



Worship Celebration

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2020 + 11 AM

Welcome to The United Methodist Church of Berea!

As followers of Jesus Christ, who reveals a God whose love knows no boundaries, we are committed to welcoming and affirming every person as a beloved child of God. Every person—of every sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, age, economic status, health, ability, or any other identifying label—is welcome to participate fully in our ministries and life together as church. We hope The UMC of Berea will become a home for you, your family, and your friends as together, we make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Join us in worship Sunday mornings at 11 AM on Facebook Live (<https://www.facebook.com/UMCBERE/>) or watch the service later at www.umcb.org/sermons.

We Gather as God's Children

In preparation for worship, you are invited to light a candle as a reminder of God's presence.

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship—Psalm 23 (UMH 754)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures,

leads me beside still waters, restores my life,

leads me in right paths for the sake of the Lord's name.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life;

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance

O God, our faithful guide, give us clarity to shake off our short-sightedness.

Give us courage to acknowledge our shortcomings.

Give us compassion to turn from our hurtful behaviors.

Give us wisdom to face our fears, to receive your grace, to awaken to your call.

Hear us, and help us to listen to you. (silent prayers of confession)

May God forgive us, free us, and lead us more fully into life.

In the name of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God! Amen.

We Grow in God's Word

Leader: With disciples of every time and place, let us listen for the word of God among us.

People: *Our ears and hearts are open.*

Gospel Lesson—John 9.1-41 (CEB)

¹ As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷ saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹ He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹² They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶ They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷ He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰ The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴ They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

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

Children's Message

Sermon

Prayers of the People/The Lord's Prayer

Moment for Mission - UMCOR Special Giving Sunday

For over 75 years, UMCOR has helped people in crisis all over the world. On UMCOR Sunday, we celebrate and give generously to cover the relief agency's annual operational and administrative costs so that UMCOR may apply 100% of other donations directly to relief efforts. This is an incredible opportunity to remember the importance of compassion and love in action.

UMCOR acts as the hands and feet of Christ's church, moving towards the most vulnerable in their time of need. Helping people in their darkest days doesn't have to be something "they" do, it can be something "we" do.

We, with our United Methodist congregations around the globe, can share compassionate relief in the midst of devastation. Until then, let's be praying for the volunteers, the lives they touch, and for hearts to be moved.

Visit www.umcsgiving.org/UMCOR to learn more. Please consider giving generously by indicating "UMCOR SUNDAY" on the memo line of your check or in the description line of your online giving.

Tithes and Offerings

Many of us already give financially to support the mission and ministries of our congregation through online giving (www.umcb.org/donate) or by mailing a check to the office. Thank you! If you do not already do so, during this time when we will not be worshiping together in person, please consider giving through one of these other methods. Your continued generosity plays a crucial role in ensuring that we can maintain our financial commitments to mission and ministry during this uncertain season.

We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

Benediction

Go forth in peace, awakened to the call of God, our creator.

Go forth with courage, following in the footsteps of Christ.

Go forth in communion with the Holy Spirit, knowing that we never go alone.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Our service of worship is ended.

Our worship through service now begins.

Small Group Opportunity via Computer or Phone

Sundays at 10 AM and Wednesdays at 7 PM.

As we continue to look for new ways to stay connected while we are physically apart, you are invited to connect in online small group community through Zoom on Wednesday evenings at 7 PM and/or Sunday mornings at 10 AM. Three questions will guide our conversations:

1. What are you grateful for?
2. What are you anxious about?
3. What are you learning?

As we consider these questions and pray together, you can join by phone or through an internet connection on your computer or smartphone using the information below:

- Sundays at 10 AM (beginning March 22)
Phone: dial 888-788-0099 (toll-free) and enter Meeting ID: 487-816-871
Internet: <https://zoom.us/j/487816871>
- Wednesdays at 7 PM (beginning March 25)
Phone: dial 888-788-0099 (toll-free) and enter Meeting ID: 390-566-723
Internet: <https://zoom.us/j/390566723>

Weekly Seeds

You are invited to use these resources for further reflection during the week. Gather together a few friends from your neighborhood, workplace, or any other community of which you already belong, and walk together through these prayers, questions, and preparations for next Sunday's worship services.

Questions for reflection and conversation:

1. Whenever something bad happens, one human reaction seems to be the desire to pin-point a quick, unilateral cause. Today's Gospel is about misplaced blame: blaming the individual, their family, or others who seem different. When have you been tempted to place blame on someone for some difficulty they or you have experienced? How can you resist this temptation and dig deeper?
2. Jesus notices the potential to reveal God's presence even in a circumstance that seems difficult. How can you participate in the work of transforming hardship into an opportunity to experience and share the presence of a loving God?

Morning Prayer

Good morning, Lord.
As the day dawns with the gift of sunlight,
I awaken into the light and grace of Christ.
Thank you for this new day.
Stay with me now, I pray.
Give me the provisions I will need,
and help me recognize your presence all around.
In praise and anticipation, I begin this new day.
Amen.

Evening Prayer

With the night, Present God, comes rest,
and a chance to be restored in you.
You are with me now and always,
and I will not be afraid.
For all that I have experienced this day,
I give you thanks.
For all that I have not noticed,
I give you thanks.
Raise my awareness to signs of your love, Amen.

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Next Sunday's Scripture Lessons

March 29, 2020 - Fifth Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37.1-14, Psalm 130 (UMH 848), Romans 8.6-11, John 11.1-45

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Care Leaders

While we are apart from one another physically, we remain connected through our common mission and through our mutual concern and care. As an expression of our connection, we now have a team of "care leaders" who will be making phone calls throughout the course of the week to check in, be in conversation, and share prayer requests. If you have not heard from a "care leader" yet and would like to connect this way, or if you would like to serve as a "care leader," contact **Pastor Nathan** at nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x101.

Cambodia Mission Trip 2021

February 25 - March 9, 2021

As we keep building relationships and sharing God's love with neighbors on the other side of the world, our next trip to Cambodia has just been

scheduled for February 25 - March 9, 2021. We are building our team now. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact **Pastor Nathan** at nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x101.

Easter Flower Deadline Extended

New Deadline to Order: Sunday, April 5

The order deadline for Easter flowers has been extended. Help decorate our worship spaces for Easter. A selection of Easter flowers will be available for **\$5.00 - \$12.50** and may be dedicated in memory or honor of a loved one. You can also chose to honor a loved one by donating a Gideon Bible for **\$5.00**. Payment must accompany order. Make checks payable to "UMCB". [Order forms are available in the March Caller or by clicking here.](#)