

**Ephraim Moravian Church**  
**First Sunday in Lent**  
February 21, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Order of Service

**“Wade in the Water” - Traditional Spiritual**

Welcome & Announcements

**“Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele” (“Deck Thyself, my Soul, with Gladness”) - by J. S. Bach**

Watchword for the Week: *‘Good and upright is the Lord; therefore He instructs sinners in the way’* - Psalm 25:8

**Hymn (p.76): “In the Cross of Christ I Glory”**

In the cross of Christ I glory  
Tow’ring o’er the wrecks of time  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure  
By the cross are sanctified  
Peace is there that knows no measure  
Joys that through all time abide.

Prayers of the Church / The Lord’s Prayer

**Congregational Sung Response (#825):**

*Hear our prayer, O Lord  
Hear our prayer, O Lord  
Incline your ear to us  
And grant us your peace. Amen.*

Scripture Readings: Psalm 25: 1-10  
Mark 1: 9-15

**“Day by Day (and with Each Passing Moment)” - by Lina Sandell & Oscar Ahnfelt**

Reflection

**“O, Divine Redeemer” - by Charles Gounod**

Sermon

Benediction

**Fantasia and Fugue in G Minor, “The Great” (BWV 542) – by J. S. Bach**

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**Reflection - by Rev. Cory Kemp**

More than any other season in the church year, Lent teaches us the rhythm, the dance in which you and I each partner in faith with God. Our Psalmist doesn't detail personal experiences, but clearly knows what it feels like to have stepped off the path of faith; their discomfort and regret is palpable. Whatever temptation initiated the trajectory away from God is acknowledged, if not named. Returning to righteous living is credited fully to God's guidance, mercy, love and teaching. Now realigned with God, they can tell us that, “In you, Lord my God, I put my trust... All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.”

Where have your wilderness journeys taken you? Have you ever felt tinges of shame at having succumbed to a subtle nudge to go a different way that you knew in your heart was wrong? What drew you back to God's guidance? What did you let go of, repent of, to make room for the humility that sought out that merciful loving kindness with which God met your return? How does trusting God again feel to you? Mark's gospel places Jesus' temptation in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry, right after he is baptized by his cousin, John. He makes it through the forty days and nights, cared for by angels, and then starts his public ministry, preaching that the kingdom of God is at hand, to repent and believe the gospel.

Soon after, John is imprisoned and murdered. How did Jesus reconcile his vocational calling with the very likely possibility that he would meet the same fate as his cousin? Was he tempted to walk away before he'd barely begun? Somehow, he moved through the struggles he must have faced in this new wilderness, trusted God and kept going. Have you struggled with a major life decision in your journey of faith? After sorting through some of the issues ahead, deciding you were ready for whatever came, did you wonder if you may not be ready at all? Were you afraid the cost would be too high, especially in ways you were unwilling to pay? How did you

work with these struggles? Whatever your decision, what did God's guidance and teaching provide you in this wilderness?

Whatever the tangible realities of your life, temptation and struggle are included in the mix. What is always available is the opportunity to rejoin God trusting, faithful covenant relationship. Lent is the perfect season to welcome your Partner back to the dance floor.

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Pastor.....Dawn E. Volpe  
Music Director.....Colin Welford  
Guest Singers.....Katie Dahl, Cynthia Stiehl



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