

Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church

Where All the People are Ministers of Christ

Our vision is to seek to live and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to nurture persons of all ages and circumstances for faithful discipleship, and to transform faith into service to others.



Reverend Candee Martin

7801 Church Lane, Toano, Virginia 23168

Adult Sunday School begins at 9am.

Welcome to our worship service! Mt. Vernon has been worshipping our Lord and serving the Greater Williamsburg Community since 1887. If we can be of any assistance to you, please let us know.

First Sunday in Lent

February 26, 2023 “Behind Every Great Church 10:15am
There is Prayer

Worship Leader

Donna Wilson

*Please stand as you are able. Please read in Unison in **Bold**.

THE PEOPLE GATHER

Prelude & Meditation

Organist, Carol Kendall

Lighting the Candles

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Words

Temptations surround us every day. Even Jesus felt its pull in the wilderness. But when we keep our focus on God’s call in our lives, we find the strength to move beyond its pull — we find the resources to move toward greatness.

*Introit

“Jesus Calls Us”

UMH #398

*Call to Worship

Temptation surrounds us every day.

Happy are those whose transgressions are forgiven.

Opportunities to stray litter our path.

Happy are those whose sin is covered.

Though we stumble and fall, God’s mercy picks us up.

God’s grace brushes us off.

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice,

God’s love meets us here.

*Opening Prayer:

Righteous God, we need your presence in our lives if we are to resist temptation. Send your angels to minister to us when the tempter comes to call.

Put not our hearts to the test, but shelter us in your protective love. For you are our God and we are your people. Amen.

*Hymn of Praise “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

UMH #110

Lenten Journey from Light to Darkness

We have come together this morning for renewal—in worship and as a community of faith. We’ve greeted one another, laughed and hugged. But now the time of reflection and stillness is upon us. It is the first Sunday in Lent—the season for journeys of the heart. Close your eyes. Be still. Listen. We are entering a holy time. The Lenten candles have been lit, but over the next six weeks the light will slowly fade into darkness for we are retelling the story of Jesus’ betrayal and suffering and death. We do this not to be morbid, but because in the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection, God is revealed—in the amazing transformation of death into life, in endings transformed into beginnings, and in dead-ends that become a source for new possibilities.

This is the sacred center of our faith—the truth made manifest in Jesus Christ—that God is in each and every one of us, quietly transforming us and the world. In his pain and suffering, Jesus speaks to every pain and loss you have endured and offers you the promise of transformation. It’s an old story, but it still has the power to reveal, to heal, and to redeem. Jesus is at the heart of our faith, in the depth of our souls. He is waiting for us, inviting us to leave ordinary time and follow along with him on the journey that brought him to the Cross. Listen in silence, for Jesus is calling you.

(Silent time.)

As we extinguish this light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain of injustice in the world.

(A candle is extinguished.)

Let us pray:

All: Loving God, as we journey through this holy season of Lent, give us strength and courage to make the changes that are needed in our lives. Open our hearts and minds to your steadfast presence and help us to put our trust in you. Amen.

Congregational Sung Response / *I Love to Tell the Story* [refrain only] UMH No. 156

***I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory,
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.***

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination:

We thank you, O God of sacred stories, for the witness of holy scripture. Through it, you nurture our imaginations, touch our feelings, increase our awareness, and challenge our assumptions. Bless, we pray, our hearing of your word this day. Speak to each of us; speak to all of us; and grant that by the power of your Spirit, we may be hearers and doers of your word. Amen.

Gospel Lesson Matthew 4:1-11 (CEB)

Rev. Candee Martin

Prayers of the People/Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Candee Martin

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. 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 of Meditation "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"

TFWS #2112

The Message "Walking the Lenten Journey"

Rev. Candee Martin

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Hymn of Response “Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

UMH #140 (vs. 1)

Special Music

The Choir

Offering

Offertory Prayer

Merciful One, we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from your mouth. Still we seek your blessing upon this offering, for many are hungry and need food, many are naked and need clothes, many are homeless and need shelter. May these gifts reflect the depths of our gratitude as they go into the world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

*Doxology: “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

UMH #95

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.

*Affirmation of Faith: Apostles’ Creed

UMH #881

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Prayer of Yearning

God of wilderness wanderings, many things tempt us; many forces cause our feet to stray. Save us from the time of trial,

for we easily succumb to temptation; we often heed voices that cause us to stray. Return us to the garden of your abiding love, for we yearn to walk with you with faithful hearts and upright spirits. Amen.

*Words of Assurance

We worship the one who forgives our transgressions and covers our sin. Rejoice and be glad, for God's mercy is greater than our failings; God's grace is greater than our sin. **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH

*Hymn of Celebration "Because He Lives"

UMH #364

Extinguishing the Candles

Christ's light leads us into the world to serve.

*Benediction

Go with joy.

Our transgressions are forgiven.

Go with hope.

Our sin is covered.

Go with love.

Our hearts are uplifted by the tender mercies of our God.

Amen.

Postlude

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*Centering Words, B.J. Beu, *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020* (Abingdon Press, 2019)

*Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Offertory Prayer, Prayer of Yearning, Words of Assurance, Benediction
B.J. Beu, *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2023* (Abingdon Press, 2022)

*Lenten Journey from Light to Darkness, Jeanyne Slettom (©2023Process & Faith)

*Prayer of Illumination, Ann B. Day, *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*, edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi, (United Church Press, Cleveland, Ohio, 1990, The Pilgrim Press)

UMH: United Methodist Hymnal.

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Mt. Vernon Stewardship – February 19, 2023

Worship Attendance	Offering
In Person: 29 Streaming: 37	\$2,843.00 Needed Weekly \$2,764.27
Total: 66	2/5: 2,854.00 2/12: 1,675.00 2/19: 2,843.00 2/26: 0,000.00 Monthly amount needed: \$11,978.50