

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

757-566-0162

Adult Sunday School begins at 9:15am.

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.

Second Sunday in Lent

February 25, 2024 “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

“Let go and let God.”

This is not just a phrase; it’s a lifestyle.

“Die to the old and embrace the new.”

This is not just a phrase,

but a promise of possibilities in God
that we often cannot see.

*Introit

“He Is Lord”

UMH #177

*Call to Worship (responsive)

In promise and covenant, God calls.

In hope and trust, we respond.

In love and faithfulness, God saves.

In gratitude and joy, we come.

Let us worship and praise God’s holy name.

*Opening Prayer (responsive)

Spirit of the ages, name us and claim us

according to your purposes,

as you once called Abram and Sarai long ago.

Train our ears to hear your call,

and turn our hearts to open

at the sound of your voice.

As we pick up our cross to follow you,
raise us to newness of life.

**For you call us to be children of your covenant,
heirs with your son,
and disciples of your grace. Amen.**

*Hymn of Praise

“Lift High the Cross”

UMH #159

Lenten Journey from Light to Darkness

On Sunday morning, for a brief space of time, we leave behind the world of home and work and school—the world where we have our lists of things to do, activities to participate in, tasks to complete. We come here this morning seeking something else. We come here seeking a shift—from the ordinary to the sacred, from doing to being. I invite you to close your eyes. Let go of your list. Recall that it is the season of Lent. Remember the parable of the sower. The sower throws the seed . . . and where it lands determines if it will grow or not grow. Think of it this way: think of the season of Lent as the sower, the time when seeds of faith are thrown with special intensity, a time when God calls to us in a low, urgent voice. Listen. Listen. Jesus is being drawn to Jerusalem. Where is God calling you to be? What is God calling you to do?

(Silent time.)

As we extinguish this light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain of injury done to the Earth and its ecosystems.

(A candle is extinguished.)

Let us pray: (unison)

Loving God, as we journey through this holy season of Lent, may we be open to your presence. Give us the strength to make the changes that are needed in our

**lives and the courage to take on the
work of transforming the world. 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 (unison)

Rev. Candee Martin

**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

Mark 8:31-38 (NRSVue)

Rev. Candee Martin

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

³¹Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to

save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Prayers of the People

Rev. Candee Martin

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Candee Martin

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

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 “He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought”

UMH #128

The Message “You Get to Choose” Rev. Candee Martin

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Hymn of Response “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

TFWS #2129

Special Music

The Choir

Offering

Offertory Prayer (responsive)

Rev. Candee Martin

God of ancient days and futures not yet seen,
bring your eternal wisdom to our time of offering.
Bring your ancient faith and faithful love
to the gifts we now bring.

**Transform the past with the promise of your future,
that together our gifts may merge with your
Spirit to bring transformation and hope to
your world. 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 (Unison)

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 (responsive)

Rev. Candee Martin

Name above all names,
visit us in our dreams
and shake us from our waking nightmares.

**For we are tired of stumbling in the dark,
blindly following human teachings
and placidly heeding human advice.**

When we lose our way
and wander from your path,
we need your love to heal us
and your grace to complete us.

**When the forces of destruction close around us,
give us the strength to follow Christ.**

**Love us back onto the right paths
and restore us to life,
through your faithful and transforming love.**

Amen.

*Words of Assurance

Rev. Candee Martin

By saying no to ourselves, and picking up our cross,
we find ourselves.

By saying yes to the good news of Christ's spirit,
we find faith and wholeness.

Thanks be to God. **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH

*Hymn of Celebration "Where He Leads Me" UMH #338

Extinguishing the Candles

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

*Benediction (responsive)

Rev. Candee Martin

Go forth with the voice of God calling your name.

We go in the love of God.

Go forth to hear Christ claiming you as his own.

We go in the mercy of Christ.

Go forth to follow where the Spirit sends you.

We go in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Go forth, called, named, and claimed by God. **Amen.**

Postlude

*** Please stand as you are able.**

Hearing Assistance Devices are available in the Narthex

Stewardship for week of February 18: \$1,615.00

*We sincerely hope you have felt the presence of
the Lord in our Worship Service this morning.*

We appreciate your attendance and support.

Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church

7801 Church Lane

Toano, VA 23168

757-566-0162

Copyright Notice

*Centering Words, Call to Worship, Offertory Prayer, Mary Scifres, *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2024* (Abingdon Press, 2023)

*Opening Prayer, Prayer of Yearning, Words of Assurance, Benediction, B.J. Beu, *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2021* (Abingdon Press, 2020)

*Lenten Journey from Light to Darkness, Jeanyne Slettom, Ph.D. and is made available through Process & Faith, a program of the Center for Process Studies. Used by permission.

*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.

CCLI Copyright Streaming License: 20688434, Size A.

Announcements/Missions

- **Office Closure:** Brenda will be off Tuesday, February 27-Thursday, February 29th.
- **Lenten Service:** February 28, 2024: New Zion Baptist Church, 3991 Longhill Road, Williamsburg
757-258-0491 Dr. Rob Whitehead, Sr.
Livestream Link:
<https://www.newzionwilliamsburg.org/live>
Speaker – Rev. Mike Burcher, Stone House Presbyterian Church
- **Jewell Bryant Circle:** Will meet Monday, March 4th at 1:00PM in the fellowship hall.
- **Fellowship Time:** The 3rd Sunday of every month there will be a Fellowship Time after the Sunday Service.
- **Cereal..Cereal..Cereal:** We will concentrate on collecting ONLY cereal donations to St. Olaf's & PGO Food Pantries, so please consider picking up an extra box or two of cereal each week and deposit it in the basket in the narthex. It's a need that we can help to fulfill. Thanks!
- **Bridge Group:** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.- 8 p.m. Tuesdays, Fellowship Hall.