



# *Third Sunday in Lent: Character*



**Open Our Eyes, Lord**  
John 9:40



# West Richmond Church of the Brethren

7612 Wanyamala Road, Henrico, Virginia 23229-4239  
804-288-6439 804-282-4408 (fax) wrcob@wrcob.org www.wrcob.org

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**March 12, 2023**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent**

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**Welcome**

**Prelude**

*Could You Not Watch With Me*

Lani Smith

*Could You Not Watch With Me* by Lani Smith  
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## **GIVE PRAISE TO GOD**

**\* Call to Worship**

based on Psalms for Praying Nan C. Merrill 2007

**One:** Let us sing for joy to the Most High, the Creator of All!

**Many:** Come with thanksgiving and gratitude to be present with God.

**One:** Come with humility and reverence;

**Many:** Come to be invited as friends and companions on the Way.

**One:** Do not harden your hearts or close your ears to God's voice.

**ALL:** BUT MAY WE GROW IN CHARACTER AND WISDOM OF FAITH.

**\* Opening Prayer**

God of Hope: Help us to see the evidence of your faithfulness in the lives of people who have been shaped by struggle. Open our hearts to hear their voices and to hear Your voice. Give us the hope which comes from the conviction that You are faithful to all generations. Give us your Spirit so Your love may be poured in us and through us. Amen.

\* **Opening Hymn**      *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*      # 6 1 0 VT

*Precious Lord, Take My Hand* by Thomas Andrew Dorsey  
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Verse 1:

Precious Lord, take my hand,  
lead me on, help me stand,  
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.  
Through the storm, through the night,  
lead me on to the light,  
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

Verse 2:

When my way grows drear,  
precious Lord, linger near,  
when my life is almost gone,  
hear my cry, hear my call,  
hold my hand lest I fall.  
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

Verse 3:

When the darkness appears  
and the night draws near,  
and the day is past and gone,  
at the river I stand,  
guide my feet, hold my hand.  
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

## CELEBRATE GOD'S FAMILY

**Time with our Children** (after, children over 5 go to Children's Church)

**Hymn**      *Lord, I Need You*      # 1 5 5 VT

*Lord, I Need You* by Christy Nockels, Daniel Carson, Jesse Reeves, Kristian Stanfill, Matt Maher  
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Verse 1:

Lord, I come, I confess.  
Bowing here, I find my rest.

And without you, I fall apart.  
You're the one that guides my heart.

*Refrain: Lord, I need you, oh, I need you.  
Ev'ry hour I need you.  
My one defense, my righteousness;  
O God, how I need you.*

Verse 2:

Where sin runs deep, your grace is more.  
Where grace is found is where you are.  
And where you are, Lord, I am free.  
Holiness is Christ in me.

*Refrain*

BRIDGE:

So, teach my song to rise to you  
when temptation comes my way.  
And when I cannot stand, I'll fall on you.  
Jesus, you're my hope and stay.  
And when I cannot stand, I'll fall on you.  
Jesus, you're my hope and stay.

*Refrain*

## Prayer of Confession

from Romans 5:1-11

We have hope that one day we will share in the glory of God and have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Suffering and endurance may lead to character, but their weight has been heavy on the shoulders of sisters and brothers of color. Forgive us when we have added to the burden of inequality, or failed to lighten the load of those who are oppressed. Forgive us when we have seen people as stereotypes instead of potential friends. Forgive us when we have treated a stranger as an Enemy. And yet, we are called to enter God's hope and reconciliation. May we recognize hope in the assurance that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Having been reconciled by his death, may we be saved by his life. God's hope will never disappoint us. Amen.

# WORSHIP IN GIVING

## Special Music

### *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

Lowell Mason

*My Faith Looks Up to Thee* by C.E. Walz, Lowell Mason, Ray Palmer  
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## Scripture on Giving

Matthew 5:23-24 CEB

<sup>23</sup> Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift at the altar and go. First make things right with your brother or sister and then come back and offer your gift.

## Blessing of the Books for the Literacy Drive

### \* Hymn

### *Praise God (Doxology)*

# 71 A VT

A: Praise God, the Source of life and birth.  
Praise God, the Word who came to earth.  
Praise God the Spirit, holy Flame.  
All glory, honor to God's name.

# LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED

## Scripture Lesson

Romans 5:1-5 (NLT)

### Faith Brings Joy

<sup>5</sup> Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. <sup>2</sup> Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

<sup>3</sup> We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. <sup>4</sup> And endurance

develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. <sup>5</sup> And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

## Sermon

“Hope Through Suffering”

## Call to Discipleship

One: I don't see color!

Many: **That is not the goal. we see color and we honor you.**

One: I will be educated about your unique lived experiences.

Many: **We will work against the racism that harms you.**

One: I will do better.

Many: **We will do better.**

ALL: **THAT'S THE GOAL!**

## GO IN GOD'S NAME

### \* Closing Hymn

*Great is Thy Faithfulness*

# 419 VT

#### Verse 1:

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father.

There is no shadow of turning with thee.

Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not.

As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

#### *Refrain:*

*Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!*

*Morning by morning new mercies I see.*

*All I have needed thy hand hath provided.*

*Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

#### Verse 2:

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,

sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,

join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

*Refrain*

\* **Benediction**

**Postlude**

*Chorale Postlude*

Roger Wilson

\* Please stand as able and led



**Ministers ..... All Members**

Pastor.....	David Whitten
Worship Leader .....	Ann Andrus
Children's Time .....	Sarah Hartman
Special Music .....	Bob Phillips
Flautist .....	Sarah Hartman
Guitarist.....	David Whitten
Pianist/Organist.....	Bob Phillips
Dir. of Tech & Media.....	Kevin Beers