

***What NEW thing would you like to see
the church try to do in the coming months?***

CALL TO WORSHIP

HYMN: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise 103

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION PO

Holy God, just as you spoke at the dawn of creation,
continue to speak to us now
as we prepare to encounter your Word.
Be with us in our listening, in our speaking,
in our understanding, and in our responding. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

Isaiah 43:16-21 - God does New Things
Philippians 3:4b-14 - Pressing toward the Goal
John 12:1-8 - Jesus Anointed at Bethany

*God seeks to give the gift of resurrection
—a new and abundant life.
With confidence in God's generosity,
we confess our sins and
seek the new life offered in Jesus Christ.*

**Purifying God,
we grow comfortable with the way things are
in our lives, in the church, and in the world.
We do not always welcome the new life you offer in Christ,
for you overturn our notions of power and protocol.
Sure of our own righteousness, we are critical of others.
Wanting to control our assets,
we hoard the gifts you give us.
Forgive us, we pray, for seeking our gain
at the expense of others.
Help us bend our lives toward
your own life of self-giving and sacrifice.
Fill us, our homes and churches, the whole world,
with the abundant love of Christ until all are made new.
In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.**

{silent prayers}

*The apostle Paul reminds us that
we do not make ourselves righteous.
Our righteousness comes through faith in Christ,
who has made us his own.
Trust the good news!
The old life has passed away—and a new life has begun.*

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven;
Thanks be to God! Amen**

CHOIR To God Be the Glory 98

SERMON

HYMN: Fairest Lord Jesus 189
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE
INTERCESSIONS

BRINGING OUR GIFTS

In Christ we are invited and inspired to lives of grateful generosity.
Let us praise the giver of all good gifts through our offering today.

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER *FotW*

**Abundant God: Your generosity astounds and humbles us.
We bow before you in gratitude and awe,
asking you to receive what we have brought in response.
May these gifts be a pleasing and fragrant offering,
for the sake of the world you came to save.
We pray in your holy name. Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

GREAT THANKSGIVING Hymnal pages 15-16

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

THE LORD'S PRAYER #895

HYMN: Give to the Winds Thy Fears 129

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *PO*

Go out into the world in peace.
Return no one evil for evil.

Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, love everyone.
That God's light and love, justice, and joy,
might be for you and all people everywhere.

Amen

POSTLUDE When We All Get to Heaven 701
(Sing the Wondrous Love of Jesus)

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This week the author is Molly Spangler
or other sources as noted.

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April 6, 2025 11:00 am
Clarksburg United Methodist Church

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Reflecting on and Praying with Scriptures

As suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary

Year C – Fifth Sunday in Lent – April 6, 2025

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Scriptures

Isaiah 43:16–21

Psalm 126

Philippians 3:4b–14

John 12:1–8

Morning Prayer:

Merciful God, as I begin this day, place in me a spirit of generosity
so that I may freely share love, joy, and encouragement
with those I encounter.

Keep me from quick judgments so that I leave room for your grace
in my life and in the lives of others.

Make me your faithful disciple in my words and in my actions,
as well as in the thoughts of my heart; in Jesus' name. Amen.

Evening Prayer:

All through the day, Lord Jesus, you have been present.

As I settle into the routines of home and evening,
I long to be at home in my relationship with you.
Help me to put aside the cares of the day and the worries of tomorrow
in order to fully enjoy the peace of your presence now.

I pray that your peace will also be with those I know
who have special need of your care tonight,
and I pray for those who lie down this night
without the safety of home or bed,
without enough food or resources.

Bring your light into the surrounding darkness
so that all of us may sleep in the security of your love. Amen.

Questions for Reflection:

John 12:1–8 draws our attention to three people:

Mary, Judas, and Jesus.

It is easy enough to identify Mary as “the good disciple” and Judas as
“the bad disciple” not only in this story but also in the larger story
of Jesus' life and death. We can (and do) make this judgment:
Mary is accepted and affirmed, while Judas is rejected.

But is this the judgment that the other person in the story would
make? As one commentator puts it, “. . . if Jesus came to save the
lost, surely there is no one in the gospel story who is more lost
than the one who betrays Jesus. . . . If the Good Shepherd can
and does go to any length to save a lost sheep, is Judas beyond
the saving grasp of the Good Shepherd?” †

George Stoup, “Theological Perspective” on John 12:1–8,
in *Feasting on the Word*, Fifth Sunday in Lent

This is not a question with an easy answer. As this story ushers you
into Holy Week, consider how the cross, the grace of Christ,
speaks to this story and to your own life story, which like most life
stories may not be a simple “either/or” example of faithfulness, but
a “both/and” mix of faithfulness and unfaithfulness.