

RESPONDING IN FAITH

Today's offering supports feeding ministries Family to Family in Ventura (<https://familytofamilyvc.org>) and Bread of Life in Oxnard. Please make checks payable to Bethel AME or give online at givelify.com (Choose Bethel AME in Oxnard and note Lenten Caravan)

* PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Generous God, you tenderly care for every one of your children. You restore our strength and shine light into the lives of those who are discouraged. Guide us, so that we will not regard others by outward appearance, but rather seek to find your love in their hearts. We dedicate our offerings and ourselves to contribute to the work of your kingdom, until Christ returns in glory. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN

Amazing Grace

UMH 378

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.
3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
4. The Lord has promised good to me, his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be, as long as life endures.
5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil, a life of joy and peace.
6. When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

* BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

A Caravan Pastor

You are invited for refreshments and fellowship after the service.

We hope to see you again next week as the Lenten Caravan continues at St. Paul's United Methodist Church - 1800 S C St, Oxnard, CA 93033

Lenten Caravan

6:30 pm - March 22, 2023



Lenten Caravan Churches & Pastors

All Saints Episcopal Church - Rev. Melissa Campbell-Langdell, Pastor
Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church—Rev. Benjamin Thomas, Pastor
**North Oxnard United Methodist Church (Garden Church) &
First United Methodist Church of Ventura, Rev. Matt McPhee, Pastor**
St. Paul's United Methodist Church— Rev. Rachel deBos-Haigler, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Oxnard—Rev. Nancy Switzler, Pastor

Ventura First UMC

1338 E. Santa Clara St., Ventura, CA 93001

Email: office@venturafumc.org

Order of Worship

LENTEN CARAVAN
March 22, 2023 — 6:30 pm

WELCOME

* CALL TO WORSHIP

A Caravan Pastor

Once we lived in darkness.

Now the light of God has shone upon us.

Find what is pleasing to God and follow God's ways.

The acts of darkness are left behind as we journey to God's light.

Thanks be to God who gives us the light.

Open our eyes and our hearts to receive your light of salvation. AMEN.

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* HYMN

Be Thou My Vision

UMH 451

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart: naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day and by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word; I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
thou and thou only, first in my heart, great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
3. Great God of heaven, my victory won, may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's
Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

PRAYER OF YEARNING

**Grant us your vision, merciful One. Bless us, O Lord—
when we fear what we do not understand;
when we let prejudice blind us;
when we cling to feelings of superiority;
when we cannot see your healing in those we think ill of.
Free us from all blindness, that we may behold your grace
and reflect the light of your glory. Amen.**

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WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God is always ready to heal our blindness.

Christ is always prepared to heal our judgmental spirits.

The Spirit is always at hand to lead in wisdom and truth. Thanks be to God!

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SPECIAL MUSIC

Love Filled the Cup

by Pepper Choplin

VFUMC Chancel Choir, Clara Johnson-Director, Kyle Hanks-Pianist

ROLL CALL

A Caravan Pastor

MISSION STATEMENT

A Caravan Pastor

In the spirit of love and contrition, we, the Lenten Caravan gather together during the Lenten Season to Praise the Lord! As Sisters and Brothers in Christ, we understand the need to come together as partners in the common struggle, to enhance the spiritual, physical, emotional, economical, and political health of our community. We can accomplish this by asking the Holy Spirit to empower us to love so we may become a true Christian Community.

* HYMN

Open My Eyes That I May See

UMH 454

1. Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!
2. Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wavenotes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!
3. Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!.

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 5:8-14

(New Revised Standard Version)

SCRIPTURE

John 9:1-41

(New Revised Standard Version)

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God!**

MESSAGE

Seeking: Who Sinned?

Pastor Matt McPhee