

Sebastopol United Methodist Church  
Sunday, March 7, 2021  
Third Sunday in Lent  
Order of Worship, including Communion and Scripture

*If you would like to participate in Communion, please have your bread and juice (or their substitutes) ready before beginning worship.*

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*Seasonal Theme:*

Jesus makes his way toward Jerusalem and the cross, so that we might have undeserved forgiveness for our sins.

*Theme for the day:*

Jesus teaches us a valuable lesson about our place of worship and the fact that he sacrificed himself for us.

*Call to Worship:*

*(please read the **BOLD** text, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Pastor: We are called by Christ to gather as one people.

People: **We are blessed by God's wisdom to gather and to learn.**

Pastor: We are amazed by God's love as we worship in His presence.

People: **His law is perfect, reviving the soul.**

Pastor: The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes.

Unison: **They are more desirable than gold, and sweeter than honey; in keeping them is a great reward. Amen.**

*Centering & Prayer of Illumination:*

*(please read along with me, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Lord Almighty, we come to you as forgiven people, freed to live gratefully following your law, which is our guide for a full and abundant life. We are grateful that we are free to worship God and God alone, that we are freed from having to make anything an idol. We are freed to call on the name of the Lord without abusing God's name. We are freed for a day of worship and rest, freed to love those who gave us birth and nurtured us. We are freed from all that binds us; we

shall not kill or break sacred bonds; we strive not to steal or lie, nor to crave anything that belongs to another. Your law brings us goodness and blessing; your grace gives us confidence and joy. By the power of your Holy Spirit, may your words be heard and may our ears hear your message today. In your Son Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

*Readings from Scripture:*    **Exodus 20:1-17**            **Psalms 19**            **John 2:13-22**

*Message:*    **TIME TO DE-CLUTTER OUR HOMES!**

*Affirmation of Faith – The Apostles' Creed, Ecumenical Version (UMH 882)*  
*(please read with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy universal church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Pastoral Prayer*

*Sacrament of the Holy Communion*

*In peace and love, in gratitude and faith, I invite you to have your bread (or chips, crackers, etc.) and juice (or water, wine, etc.) ready.*

*Let us come together to Christ's table.*

*(we read together the texts in **BOLD**)*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

O God, you are the creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image, to love and to be loved. You made a holy covenant with us and sent prophets to teach us your truth. When we turned away and were unfaithful, you kept faith with us.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we join in your praise, saying,

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

Taking our form and flesh, Jesus came among us as a servant. He showed us the depth and power of your love. By his suffering, death, and resurrection you delivered us from sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which Jesus gave himself up for us, he took bread. He gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said, "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Remembering your gracious acts, we offer ourselves to you in service and praise as we keep the feast that Christ prepares:

*[lifting the bread]* Bread of Heaven,

*[lifting the cup]* Cup of Salvation,

*[lifting bread and cup]* Resurrection and Life.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

O God, pour out your Holy Spirit among us: in this bread, in this cup, in your people; one in the body, one in the blood, one with Christ, one in mission, one in ministry; in this place, in every place, in this world, and in the world to come.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, Almighty God, now and forever. [Lord's Prayer]

**Amen.**

*Receiving the Bread and Cup*

*Prayer after Receiving*

O God, we give you our thanks and praise. You feed us by your grace. You are with us in all our journeys. Give us courage and faith to serve you in all we do. Fill us with the power of your Holy Spirit. Enable us to be faithful and fruitful servants of the gospel and ministry to which you have called us. In Jesus's name we pray.

Amen.

*Come to Christ and offer your gifts, not as a burden, but as opportunity to give rest and renewal to those who yearn to know God's love. Thank you again for all the offerings and pledges you have sent in by mail.*

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication:*

***(please read along with me, aloud or silently as you prefer)***

God, we want to follow your commandments, to love only you and to love our neighbor freely, not desiring for ourselves something they possess. Accept these offerings, we pray, and teach us to be generous, giving fully of ourselves, that we may truly be the body of Christ in this world. Amen.

*Blessing and Benediction*

During this Lenten Season meditate on God's commandments, practice the way of life they teach, and see how God's laws revive your soul. Stay firm in his promise. His wisdom will strengthen you to faithfulness and greatness in all you do.

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Scripture Readings – March 7, 2021

*first reading* –**EXODUS 20:1-17**

Then God spoke all these words: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

*second reading – PSALM 19*

The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hid from its heat.

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.

Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults.

Keep back your servant also from the insolent; do not let them have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

*third reading – JOHN 2:13-22*

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves,

“Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!” His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” The Jews then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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Sebastopol United Methodist Church  
500 North Main Street, Sebastopol CA 95472  
sebumc@sonic.net sebumc.org YouTube channel: Sebastopol UMC  
*Thank you for worshipping with us today.*