

***First Sunday in Lent***  
**February 18, 2024**

***Leading in Worship Today***

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor: *John D. Jordan* AV Director: *Marie Stiles*  
 Music Director: *Christopher A. McCroskey* AV Assistant: *Chris Derrick*  
 Time Together: *Joyce Robinson; Slone Taylor*

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey

Call To Worship "O How He Loves You and Me" Choir  
 Greeting

\*Hymn "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" 269

Opening Prayer The Lord's Prayer 895

**Proclamation of the Word**

Prayer of Illumination

"Let the Children Come!"  
*(Those 3 years of age through 8 years of age may go to Children's Church.)*

Old Testament Reading Genesis 9:8-17 Pages 7-8 (O.T.)  
 Psalter Psalm 25:1-10 756-757

\*Hymn "Spirit Song" 347

New Testament Reading 1 Peter 3:18-22 Page 224 (N.T.)

Anthem "Wade in the Water" Choir

Gospel Reading Mark 1:9-15 Page 37 (N.T.)  
 Sermon "Into the Wilderness" Rev. John Jordan

\*Affirmation of Faith "The Apostles' Creed" 881

\*Gloria Patri "Glory Be to the Father" 70

Pastoral Prayer

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

Offertory Christopher A. McCroskey

\*Doxology "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" 95

\*Hymn "Trust and Obey" 467

\*Dismissal With Benediction

\*Benediction Response "May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You" Choir

***VISITORS ARE WELCOME*** in the service of worship! Please make use of the visitor's tags (located in the pew backs) to help us better welcome you as a visitor to Trinity this morning. We ask that you also please fill in the pew pad as it passes to register your attendance with us. **Large print hymnals** are available from the ushers.

You may join as a member into the life and work of this congregation by Confession of Faith or by Transfer of Membership from another church. If you would be interested in becoming a member, please speak to the pastor.

***TODAY'S LOVELY FLOWERS*** are given to the ***Glory of God.***

\*The Congregation May Stand

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS...

English Pearcy Patsy Zeigler Charlie Hooker Kaye Floyd Patsy Shuler Taylor Linholm  
Becky Derrick John Ballentine Mary Kamoroff Jimmy Grahl Latson Lewis Christopher McCroskey

**Shut-Ins:** Esther Carter; Gillett Hipp; Linda Maloch; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath

**Family and Friends:** Logan Sturkie (*granddaughter of Marty Johnson's neighbor*); Bryan Collard (*brother-in-law of Mary Sue Lewis*); Charlyn McNeill (*sister of Mary Sue Lewis*); Elizabeth Kelsey & Jamie Barnett (*friends of John & Kay Jordan*); Alex Courtney (*friend of great nephew of Joyce Robinson*); Lawrence Gilbert (*friend of Becky Derrick*); Bob Bohnstengel (*spouse of Jo Ann Heiting's cousin*); Judy Spence (*former member*); Anne Piercy (*former member*); Missy Abrams (*stepdaughter of Lissa Abrams*); Mary Davis (*daughter of Bob & Libby Strickland*); Gloria Erd (*friend of Lynn Martin*); Pearl Geddens (*mother of Tom Geddens*); Beverly Lipscomb (*sister-in-law of John Jordan*); Ross Deal (*grandson of Mary Kamoroff*); Nancy Wilson (*friend of Jeanette Hornsby*); David Turner (*brother of Pam Turner*); Ernie & Betsey Hendrix, Chip Mixon (*friends of Tommy Gleaton*); Ron & Janet Walker (*friends of Tommy & Chris Gleaton*); Merit Takach (*friend of Joyce and Brent Robinson*); James Boggs (*father of Claire Boggs*); Stacy Coggins (*daughter of Steve Aiello*); Sweat Family (*friends of Marty Johnson*); Bill Areheart (*friend of Bonnie Ramsey*); David Grandshaw (*brother-in-law of Edwa Meek*); Robert Bradley (*Business Associate of Simon Ross*); Gary Becton (*friend of Mark Branham*); Florence Lee Carter, Monnie Tiller (*friends of Chris Derrick*); Adrin & Linda Hargett (*stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey*); Alexa Lookingbill, Teddy Derrick (*uncle of Arvan Derrick*); Haidee Baehr (*friends of Ruth Frady*); Denise Paul, Scott & Karen Nelson (*cousins of Gale Frady*); Dan Conner, Max Johnson (*friends of Gale Frady*); Bernardo Velasquez, Walt & Janet Beck (*friends of Jo Ann Heiting*); Adam Lavender (*son of Phil Lavender*)

