

# The Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair

Sunday, March 16, 2025  
Second Sunday in Lent



10:00 a.m.

\*If you are able, please stand.  
Please turn off cell phones.

## WE GATHER AROUND GOD'S WORD

"If you look throughout human history ... the central epiphany of every religious tradition always occurs in the wilderness."

John F. Kennedy

"May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view."

Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*



### Prelude

*Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*

spiritual

Anne Marie Juliano, piano

### \*Call to Worship (based on Psalm 27:1)

Will Hofmann

One: The LORD is our light and our salvation;

**All: Whom shall we fear?**

The LORD is the stronghold of our life;

**Of what shall we be afraid?**

Come, seek God and give thanks in this time of worship.

**Let us worship God!**

### \*Opening Hymn 400 *I Rejoiced When I Heard Them Say*

England

(verses 1, 2, 4)

### Invitation to Confession and Worship

When we seek God in prayer and confession, God hears. Let us approach God's throne of grace with confidence and trust.

### Prayer of Confession and Preparation (unison)

**Eternal God, as conflict and uncertainty rage and fear grows large, the distance between us feels like absence, and we come to believe you are hidden, or uncaring. Forgive our lack of trust, we pray. Forgive our lack of spiritual openness and expectation that you will again keep your promises. Forgive us when we make our faith all about what you might do for us rather than how we might work at right relationship with you. Hear our silent and personal confessions—and assure us once again that nothing can divide us from you.**

*our silent prayers of preparation and confession*

## The 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 debts as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn 775 (seated) *I Want Jesus to Walk with Me*

spiritual

## Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness (responsive)

One: What then are we to say to these things?

**All: If God is for us, who can be against us?**

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

**Nothing, for there is now no condemnation  
for those who trust in Christ Jesus.**

Friends, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed us  
from the power of sin that leads to death. So be at peace.

**Thanks be to God!**

**\*We Give God Glory** (Hymn #582)

*Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,  
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,  
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.*  
*World without end, without end. Amen. (sing 3 times)*  
*As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be. Amen.*

## Welcome & Life of the Church

Pastor Greg Horn

(Please fill out the Friendship Pad completely and pass it along.)

## WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

### Time for Children

(All children are invited forward. Afterward, all children may attend Sunday School.)

### Scripture Reading (p.816 of OT)

**Isaiah 40:1-3, 27-31** (NRSV)

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup> A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>27</sup> Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God'? <sup>28</sup> Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. <sup>29</sup> He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.

<sup>30</sup> Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; <sup>31</sup> but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

One: The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

<sup>1</sup>After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, ‘Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.’ <sup>2</sup>But Abram said, ‘O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?’ <sup>3</sup>And Abram said, ‘You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir.’ <sup>4</sup>But the word of the Lord came to him, ‘This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir.’ <sup>5</sup>He brought him outside and said, ‘Look towards heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ <sup>6</sup>And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

<sup>7</sup>Then he said to him, ‘I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.’ <sup>8</sup>But he said, ‘O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?’ <sup>9</sup>He said to him, ‘Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.’ <sup>10</sup>He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. <sup>11</sup>And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup>As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. <sup>13</sup>Then the Lord said to Abram, ‘Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years; <sup>14</sup>but I will bring judgement on the nation that they serve, and afterwards they shall come out with great possessions. <sup>15</sup>As for yourself, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. <sup>16</sup>And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.’

<sup>17</sup>When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. <sup>18</sup>On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.’

**One:** The Word of the Lord.

**All:** **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

“A Promise in the Wilderness”

Pastor Greg Horn

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD**

**\*Hymn 203**

*Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love*

*Cherponi*

### **We Worship With Our Offerings**

**Prayer of Dedication**

**Offertory Anthem**

*Pilgrim Song*

arr. Ryan Murphy

Chancel Choir

*My brethren, I have found a land that doth abound with fruit as sweet as honey;  
The more I eat, I find, the more I am inclined to shout and sing hosanna.*

***My soul doth long to go where I may fully know the glory of my Savior;  
And as I pass along I'll sing the Christian song, I'm going to live forever.***

*Perhaps you think me wild, or simple as a child; I am a child of glory;  
I am born from above, my soul is filled with love; I love to tell the story.*

*My soul now sits and sings and practices its wings, and contemplates the hour;  
When messenger shall say, "Come quit this house of clay, and with bright angels tower.*

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

**Prayer of the People**

**\*Closing Hymn 772**

*Live into Hope*

*Truro*

**\*Charge and Benediction**

**Postlude**

**GO WITH GOD – TO SERVE GOD’S WORLD**

*The flowers decorating the chancel this morning are given by  
Lisa and Ellen Cowan Brescia and Erika Cowan,  
in celebration of Spring and Erik’s birthday.*

**WELCOME** and thank you for your part in this service of worship. If you are a visitor here at the Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair (PCUM), you are especially welcome. May you sense in this place the presence and the love of God in Christ. After worship, you are invited for refreshments and conversation in Fellowship Hall.

**PLEASE ASK AN USHER** for anything you might need, and please help fellow worshippers by exiting and entering the sanctuary at times other than during prayers or scripture readings.

**CHILDCARE** for toddlers and a nursery for younger children are always available during worship in the North Wing, located off Fellowship Hall. Please ask an usher for directions.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES** for all children preschool through 7th grade are located in the North Wing. Ask the ushers for directions. Parents of kids participating in Sunday School for the first time: please step out briefly with your child(ren) as they are dismissed to register them and complete an emergency contact form.



**MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MICHELLE LIM** – This Saturday, March 22 at 11:00 a.m., you are warmly invited to a memorial service celebrating the life of the Rev. Dr. Michelle Lim an elder on the PCUM Session, a minister in the Korean Presbyterian Church, and member of the pastoral staff at Fifth Ave Presbyterian Church in NYC. Interment in the church’s Memorial Garden and a repast in Fellowship Hall will follow.

**PIZZA & MOVIE NIGHT FRIDAY, MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup>** – Hey kids and parents! At 6:00 pm on Friday evening, March 28<sup>th</sup>, families with children 2nd grade & younger (older siblings are welcome!) are invited to a FREE evening of movie-watching, fellowship and fun for kids and families! Come, meet other PCUM parents while your children play with friends from Sunday School or the Nursery under the supervision of the Children’s Ministries staff. There will be pizza and salad for everyone, as well as a short child-friendly film screening. Please RSVP by Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup> to Millie Tourtelot at [millie@pcum.org](mailto:millie@pcum.org).

<p>The Presbyterian Church of Upper Montclair 53 Norwood Avenue Upper Montclair, NJ 07043 973-746-3854 <a href="mailto:pcum@pcum.org">pcum@pcum.org</a> <a href="http://www.pcum.org">www.pcum.org</a> Facebook/Instagram: @PCUMontclair</p>		<p><b>Pastor &amp; Head of Staff:</b> The Rev. Gregory A. Horn <b>Director of Music Ministries:</b> Anne Marie Juliano <b>Director of Christian Education:</b> Millie Tourtelot <b>Co-Youth Leader:</b> Garrett Pahl <b>Children’s Programs/Co-Youth Leader:</b> Sierra Joy <b>Church Administrator:</b> Denise Silecchia <b>Livestream Techs:</b> Tres Williams, Jerome Nelson <b>Custodian:</b> Jimmy Abad</p>
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## Journey Through Lent

**TRUST IN EXILE? THURSDAY EVENING STUDY** – On Thursday evenings from 6-7:30 p.m. throughout the season of Lent (through April 10), join Pastor Greg Horn and others as together we focus on the theme of "Exile" in the scriptural tradition.

Come, connect with others and sharpen your skills as a Bible reader as we engage human stories of exile across centuries and discover God's comfort and challenge for us today. In-person and on Zoom.

**PALM/PASSION SUNDAY – April 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am:** Join the procession waving palm branches and celebrating the coming Savior, even as the shadow of the cross—and the promise of resurrection—loom ahead. The story of Christ's betrayal and passion is proclaimed through a dramatic reading by a number of gifted voices and special music presented by the Chancel Choir.



**MAUNDY THURSDAY – March 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm:** Plan to take part in this meaningful Holy Week experience as the PCUM family gathers around the Lord's Table to focus on the great love God of in Christ that sustains us even through the darkest times.

**EASTER WORSHIP CELEBRATIONS** on **Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>** will be at **9:00 am & 11:00 am**. There will be coffee and fellowship time between services in Fellowship Hall and PCUM's Annual Easter Egg Hunt will begin at 10:20 a.m. on the East Lawn (weather permitting).

**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING:** *Sharing Resources. Changing Lives.* The PCUM worshipping family will receive the special One Great Hour of Sharing offering on Palm Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. Since 1949, OGHs gifts have supported ministries of disaster response, refugee assistance, and community development that help people find safe refuge, start new lives, and work together to strengthen their families and communities.

**DEDICATE EASTER FLOWERS** – Remember or honor a loved one Easter Sunday by dedicating Easter Flowers that will adorn the sanctuary to give thanks to God and proclaim the Good News of God's gift of new and abundant life in the resurrected Christ. Dedication forms are available in the Narthex. You can also sign up on the website home page ([www.pcum.org](http://www.pcum.org)). Each plant is \$15. **No orders can be received after Palm Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>.**

**PCUM's WEEKLY MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP** meets Wednesdays from 7-8:30 p.m. All teens and tweens 6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to come out to have fun, share dinner, and meet old and new friends.

**SIGN UP TO HELP PREPARE & SERVE COFFEE HOUR** – Hospitality is a priority of this church family. Sign up to help on the Coffee Hour Calendar in the Deacons' Corner or online at [www.pcum.org](http://www.pcum.org).

**VOLUNTEER TO SERVE HUNGRY NEIGHBORS** – Join fellow volunteers serving hungry neighbors for an experience that feeds everyone! PCUM prepares and serves an evening meal in Montclair every 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month and lunch in Newark the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday. *Sign up at [pcum.org/serve-others](http://pcum.org/serve-others).*

**MONTCLAIR MUSIC CLUB** announces an extraordinary all vocal program of arias, duets and songs by Puccini, Mozart, Bellini, Johann Strauss, Jr., Verdi and Richard Strauss, at PCUM on Monday evening, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m. The program will feature soprano Iris Prcic and tenor Rafael Gavidia with collaborator Eric Olsen; soprano Karen Lundry with collaborator Barry Spatz; soprano Mia Riker-Norrie and baritone Alan Briones with collaborator Rebecca Eng; and soprano Julia

Rolwing with collaborator Soyeon Kim. Free and open to the public. Donations welcome. Reception immediately following the program.