

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

March 7, 2021 The Third Sunday of Lent

“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

The heavens shout out the glories of the Lord.

God’s handiwork is written across the skies.

The music of creation sings throughout the earth.

Day by day, night by night, in word and in song, declare the glories of the Lord !

We worship the God of glory and grace.

Opening Prayer Living God, as we gather together in your love, we leave the ways of the world and all of its distractions behind. We seek only to worship you in spirit and in truth, letting nothing come between us. We want only to be enriched by your wisdom, your strength, your ways, and your love. Bless all who have come to seek you, on this, your holy day. Amen.

Scripture Reading “*I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.*” Read Exodus 20.1- 17

Prayer of Confession Based on Psalm 85
Lord, you forgive the iniquity of your people.

You pardon all their sin.

You withdrew all your wrath.

Will you not revive us again?

Restore us again that your people may rejoice in you.

Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation, we pray.

Time of Silent Confession *In this season of reflection and repentance, let us bring to God the confessions of our hearts.*

Words of Assurance Gracious God, you grant us your never-ending grace; you know our actions and forgive us still. You flow

through our sins and sorrows with your mercy and grace. We thank you that you restore us, renew us, and reclaim us.

Scripture Reading “*For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*” Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Remembering our Joys and Concerns in Prayer *We come to worship with many concerns upon our hearts but also joys in our lives. You are invited to share them with God in this time of silence.*

A Lenten Prayer (insert) and **The Lord’s Prayer**

Scripture Reading “*The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*” Read John 2.13-22

Meditation Every now and again I have an experience that I’m sure is not unique to me. It occurs when I see or read something that reminds me of an earlier time on my faith journey. When I encounter it, I begin to wonder, “How much did that impact my faith?” My reading this week for this meditation and the sermon to follow reminded me of a “painting” that hung in my bedroom as a child. Perhaps you are familiar with this well-known depiction by American artist Warner Sallman from 1940. Called *Head of Christ*, it has been described as an “extraordinarily successful work of Christian popular devotional art.” The portrait, comprised of gold and bronze tones, shows Jesus sitting in a three-quarter profile, looking serenely off into the distance. His light brown hair gleams, his cheekbones are high, his beard neatly trimmed, and his eyes are soft and caring. This was the Jesus of my childhood – and perhaps yours as well if this portrait was in your home, too.

As I think back to that framed copy which hung over my bed, two thoughts come readily to mind: first, that my parents shared

their faith with me by hanging this in my room; they wanted me to know that I was protected and loved and secure as I grew with Jesus watching over me; and second, I remember the feelings of being protected and loved and secure so my parents' plan really worked! And I am forever grateful for that. That portrait on the wall was as important to my faith as the lessons I learned in Sunday School in shaping who I am and who I believe Jesus to be.

And then, with the portrait still on my wall in my high school years, I read the story we hear in this week's gospel lesson – the story of Jesus turning the tables of the moneychangers. I was shocked at this story – which I'm sure I had heard before but this time really paid attention to. The Jesus I deeply loved was angry, really angry! How could this be? He was always quiet and calm, like his portrait showed, a role model for all of us, I was certain.

But I began to think more about the story, more about what I knew of Jesus. I had been taught that God's Son was both human and divine and here, in this story, I realized, I was seeing Jesus at his most human. Of course he was upset with the "business" being done outside the temple; certainly he didn't want those coming to give God their offerings to be cheated beforehand by the swindlers there. Jesus got angry! And I got it! I began to understand that Jesus was displaying a human emotion – just like the emotions we all have – and that it's okay to feel them and express them and not feel guilty about that.

That was a very freeing understanding for me; if Jesus could be human, well then, so could I and so could all the human beings around me. While God ultimately wants us to live calm and peace-filled lives, God also wants us to be fully human as well. So cherish being YOU, knowing that Jesus loves you!

The Sacrament of Holy Communion (insert)

Words of Benediction Hope in the Lord as your Lenten journey continues for God is our refuge and our strength. Trust in our God in the week ahead for God is our companion and our protector. Blessed be the name of our God.



The Third Sunday of Lent

Lisbon United Methodist Church
welcomes, nurtures, and serves
all people
with the love of Christ.