If you have a friend or family member on the Prayer List, we ask you to please keep us updated. If no word is received, we will trust that our prayers have been answered and remove the name. To update us, please call the office or e-mail us at [trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com](mailto:trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com).

**OUR PRESENCE ...**

In-Person Attendance 02/11 SS: 14 Worship: 28

**OUR GIFTS ...**

General Fund 02/11 \$ 5,075.00 Souper Bowl \$ 206.00

**OUR SERVICE ...**

**OUR WITNESS."**

**Upcoming Events**

02/19 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

02/21 Wednesday's Words, 11: 30 a.m.

Choir, 6 p.m.

T.a.G., 7 p.m.

02/22 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

GLIA Articles Due

02/23 Office Closed

**Readings for February 25**

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalms 22:1-18, 23-31

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38



Ministers

Pastor

Resident Bishop

District Superintendent

The Congregation

John D. Jordan

Jonathan Holston

Rev. Fran M. Elrod

**Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

**Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform**

First Sunday  
in  
Lent

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**Sunday, February 25**

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, resumes this month and will be held on Sunday, February 25. It will continue on the fourth Sunday of every month. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and great fellowship!



**Columbia Community Concert Band's  
Winter Concert  
February 25 at 4:00 p.m.  
Airport High School Auditorium**

The 43<sup>rd</sup> season continues as we present our winter concert on Sunday, February 25, 4 p.m., in the Auditorium at Airport High School. Selections include a variety of music from American Classics to River Dance to our usual march or two. This concert features our talented saxophone players in "What a Wonderful World" made so famous by Louis Armstrong. Look for the signup sheet on the round table in the Gathering Area if you'd like to reserve a seat on the bus which will leave from the Gunter Circle parking lot at 3:20 p.m. on the day of the concert. We hope you can join us for a relaxing musical afternoon!



**Sunday, March 3  
4 p.m.**

Join us on Sunday, March 3, for food and fellowship as we watch the documentary film, Route 60: The Biblical Highway.

This film follows David Friedman and Mike Pompeo as they venture down this sacred road, treading the very ground Abraham, Jacob, King David, and Jesus once walked. Discover the history of Route 60, the Biblical Highway.



**Wednesday's Words  
Every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m.**

This month I have started a series on United Methodist beliefs. You may participate in person in the sanctuary or on our YouTube channel. Wednesday's Words will be ongoing and open to any topics you might like to discuss. Come or tune in on Wednesdays at 11:30 am.

**Coming Up in March**

**Holy Week Services**

Sunday, March 24 at Trinity / Debbie Miller preaching  
Monday, March 25 at Brookland / Morgan Byers preaching  
Tuesday, March 26 at Shiloh / Mark Payne preaching  
Wednesday, March 27 at Platt Springs / John Jordan preaching

Mark your calendars for these times of worship and fellowship with our sister UM churches in the West Metro Area.

## Mark 1:9-15

John baptizes Jesus in the Jordan. Jesus sees the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove. He hears a voice from heaven saying, “You are my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” Then, the Spirit immediately drives Jesus out into the wilderness. There, Satan tests him for forty days.

Wait a minute! Some stuff is missing! This story is much longer, with 11 verses in Matthew and 14 in Luke. Where is the dialogue between Jesus and Satan? Where is the bit about turning stones into bread, giving Jesus the kingdoms of the world, and jumping off the Temple Mount?

Mark is rather terse. He uses only two verses to tell a story that takes Matthew 11 and Luke 14. He tells it so differently. He presents a different message from the two other evangelists.

In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus does not come as a little baby. He comes as the judge and redeemer. Jesus comes to judge the world and redeem creation from sin. He must confront human sinfulness head-on. He must confront Satan, the tempter.

