

**Sunday Worship - March 30, 2025**  
*Fourth Sunday in Lent*



James Tissot (1836-1902), *The Poor Lazarus at the Rich Man's Door*

**Narrative Lectionary Year 3- The Gospel of Luke**  
**Luke 16:19-31 The Rich Man & Lazarus**

**First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, Iowa**

*“Striving to live as Jesus lived –confronting injustice with love, compassion, service.”*

## Welcome to Worship

### PRELUDE

### RINGING OF THE HOUR

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come and find yourself in God's story

**All: Come and have your imagination expanded**

Leader: Come and meet the Living Word

Come and see what the Holy Spirit wants to show you

**All: We come at Christ's command, to be transformed.** (© Teri Peterson)

### \*OPENING PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray...

You, Lord, invite us to a new world,

so different from what we know of the way things are.

Open us today to hear your word afresh, to see what is possible in your eyes.

And make us willing to try your way even when it contradicts the way of the world.

We ask through the power of Jesus the Christ. Amen. (© Teri Peterson)

### HYMN #183 Come to Me, O Weary Traveler

1. Come to me, O weary traveler; come to me with your distress;  
come to me, you heavy burdened; come to me and find your rest.
2. Do not fear, my yoke is easy; do not fear, my burden's light;  
do not fear the path before you; do not run from me in fright.
3. Take my yoke and leave your troubles; take my yoke and come with me.  
Take my yoke, I am beside you; take and learn humility.
4. Rest in me, O weary traveler; rest in me and do not fear.  
Rest in me, my heart is gentle; rest and cast away your care.

### \*PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

Leader: Who can understand the heart? Only God.

Let us confess the ways we have turned from the One who knows us and saves us.

**ALL: Compassionate and merciful God,  
you call us into a relationship with you and one another.  
You call us to step out of our usual ways to truly see.  
You call us to reach across the chasms of this world to create one beloved community.  
We confess that we find it easier to ignore others,  
because we don't know what to do or how to fix situations,  
so we avoid even seeing the people you place in our paths.  
We understand that it's the way of the empire to keep us divided and separated,  
yet we confess we do not resist —  
Indeed, that we have bought the lie that we are each isolated individuals, on our own.  
We insulate ourselves from the suffering we do see,  
using our privilege and position to protect ourselves,  
lusting after the trappings of even greater wealth and comfort,  
looking for reasons others deserve their suffering.  
Forgive us, loving God, for believing and living un-truths  
that contradicts your word and your kingdom.  
Forgive us for our inability to see our neighbors as fully human.  
Forgive us for seeing yet doing nothing, as if we deserve better than others.  
Awaken us today to your vision, and give us courage to put it into action right now,  
before it is too late for yet another generation  
to live in the fullness of your kingdom life today.  
We ask in the name of the One who died and was raised  
to show us the way, Jesus the Christ. Amen.** (© Teri Peterson, adapted)

*Time of Silence*

#### **\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Leader: From the beginning, the world has been built only upon grace\*.  
From the beginning, God has been showing us a more excellent way.  
From the beginning, God is love.  
Knowing this truth, live its reality: you are beloved,  
and the kingdom is open to you even now.

**ALL: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

*\*from the Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, vol. 2*

(© Teri Peterson)

#### **RESPONSE #750 Goodness Is Stronger than Evil**

Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;  
light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.  
Victory is ours ; victory is ours Oh, victory is ours; victory is  
through God who loves us. us. ours through God who loves us.

## \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

## DISCOVERY TIME

### SCRIPTURE READING

Leader: In the beginning was the Word.

**All: And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

Leader: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

### Luke 16:19-31 (CEB) - The Rich Man & Lazarus

**Reader 1:** “There was a certain rich man who clothed himself in purple and fine linen, and who feasted luxuriously every day. <sup>20</sup> At his gate lay a certain poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. <sup>21</sup> Lazarus longed to eat the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table. Instead, dogs would come and lick his sores.

**Reader 2:** <sup>22</sup> “The poor man died and was carried by angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> While being tormented in the place of the dead, he looked up and saw Abraham at a distance with Lazarus at his side. <sup>24</sup> He shouted, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I’m suffering in this flame.’ <sup>25</sup>

**Reader 1:** But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received good things, whereas Lazarus received terrible things. Now Lazarus is being comforted and you are in great pain. <sup>26</sup> Moreover, a great crevasse has been fixed between us and you. Those who wish to cross over from here to you cannot. Neither can anyone cross from there to us.’

**Reader 2:** <sup>27</sup> “The rich man said, ‘Then I beg you, Father, send Lazarus to my father’s house. <sup>28</sup> I have five brothers. He needs to warn them so that they don’t come to this place of agony.’ <sup>29</sup> Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets. They must listen to them.’ <sup>30</sup> The rich man said, ‘No, Father Abraham! But if someone from the dead goes to them, they will change their hearts and lives.’ <sup>31</sup> Abraham said, ‘If they don’t listen to Moses and the Prophets, then neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.’”

Leader: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us,

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

## REFLECTION

## HYMN #100 Canticle of the Turning (My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout)

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn? REFRAIN

REFRAIN: My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and world is about to turn.

2. Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,  
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. REFRAIN
3. From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;  
There are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. REFRAIN
4. Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,  
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. REFRAIN

## SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**ALL: 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.**

## WE OFFER OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

Leader: Everything we have is a gift from God, and our offerings are a way of acknowledging God as the giver. Whatever and whenever we give is a vital part of our response to God and helps us connect our love for God with our life of discipleship. Let us pray:

**ALL: May we commit ourselves, Lord God, once again looking ahead to this week:  
to find ways to serve, to find ways to give,  
to find ways to use our abilities in bringing about change for justice and peace,  
to find ways to use our whole selves in bringing about your Kingdom. Amen.**

## HYMN #852 When the Lord Redeems the Very Least

1. When the Lord redeems the very least, we will rejoice.  
When the hungry gather for the feast, we will rejoice.

*Refrain:* We will rejoice with gladness. We will rejoice.  
All our days we'll sing to God in praise.  
We will rejoice.

2. When the Lord restores the sick and weak, we will rejoice.  
When the earth is given to the meek, we will rejoice.

*Refrain*

3. When the Lord revives the world from death, we will rejoice.  
When the word of God fills every breath, we will rejoice.

*Refrain*

4. When the Lord returns in victory, we will rejoice.  
When we live in glorious liberty, we will rejoice.

*Refrain*

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

**Thank you to the following people for helping with our service this morning:**

Pat Hogan, Music

Shane Austerman, Liturgist

Scott Larson and Gerald Gerber, AV

Linda Nost, Coffee Hour

**First Pres Mount Vernon Staff:**

Lori Wunder, Pastor

Cristina Galán, Office Manager

Nona Hutchinson, Treasurer

Jeff Bray, Custodian