

Prelude
Ringing of the Bell

***Call to Worship**

Psalm 121

¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?

² **My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.**

³ He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.

⁴ **He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.**

⁵ The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

⁶ **The sun shall not strike you by day
nor the moon by night.**

⁷ The Lord will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.

⁸ **The Lord will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.
Come let us worship our Lord!**

Invocation

We gather in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

***Hymn**

"Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine"

473 TNCH

***Confession**

Holy God. We come before you seeking your mercy. Help us to see where we have sinned against one another, and therefore, against you. Help us to turn from sin to seek out your gift of life. Forgive us, O merciful God as you hear the words of our hearts as we confess in silence before you and our neighbor.

Silent confession.

Our sins are many and your mercy is great.
Forgive us, O merciful God.

***Words of Assurance**

Our God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin and generously made us alive together with Christ. By Grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God, strengthen you through the Holy Spirit to dwell on the Word, to walk in faith, and share your blessings with others. Christ lives in your hearts through faith. **Thanks be to God! Amen**

***The Gloria Patri**

**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**

Welcome and Announcements

Children's Time

Scripture Readings

Genesis 12: 1 - 4a NRSVUE

The Call of Abram

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.

John 3: 1 - 17 NRSVUE

Nicodemus Visits Jesus

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." ³ Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

¹¹ "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as

Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Sermon

Hymn

“Lift High the Cross”

198 TNCH

Refrain, vs. 1, refrain, vs. 3, refrain, vs. 5, refrain

Prayers

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Cares Chorus

I cast all my cares upon you.

I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.

And anytime I don’t know just what to do,

I will cast all my cares upon You.

Hymn

“For the Bread, Which Thou Hast Broken”

214 HUCC

Vs. 1, 2, 4

The Lord’s Supper

Invitation Come, let us gather round the Lord’s table, a table of life and grace,
of faith and promise.

Prayer of Consecration

Most Gracious God, we seek Your blessing on the bread and the cup, that they may refresh our bodies and renew our spirits, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Words of Institution

And so we recall that on the night of betrayal and desertion, the Lamb of God, Jesus the Christ, took bread, broke and give it to the disciples, saying:

“This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

And, in a like manner, after supper, Jesus took the cup and after giving thanks gave it to them saying,

“This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood
Poured out for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink of it, for the remembrance of me.”

All honor and glory are yours, O God, through Jesus Christ. Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit in your glorious creation, both now and forever. Amen

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Post Communion Prayer

**We have been fed and forgiven, Holy One, by your presence.
We have been Led to faith, Eternal One, by your light.
May we bask in this promise now and forevermore. Amen**

Offering our Gifts

Invitation

Having received new life through the generosity of God and the hope Christ brings,
let us give thankfully and abundantly that we may be called God's generous people.

Offertory Music

****Doxology***

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

****Offering Prayer***

God of all creation. You have blessed us to be a blessing. Open our eyes to all that we have and to the needs of those around us. Give us the faith to meet those needs with confidence in your abundant grace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

****Hymn***

“Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing”

77 TNCH

****Benediction***

As you go into the world to share God's Word and God's Love
Know that God goes before you to show you the way,
Behind you to encourage you,
Beside you to befriend you,
Above you to watch over you
And within you to give you peace. + **Amen**

****Postlude***

March 5 2023 Lent 2

Pastor's notes

This is what I usually said:

Most Gracious God, we thank You for the many gifts we have received from You. Above all, for the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, through whom Your love and forgiveness flows to us. We thank You for His death on the cross, through which we know our sins are forgiven; and for His resurrection, which is Your promise to us of eternal life.

Gracious God, send Your Holy Spirit and bless these gifts of the bread and the cup, that they may be living reminders to us of the Body and Blood of Christ. And may Your grace, Your forgiveness, and Your healing be as real to us as the bread which we eat and the cup which we drink. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

I often adjusted this to fit the season. Advent through Epiphany, I added, "We give You thanks that You did not leave us alone on this earth but came to us, sharing our lives and showing us the way back to You." I also would change the word "healing" to fit the main theme of the sermon.

This is what Deb usually says:

Most Gracious God, we seek Your blessing on the bread and the cup, that they may refresh our bodies and renew our spirits. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

This also shows the range of what can be said in the UCC. There is a service of communion in the black UCC hymnal that is longer, but it is not identified as a "Prayer of Consecration".