The Spirit drives Jesus out into the wilderness. The Spirit does not lead Jesus into the wilderness, the Spirit forces him into the wilderness. The Spirit does not allow time for contemplation but drives Jesus immediately into the wilderness. Mark tells us in the temptation story that Jesus confronted sin and temptation. Aspects of this story recall the story of Adam and Eve and the wandering in the wilderness.

Satan tempted Adam and Eve with the knowledge of good and evil that God forbade. God drove them out of the Garden and into the wilderness.

The Israelites thought God had abandoned them in the wilderness, so they had Aaron make them a golden calf to worship. God led them to wander in the wilderness for forty years because of their idolatry.

The Israelites and Adam and Eve failed to resist temptation. They failed to rely on God. They failed to trust that God keeps promises. Adam and Eve failed, and sin entered creation. The Israelites failed and remained in the wilderness until the generation passed. Humans fail when confronted with sin.

Often, we are driven into the wilderness. Wesley says in his notes on this passage, “So, in all the children of God, extraordinary manifestations of his favor are likely to be followed by extraordinary temptations.”<sup>1</sup> The closer God draws us, the more Satan tempts us. We are driven into our wilderness by circumstances we cannot control. At times our confidence is shaken and our faith may waver. We feel we are not strong enough to resist the temptations. We have failed.

When Jesus entered the wilderness to confront sin, the outcome was different. The evidence that Jesus overcame sin is much different than Matthew and Luke. In those Gospels, Jesus overcomes Satan with masterful debate, countering every one of Satan’s temptations. In Mark, there is no debate. How do we know Jesus overcame sin?

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<sup>1</sup> John Wesley, *Wesley’s Notes on the Bible*, Ed by G. Roger Schoehals. (Grand Rapids, MI, Francis Asbury Press, 1987) 425.

Jesus was with the wild beasts, indicating a return to the prefall order of creation. This harkens also to the Kingdom described in Isaiah 11: 6-9:

The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid;  
the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.

<sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

<sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

<sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

Jesus' being with the wild beast is evidence that Jesus overcame sin and restored creation.

Though the Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness, he was not alone. Mark states, "The angels waited on him." A better translation than the NRSV is, "The angels ministered unto him." This indicates the special relationship between God and Jesus, and God did not leave Jesus alone. God sent divine messengers to provide for Jesus' needs: physical, emotional, and spiritual. God sent messengers to support Jesus so he could overcome sin and restore created order.

The Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness to confront and overcome sin. The wilderness is the place where sin is defeated and creation is restored.

The wilderness may be defined as a lonely or desolate place. We are often driven into the wilderness: lonely, desolate conditions where we feel cut off and separated from God and others. We may be in the wilderness of grief, illness, confusion, conflict, depression, and addiction to name a few. Our wilderness is any condition where we feel separated, isolated, and alone.

When we find ourselves in the wilderness, we must remember three important things. We are not in the wilderness forever. Yes, it may be for a long time, forty days or forty years, but not forever. Noah was in the ark for a long time but not forever. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years but not forever. Jesus was in the wilderness for a long time, but not forever. As the Psalmist says, "Yea, though I walk **through** the darkest valley..." We will make it through our wilderness times.

In the wilderness, we are not alone. God sent messengers to minister to Jesus in the wilderness. God sends messengers into our wilderness to minister to us. The divine messenger may be a friend dropping by some food. A divine message may be a booklet received in the mail or the perfect devotional on a down day. Someone simply sharing a smile or warm greeting may be a divine messenger. God may send many messengers to us to say that God is with us. Again, to quote the Psalmist, "For you are with me." God is with us in our wilderness.

Finally, the wilderness is a place of restoration. The wild beasts were with Jesus, which indicated a restoration of God's intended order. In our wilderness, God can restore our relationship with God and others. In our wilderness, we learn that we must rely on God and cannot make it through the wilderness alone.

I can only speak for myself, but I know through my many wilderness experiences, I have grown closer to God. I grew closer to God because I know I could not have made it through the wilderness without God.

Though they may seem to last forever, our wilderness times are temporary. We are not alone in the wilderness. God is with us. God uses our wilderness times to strengthen and restore our relationship as we let go and rely on God.