

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

117 N. 2nd Street, Clarksburg, WV 26301

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Rev. Michael Q. Atkinson, Lead Pastor

Rev. Harry Jenkins, Associate Pastor

Brett Miller, Director of Music

"A Holy, Healthy, and Loving Community Striving to Know Christ and to Make Christ Known"



February 26, 2023

10:45 a.m.

"First Sunday in Lent"

WORDS OF WELCOME ----- Pastor Michael Atkinson

ORGAN PRELUDE - "O Welt, ich muss dich lassen" / J. Brahms - Dr. Jessica Scott

*CALL TO WORSHIP ----- Tammy Matheny, Liturgist

Leader: Come, people of God, to know again who you are,
return to the One who gives you life.

People: We come as children of God, longing for a closer walk with our Creator.

Leader: The abundant grace of God is offered to all of us in Christ Jesus

People: We gather to receive that gift, to learn and remember how best to use it.

Leader: We cannot live by bread alone; life is intended to be more than food.

People: Our worship is the opening of ourselves to receive the gifts of the Spirit.

Leader: Let nothing distract you from that intent;
we have assembled that God may speak to us.

People: We wait upon God, the Sovereign One, who knows us as we are and loves us.

*OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we are filled with wonder as we ask about our beginnings, as we question the evil in our world, as we ponder the mystery of who you are and how we can live our lives in faithfulness. Let your Spirit flow through our worship, that we may hear what you want us to hear. As Jesus overcame the temptation to hear less than your will in verses quoted to him, may we also be empowered to reject false messages and embrace your truth. Amen.

*HYMN #269 ----- "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

CHILDREN'S MOMENTS WITH THE PASTOR - - - - - Pastor Atkinson

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY SONG - "Create in Me a Clean Heart" - Don Gardner/Dr. Scott

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON- - - - - Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of all time and space, we have joined our ancestors in seeking to live our own way. We have been tempted to play God with our own lives and those of others. We have confused freedom with self-indulgence. We have sought to make decisions that are not ours to make. We have put down others to gain status for ourselves or have accepted the hierarchies of this world as God-given when they are not. Forgive us, O God, and equip us for clear thinking, honest response, and loving service. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

(Silent prayers of Confession may be offered at this time.)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

The abundance of God's grace is freely given to you this day. In Christ, we have known the reign of God's righteousness. God also lives in us. Receive this gift, with joy and thanksgiving, praising God for the new life that is yours.

GOSPEL LESSON-----Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him saying, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a high mountain and showed him the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" The devil left him, and angels came to attend him.

SERMON-----"Remaining Faithful"-----Pastor Atkinson

(You are encouraged to use this space for notes)

*HYMN #2112 (The Faith We Sing)---- "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"

*BENEDICTION

ORGAN POSTLUDE --"Tocatta in e minor" / J. Pachelbel ----- Dr. Scott

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH -- 304-623-3397

Pastor Michael Atkinson -- 304-771-3309

Pastor Harry Jenkins -- 304-280-0592



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CONGREGATIONAL GATHERING

“You are invited to gather on Sunday, March 5 at 9:30 AM. in the Fellowship Hall to hear some findings of our Vision Team’s Self-Study (Community and Church Assessment). It is our hope that you will gain insight from our work and that you will add your thoughts about our community needs and how the ministry at First Church might address those needs.”

Pastor Michael Atkinson

UPCOMING EVENTS AT FIRST CHURCH

Sunday, February 26th -- Confirmation Orientation at 12:00 p.m. in the Parlor

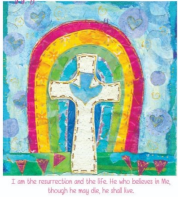
Tuesday, February 28th -- Monastic Meal at 12:15 p.m.

Thursday, March 2nd - Prayer Shawl Ministry at 5:00 p.m. in the Parlor

Twelve-Step Meetings (7 sessions each week) -- Monday through Thursday -- Library
Winter Shelter -- nightly from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m.



Happy Easter



OUR EASTER PROGRAM: “THE GLORIOUS RAINBOW OF EASTER”

Practices for "The Glorious Rainbow of Easter", will be held on the following dates **after church**:
March 12th, March 19th, March 26th, and April 2nd. \

Rehearsals will last 30 minutes or less.

Any child, youth, or adult that would like to participate is encouraged to stay for the rehearsals.

On Easter Sunday, April 9th, all participants in the Easter program are asked to be at the church by 10:15 am for quick run through before presenting it to the congregation.

(Also, the Children’s Church choir will be singing on Palm Sunday, April 2nd.)

QUESTIONS? CONTACT SHELLEY SPELLMAN AT 304-669-8461

Contact Tammy Matheny at 304-476-2015
if you would like information about our Prayer Chain.

