

Astoria First United Methodist Church
March 14, 2021

Fourth Sunday in Lent

ORDER OF WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary Frances Gunn

CENTERING MUSIC

“Seeking Thee”

Stephen Morden

WORDS OF WELCOME

Pastor Michael

CALL TO WORSHIP

Mary Frances Gunn

Taking part safely from home, staying a safe, masked distance in church, we are reminded of that promise: God's love endures forever! Despite our pandemic fatigue, in spite of the grumbling it inspires: the Light of Christ shines in our lives! Unable to sing together (or too shy to sing alone), when we wonder if we have the energy to continue to care for others, we are taught new songs by the Spirit, who encourages us to not give up!

OPENING PRAYER

Pastor Michael

SCRIPTURE READING

“Numbers 21:4-9”

Mary Frances Gunn

God's people set out on the way to the Red Sea, but the people became impatient along the way. So they spoke against God and against Moses saying, “why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.” So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Shine, Jesus, Shine”

Stephen Morden and Janet Todd

SCRIPTURE READING *“Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22”***Mary Frances Gunn**

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. Some were fools through their sinful ways, and because of their iniquities suffered affliction; they loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man! And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, and tell of his deeds in songs of joy!

CALL TO RECONCILIATION**Pastor Michael****UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION****Mary Frances Gunn**

Living, loving, ever present God. You journey with Your people through every time and season. You remain faithful, dependable and true. When we look to You, often we are enabled to see the way ahead. You make the darkness light and turn sorrow into joy. God of all the universe, You draw alongside us, weeping with us, gently cradling our pain, reaching out to heal and to hold. Forgive us, O God when we forget Your love, for ourselves and for others. Forgive us when we hoard or discard resources out of the rich bounty that You have given. Forgive us when we fail to see our connectedness to You and to our neighbor. Bring us back to You time after time. Stop us in our tracks and confound us with love until, worn down, we fix our eyes on You, God of our salvation.

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION**WORDS OF ASSURANCE****Mary Frances Gunn**

Let those who worship in a spirit of hope say so: God's love endures forever! Let those safely gathered in sanctuaries say so: God's love endures forever! Hear now the loving truth of God: God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Let those scattered in all places say so: God's love endures forever! This is the good news for us: God's love endures forever. Thanks be to God. In the Name of Christ, we are forgiven!

SCRIPTURE READING *“Ephesians 2:1-10”***Mary Frances Gunn**

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

HYMN OF PREPARATION

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

Mary Frances Gunn
UMH#384

GOSPEL LESSON

“John 3:14-21ff”

Pastor Michael

SERMON

“Folium Following (ff) No Final Page Number Given”

Pastor Michael

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Mary Frances

PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor Michael

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. AMEN.

BENEDICTION:

Pastor Michael

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**We welcome to our friends from the Warrenton UMC
as they join us for worship.**

**As a follow-up to our recent Four Week Advent Study,
We are beginning another study in the new year.**

Topic: Extraordinary Men and Women in the Bible

Our next study will be Tuesday, March 16, 2021.

Time: 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. by Zoom

**Our Stewardship / Pledge Drive was in January and it's not too late to
send your pledge cards into the church office As Soon As Possible.**

We still need volunteers for liturgist each week.

Please call Sue Hicks or Mary Frances Gunn if you wish to help.

If you want to provide special music – let Mary Frances know.

We now have recordings of the worship services available as a link.
