



**Laurel Presbyterian Church**  
*Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve*

*Welcomes You!*

**Lent 3**

March 8, 2026, 11:00 AM

**Where Love is Known**

PRELUDE

James A. Sudbury

RINGING OF THE HOUR

Janice Berger

WELCOME BELOVED ONES

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry

LENTING WITH LOVE

Joan McArthur

***GATHERING AROUND LOVE***

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

Laurel Choir

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Julie Messick

Leader: From the wilderness of our lives . . .

**People: You ask us to show mercy.**

Leader: From the thickness of our own suffering . . .

**People: You ask us to drop everything and show compassion.**

Leader: From our endless complaint lists . . .

**People: You ask us to bring love into the world.**

\*HYMN

*Love Devine, All Loves Excelling*

No. 366

***RECEIVING LOVE***

CALL TO CONFESSION

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Like Jonah, we prefer our justice to your justice, and our ways, to your ways, Merciful One. It is so much harder to extend your compassion and grace than we thought possible. You ask us to refrain from our sniff tests by asking that we offer acts of**

kindness anyway, and to all—and frankly, we wonder if we can stomach it. We find ourselves calculating the costs of giving when it seems hopeless and a bottomless pit. Like Jonah, we just want to throw in the towel because your mercy seems outrageous and we are just mere mortals. We don't understand how you could bless the poor, lift up the marginalized and lavishly extend kingdom love to the down and out. Forgive us for wanting to judge rather than to extend grace. Forgive our fear of those we don't know, and yet, have made assumptions about. Help us to remember who we are in you, so we might drop everything to reflect your image and likeness in the world, offering a helping hand and all the love from the wilderness. Thank you for telling us again and again, of who you say we are in you. For we pray this through our Suffering Servant, who is the purest image of You, and who is and was, and always will be our Christ, Amen.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION. . . AMEN.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN

**Leader:** Cherished People of God; Hear the good news! We are made from cosmic material, and because we are, we can always return again and again to recover our true identities in you.

**People:** **With great gratitude, we return ourselves to you to reclaim our identity as your Beloved Ones—to live as your God-Directed people.**

\*OUR RESPONSE

*Gloria Patri*

Hymn No. 581

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

**Leader:** The peace of Christ be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

## *PROCLAIMING LOVE*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Tommy Campbell

SCRIPTURE

Romans 5: 1-11 (NRSVue)

**Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God!**

MUSICAL MEDITATION

*A Blessing of Music*

Laurel Choir

SCRIPTURE

Jonah 4 (NRSVue)

**Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

*"Jonah Lets It Rip"*

Tommy Campbell

**BEHOLDING LOVE IN THE WORLD**

\*HYMN

*God Is Calling Through the Whisper*

No. 410

\*PROFESSION OF FAITH

*Philippians 2: 5-11*

Julie Messick

**We profess that Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even on a cross.**

**Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord!**

\*OUR RESPONSE

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

Hymn No. 606

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry

Leader: We pray that you would return us to our true identities so we might live from your generous flow of love within.

**Silence**

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that you would soften our hearts so we might say "yes!" to all that you do.

**Silence.**

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might "be light" even in this present darkness—even into our own darkness.

**Silence.**

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might "be instruments of your peace" when the world is shattering before us—even into our own shatterings.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might “hold joy” even when we see so much suffering—even into our own suffering.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might “be love” even when challenged by our most challenging neighbors—even when it is hard to stomach—even into our most unlovable places.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might “trust” you, and “**of who you say we are in you;**” and we ask that you deepen our understanding, and practice of, living as “precious, honored, and oh so loved ones.”

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray for all those who are dealing with harsh realities, enduring medical challenges, grief, isolation, uncertainty, unforgiving timelines, sleep deprivation, addiction, housing and food deserts, lack of resources for medical support, and those who are emotionally under the weather or feeling unloved—and we pray that you would hold us tenderly—surfacing tangible forms of comfort, deepening our trust in you, while finding ways for us to be merciful.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: For we dare to pray all these things in the name of our Suffering Servant, who taught us to pray:

**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; lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## *BEARING LOVE INTO THE WORLD*

|                         |  |                  |
|-------------------------|--|------------------|
| *HYMN                   | <i>There in Gods Garden</i>            | No. 226          |
| *CHARGE AND BLESSING    |  | Tommy Campbell   |
| *POSTLUDE               |  | James A. Sudbury |
| *RECESSION AND GREETING | Tommy Campbell, The Rev. Ann D. Cherry |                  |

**\*Please feel free to sit, stand, and move during our worship service.**

**\*\*Please wait to greet each other until the worship leaders have recessed down the aisle.**

**Welcome Back to Tommy Campbell:** Tommy Campbell is a graduate student at Union Presbyterian Seminary and is earning a Master of Theology degree exploring the intersection of pastoral care and the professional workplace. Tommy has served previously in several roles in outdoor ministry, as well as a Supply Pastor of two small churches in the Pennsylvanian coal country.

**Gratitude to our Liturgist:** Thank you to Julie Messick for serving as our liturgist today.

**Gratitude for the Steady Presence of Laurel Love:** Thank you to Carolyn Stinger for her copy editing, Billy Shepherd for tending to our church sign, Mary Scarce, Beverley Shepherd and Carolyn for our printing, Brenda and Pete MacRae, for serving as our newsletter editors, Brenda MacRae, our website master, and Tod Balsbuagh, Marshall Chamberlayne, Wayne Alvis and Pete MacRae for tending to our building and grounds.

**All Are Welcome!** The signature gift of Laurel Love is our affection and love for God and for one another.

**Jonah, Chapter 4, *New Revised Standard Version, updated edition***

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for

it is better for me to die than to live.” And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The LORD God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” Then the LORD said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

## Laurel Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry, Minister  
 Marcy Deisher, Treasurer  
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 Gladys Chamberlayne, Elder, MCM Team  
 Julie Messick, Elder, VTF  
 Thomas Miller, Elder, WE Team

James A. Sudbury, Director of Music  
 Jill Day, Clerk  
 Rebecca Owen, Elder, MCM Team  
 Rudy Van’t Riet, Elder, SP Team  
 Bill Shepherd, Elder, SP Team

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**Where Love is Known**

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**“You are precious in my sight and honored and oh so loved.” Isaiah 43:4**