

**The United Methodist Church at Absecon**

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# *Unlikely Freedom: Barabbas*

*March 8, 2026 – Third Sunday in Lent*

Today's Lay Reader: Tom Crawford

**Welcome**

**Prelude**

**Call to Worship**

**Leader:** Come! Come from our sanctuary or from your home. Come at 11 AM on Sunday or any time during the week. Come whenever and wherever you are. Come! Worship is called in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

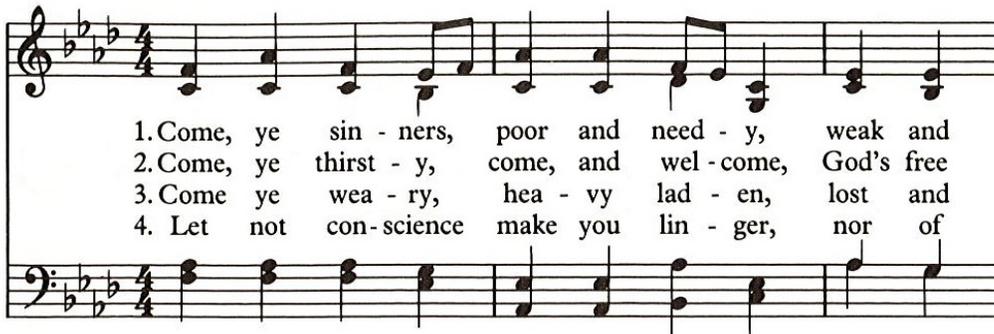
**People:** **We come, ready to lay down our shame and worship God!**

**Leader:** Shame and blame, it's what people often do. But what are followers of Jesus called to do?

**People:** **We are called to forgiveness. We are called to love. We are called to Christian perfection.**

## Hymn

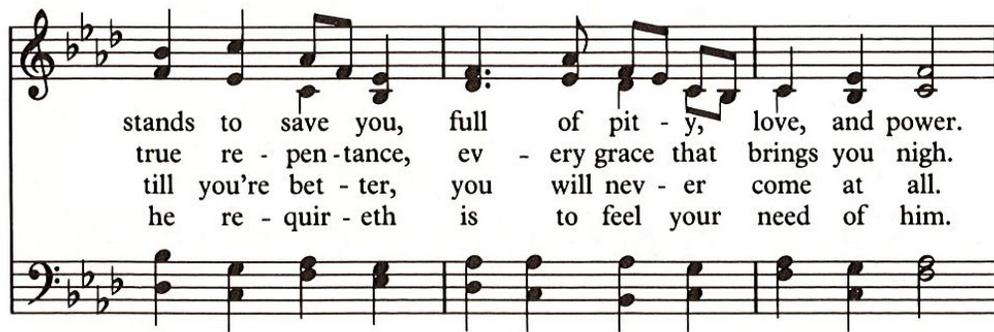
## Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy



1. Come, ye sin - ners, poor and need - y, weak and  
 2. Come, ye thirst - y, come, and wel - come, God's free  
 3. Come ye wea - ry, hea - vy lad - en, lost and  
 4. Let not con - science make you lin - ger, nor of



wound - ed, sick and sore; Je - sus read - y  
 boun - ty glo - ri - fy; true be - lief and  
 ruin - ed by the fall; if you tar - ry  
 fit - ness fond - ly dream; all the fit - ness



stands to save you, full of pit - y, love, and power.  
 true re - pen - tance, ev - ery grace that brings you nigh.  
 till you're bet - ter, you will nev - er come at all.  
 he re - quir - eth is to feel your need of him.

*Refrain*



I will a - rise and go to Je - sus;

he will embrace me with his arms; in the arms of  
my dear Sav - ior, O there are ten thou - sand charms.

### Opening Prayer

**God, thank you for bring present even in the hard conversations. Thank you for being present when we feel anger, sadness, fear or even shame. As we discuss the feeling of shame today, open our hearts and minds to learn all that we can from today's scripture lesson. Deepen our faith in Christ and our sense of Christian community as we journey through Lent together. Amen.**

### Pastoral Prayer

### The Lord's Prayer

### Chorus I Love You, Lord

I love you Lord, and I lift my voice to worship you, O my soul rejoice.  
Take joy, my King, in what you hear,  
may it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

### Senior Choir Precious Lord, Take My Hand

### Young Disciples Chatting with the Rev

### Scripture Lesson Matthew 27:15-26

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have

nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.” Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” All of them said, “Let him be crucified!” Then he asked, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.” Then the people as a whole answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” So he released Barabbas for them, and after flogging Jesus he handed him over to be crucified.

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God  
 People: **Thanks be to God**

**Message** *Unlikely Freedom: Barabbas*

**Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts to God**

**Offertory** *Steal Away* arr. Gilbert Martin

**Offertory Hymn** *Lift High the Cross* (verse 1)

Musical notation for the first part of the offertory hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 4/4 time. The melody is in the treble clef. The lyrics are: "Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim".

Musical notation for the second part of the offertory hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 4/4 time. The melody is in the treble clef. The lyrics are: "till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name." The piece ends with a double bar line and the word "Fine" above the staff.

*Harmony*

1. Come, Chris-tians, fol - low this tri-um-phat sign. The  
 2. Each new-born ser - vant of the Cru - ci - fied bears  
 3. O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo-rious tree, as  
 4. So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be: Praise

hosts of God in u - ni-ty com - bine.  
 on the brow the seal of him who died.  
 thou hast prom - ised, draw the world to thee.  
 to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

*D.C.*

**Hymn****Nearer, My God, to Thee***(verses 1, 2, and 5)*

1. Near - er, my God, to thee, near - er to thee!  
 2. Though like the wan - der - er, the sun gone down,  
 3. There let the way ap - pear, steps un - to heaven;  
 4. Then, with my wak - ing thoughts bright with thy praise,  
 5. Or if, on joy - ful wing cleav - ing the sky,

E'en though it be a cross that rais - eth me,  
 dark - ness be o - ver me, my rest a stone;  
 all that thou send - est me, in mer - cy given;  
 out of my ston - y griefs Beth - el I'll raise;  
 sun, moon, and stars for - got, up - ward I fly,

still all my song shall be, near - er, my God, to thee;  
yet in my dreams I'd be near - er, my God, to thee;  
an - gels to beck - on me near - er, my God, to thee;  
so by my woes to be near - er, my God, to thee;  
still all my song shall be, near - er, my God, to thee;

near - er, my God, to thee, near - er to thee!

**Benediction**

**Postlude**

**Solid Rock**

**William Bradbury**