 during the summer. The youth experience camp activities and learn of Jesus Christ; however, many of them have never been to camp and do not own the clothing and supplies needed for camp. Family Guidance has advised that right now they have a critical need for the following items for the camps this summer; therefore, the Bethany Mission Team is holding a collection for the following items. Bins are outside the Nursery: *Girls One Piece Bathing Suits in sizes 8, 10, 12, 14, and 16; Boys Swim Trunks in sizes 8, 10, 12, 14, and 16; Boys White T-shirts in sizes 8, 10, 12, 14, and 16* *ALL ITEMS MUST BE NEW WITH TAGS STILL ON*

MARCH SPECIAL OFFERING – One Great Hour of Sharing

The special offering envelope for March supports the PC(USA) One Great Hour of Sharing Collection. A gift to One Great Hour of Sharing enables the church to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief to those

affected by natural disasters, providing food to the hungry, and helping to empower the poor and oppressed. Online giver? Not receiving envelopes? You can still donate to this special offering either by selecting "One Great Hour of Sharing" in the online giving portal or noting that your donation is for One Great Hour of Sharing on your check or a pew envelope. Thank you for your contribution to One Great Hour of Sharing!

CHURCH FINANCES AS OF MARCH 12, 2023:

| | 2023 YTD (\$) | 2022 YTD (\$) | +/- (\$) |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Contributions* | \$ 111,626 | \$132,122 | \$ (20,497) |
| General Fund Subsidies (Transfers) | 47,918 | 45,838 | 2,080 |
| Investment Income ** | 4,451 | (12,173) | 16,625 |
| Total General Fund Income | \$ 163,994 | \$165,786 | \$ (1,792) |
| Year to Date Budget | 170,404 | | |
| +/- Budget | \$ (6,410) | | |

*For purposes of this report, any prepaid pledges have been spread over 52 weeks. ** Investment income is updated monthly upon receipt of investment statements. A friendly reminder from the Stewardship team, please write the amount of your giving on the outside of the envelope when turning in your offering. This helps make the job of those counting much easier.

WEEK AHEAD

Sunday, Mar 19

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

8:15AM and 10:45AM – Worship

9:30AM – Sunday School & New Members Class

12:15PM – Confirmation Class

3:00PM – BYG

6:30PM – AM MOPS Steering Committee

Monday, Mar 20

7:00PM – Body Carpenter Workout

Tuesday, Mar 21

6:00PM – Coed Dart Ball

6:30PM – Men's Huddle

Wednesday, Mar 22

11:30AM – Knitters

7:00PM – Choir

7:00PM – Scouts

Thursday, Mar 23

9:00AM – Quilters

9:15AM - MOPS

12:00PM -Rotary

7:00PM – Dart Ball

8:00PM - AA

Friday, Mar 24

Saturday, Mar 25

Diaper Bank

Lenten Week 5 – Shelter the Homeless Event

11:30AM – Knitters

Sunday, Mar 26

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

8:15AM and 10:45AM – Worship

9:30AM – Sunday School

9:30AM- New Members Class

10:15AM – Session Meeting for New Members

12:15PM – Confirmation Class

3:00PM – BYG