

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

117 N. 2nd Street, Clarksburg, WV 26301

Phone: 304.623.3397 email: cfumc@citynet.net

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"



March 26, 2023

10:45 a.m.

"Fifth Sunday in Lent"

WORDS OF WELCOME ----- Pastor Michael Atkinson

PRELUDE ----- "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross" / Joyce Jones- -Dr. Jessica Scott

*CALL TO WORSHIP ----- Rev. Harry Jenkins

Leader: Lazarus, though dead, was called to life by Jesus.

People: May we be called to the light of righteousness.

Leader: As others witnessed this resurrection, they believed in Jesus.

People: May we, who have heard, believe in the power of Jesus
to conquer our fears and doubts.

Leader: Praise be to God who has given us Jesus.

People: Praise be to Jesus who has given us life.

*OPENING PRAYER

Healing and Empowering God, we are sometimes so sure that things will not work out, we doubt even your ability to put things right in our lives. We lack such faith. But Jesus came to show us that our most dreaded enemy--death--can be overcome by faith. Heal our doubts and our longings for assurance and give us spirits of trust and hope. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

*HYMN #393 ----- "Spirit of the Living God"

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

OFFERTORY DUET - - - "The Power of the Cross" - - - - - Getty / Townend
Lorie Wyant and Don Gardner, singers ; Dr. Scott, piano

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.

GOSPEL LESSON - - - - - John 11:1-45

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, and then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?"

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world's light. It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light." After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

He told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. Let us go to him." Thomas, also known as Didymus, said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go." Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Leader: The word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON - - - - - "A New Lease on Life" - - - - - Pastor Atkinson
(You are encouraged to use this space to take notes.)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, we confess that we are frightened by death. We have experienced the loss of loved ones and have heard, all too often, of the horrible losses sustained by the young people who live in lands of warfare and strife. In this scripture today we encounter Lazarus and his family. They, too, long for Lazarus to be alive again. Jesus' power to resurrect Lazarus confuses us. We long for that type of healing for our loved ones.

And so, when their bodies cannot be healed and they die, we slip away from our faith, proclaiming that it is a nice story. Give us courage to face our fear. Give us awareness that you have offered to all those who have gone before us, a place in your kingdom. Help us move away from the prison of death to the light of eternal life and hope. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

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

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Though darkness and death appear all around, there is the comforting healing light of God's love shining on you and in you. Feel the warmth of the presence of God and let go of your fear, for God is with you. AMEN.

*HYMN #261, v. I-4 - - - - - "Lord of the Dance"

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE - - - - - "Excerpts from Sonata VI' / Mendelssohn- - - - -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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fumc@citynet.net



(follow us on Facebook) First United Methodist Church of Clarksburg



TODAY AT 4:30 p.m.!

Folks of all ages are welcome to come for an time of fun
that includes decorating Easter eggs.

Questions? Call Leah Wray (304-672-2096) / Renae Payne (304-669-6025).

RSVP's are appreciated but not required.

Snacks, eggs and coloring supplies will be provided.

We can't wait to kick off our 1st Family Fun Night with you!

UPCOMING EVENTS AT FIRST CHURCH

Today after worship -- Confirmation Class with Pastor Mike -- Parlor

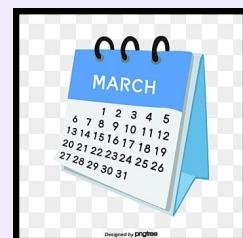
Monday, March 27th -- Vision Team at 5:30 -- Parlor

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

Wednesday, March 29th -- Study with Pastor Atkinson at 6:00 p.m. -- Parlor

Thursday, March 30th - Prayer Shawl Ministry at 5:00 p.m. in the Parlor

Thursday, March 30th -- Study with Rev. Jenkins at 6:00 p.m. -- Parlor



Twelve-Step Meetings (7 sessions each week)--Monday through Thursday-- Library

RUMMAGE SALE!

You've been asking...so here it comes...the next Rummage Sale, October 5th and 6th!

Start storing your items, or, if need be, bring your stuff ahead of time and put it in the Fellowship Hall.

Questions? Contact Outreach Co-Ordinator Anita Burns at 304-203-1279 (or the church office).



OUR EASTER PROGRAM: "THE GLORIOUS RAINBOW OF EASTER"

Practices will be held during Children's Church: today and April 2nd.

(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.**

