

Wednesday, February 28th, 2024

COMBINED LENTEN SERVICE – 7:00 PM



Bread: February 21st — Nekoosa UCC — 7:00 PM

Cross: February 28th — Port Edwards UMC — 7:00 PM

Coins: March 6th — Nekoosa UCC — 7:00 PM

Shoes: March 13th — Port Edwards UMC — 7:00 PM

Oil: March 20th — Nekoosa UCC — 7:00 PM

HOLY WEEK: Maundy Thursday — Port Edwards UMC — 7:00 PM

Good Friday — held at both churches separately



Musician: Sue Mitchell

Media Technician: Colby Grunden

Greeter: Midge Herschleb

Liturgist: Kathy McGrath

Scripture Reader: Lynette Hilgers

Tonight's service is led by Bonnie Wheeler (NUCC). Pastor Caleb is out sick for the week.

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## WORDS OF WELCOME

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP:

L: Jesus, we our cross have taken, all to leave and follow You;

**P: destitute, despised, forsaken, You on earth do suffer, too.**

L: Death to ev'ry fond ambition, all we've ever hoped or known;

**P: yet how rich is our condition, God and heav'n are still our own!**

L: And, since You have smil'd upon us, God of Wisdom, Love, and Might;

**P: when foes may hate and friends may shun us,**

**ALL: just show Your face, and all is bright: AMEN!**

*[“Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken,” Henry Francis Lyte, 1825; adapted]*

## OPENING PRAYER:

**ALL: God of Life, it's too easy for faith to become an escape:  
a way to avoid the pain of being human and alive;  
or a path to success:**

**a way to persuade the universe to give us what we want;  
or a system of control: a way to bend others to our will.**

**But the faith You offer is different:**

**it is much more dangerous and compelling.**

**It is a faith that carries the cross, embraces death,  
and lays itself down for the sake of others;**

**it is the only faith that can lead us to Resurrection,  
to life renewed and overflowing.**

**We praise You for this faith, God.**

**Open our hearts to receive it!**

**In the name of Your Son, Jesus, the Crucified One: AMEN!**

**\*OPENING HYMNS:**      *A Medley At the Cross*      lyrics below

Song #1 (UMH 297):

**Beneath the cross of Jesus I \*fain would take my stand,  
the shadow of a Mighty Rock within a weary land;  
a Home within the wilderness, a Rest upon the way,  
from-the-burning of the nootide heat, and-the-burden of the day.**

*\*willingly; gladly*

Song #2 (UMH 298):

**When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died;  
my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.**

Song #3 (UMH 301):

**Jesus, keep me near the cross; there a precious fountain,  
free to all a healing stream, flows from Calv'ry's mountain.**

***In the cross, in the cross, be my glory ever,  
'til my ransomed soul shall find / rest beyond the river!***

*[continues on next page]*

Song #4 (UMH 504):

**On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,  
the emblem of suff'ring and shame;  
and I love that old cross where the dearest and best  
for a world of lost sinners was slain.**

*So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, 'til my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown.*

SCRIPTURE READINGS (PAGE # - <sup>N</sup> - NEW TESTAMENT):

Hebrews 12:1-3 (<sup>N</sup>307) / Mark 8:34-37 (<sup>N</sup>60)

### **'LENT IN PLAIN SIGHT'**

#### **A BALANCED CROSS**

Pastor Caleb

**\* HYMN OF RESPONSE:**      *Lift High the Cross* (vs. 1 & 4)      **UMH 159**

Chorus: **Lift – high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim /  
'til all the world – adore – His sacred name!**

**Vs. 1: Come – Christians, fol – low – this triumphant sign. The –  
hosts – of – God – in – unity combine. (chorus)**

**Vs. 4: So – shall our song – of – triumph ever be: Praise –  
to – the – Cru – ci – fied for victory! (chorus)**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**ALL: Merciful God, when we hear the words from Jesus:**

***'Take up your cross and follow Me,' they scare us.***

**We know what it meant for Jesus.**

**We are unsure if we can sacrifice our lives, too.**

**We are not even ready on most days**

**to sacrifice those trivial things for the sake of Your Kin'dom.**

**Forgive us for choosing daily to be smug, for all our made-up excuses,  
and for complaining about being bored as we do little worthwhile.**

**Forgive us for trying to make our cross more comfortable,  
for finding Your cross too harsh and inconvenient.**

**Forgive us for not loving our neighbor as You have loved us—  
(*we'd do it in a heartbeat, if only we first knew their names*)!**

**So here we are, Lord: forgive us and free us!**

**Tonight, we choose again to take up our cross and follow You!  
In the name of Jesus, who lived *with* us, died *by* us, and rose *for* us:  
AMEN!**

***[MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION & CONFESSION]***

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE:**

*L: Hear the Bad News:*

Jesus died a prolonged, humiliating, gruesome death  
on a torture device used by the state as a strategic show of fear.

*Hear the Good News of Jesus Christ:*

His love still speaks from this cross, overturning the power of evil!

**ALL: In His name, we are a forgiven people! Glory to God! AMEN!**

**\*CONFESSATIONAL HYMN:     *Where He Leads Me* (vs. 1 & 3)     UMH 338**

***Vs. 1: I can hear my Savior calling: (3x)***

***“Take thy cross and—follow—follow Me.”***

***Chorus: Where He leads me, I will follow: (3x)***

***I'll go with Him—with Him—all the way.***

***Vs. 3: I'll go with Him through the judgment: (3x)***

***I'll go with Him—with Him—all the way. (chorus)***

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*(each time):* L: O Crucified God,     **ALL: deliver us from evil!**

**\*CLOSING HYMN:**      *O Young and Fearless Prophet*      **UMH 444**

**Vs. 1: O young and fearless Prophet of ancient Galilee,  
Thy life is still a summons to serve humanity;  
to make our thoughts and actions less prone to please the crowd,  
to stand with humble courage for truth with hearts uncowed.**

**Vs. 2: We marvel at the purpose that held Thee to Thy course /  
while ever on the hilltop before Thee loomed the cross;  
Thy steadfast face set forward where love and duty shone,  
while we betray so quickly and leave Thee there alone.**

**Vs. 3: O help us stand unswerving against war's bloody way,  
where hate and lust and falsehood hold back Christ's holy sway;  
forbid false love of country that blinds us to His call,  
who lifts above the nations the unity of all.**

**Vs. 4: Stir up in us a protest against our greed for wealth,  
while others starve and hunger and plead for work and health;  
where homes with little children cry out for lack of bread,  
who live their years sore burdened beneath a gloomy dread.**

**Vs. 5: O young and fearless Prophet, we need Thy presence here,  
amid our pride and glory to see Thy face appear;  
once more to hear Thy challenge above our noisy day,  
again to lead us forward along God's holy way.**

**\*BENEDICTION**

**REFRESHMENTS IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL**

**OFFERING**

*(place any donations in the wooden box as you leave the service tonight)*

When at Nekoosa:      Nekoosa School District Lunch Debt Fund  
When at Port Edwards:      Port School District Lunch Debt Fund

HOLY WEEK:

**Live Last Supper Service**

Marshfield Wesley United Methodist Church

*(211 S. Maple Avenue, Marshfield, WI)*

Mon., March 25<sup>th</sup> – 7-8 PM / Wed., March 27<sup>th</sup> – 7-8 PM  
*(we'd like to take a group on Wed.)*

No admission or tickets needed.

**Maundy Thursday Service** – 7-8 PM @ Port Edwards UMC

**Good Friday Services** – held at both churches separately