

# SJUMC Online Worship Guide

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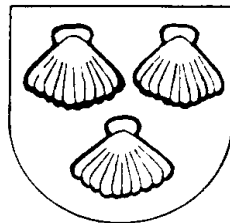
**March 19, 2023**

**9:30 am**  
**“Who sinned?”**

**ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE**

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Administrative Assistant: Kenna Haj      |      Bell Choir Director: Laural Clark  
Director of Music Ministry: Antuan Hairston      |      Organist: Clarice Snyder  
Pastor: Rev. Patricia Abell



**Saint James United Methodist Church**  
Marriottsville, MD

WE GATHER

**Prelude** "O Help me, Lord to Praise Thee, Great Shepherd of thy Sheep" J.S. Bach

**Offered by Clarice Snyder**

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**Welcome**

**Rev. Patricia Abell**

**Introit**

"God, How Can We Forgive"

**TFWS 2169**

1. God, how can we forgive  
when bonds of love are torn?  
How can we rise and start anew,  
our trust reborn?  
When human loving fails  
and every hope is gone,  
your love gives strength beyond our own  
to face the dawn.

2. When we have missed the mark,  
And tears of anguish flow,  
How can you still release our guilt,  
The debt we owe?  
The ocean depth of grace  
surpasses all our needs.  
A priest who shares our human pain,  
Christ intercedes.

3. Who dares to throw the stone  
to damn another's sin,  
when you, while knowing all our past,  
forgive again?  
No more we play the judge,  
for by your grace we live.  
As you, O God, forgive our sin,  
may we forgive.

Words: Ruth Duck

Music: Hebrew melody, Sacred Harmony; harm. From Hymns Ancient and Modern, alt.  
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**Call to Worship**

**Jim Quindlen**

ONE: Scripture is full of questions...

**ALL: Where are you?**

Am I my brother's keeper?

**Whom shall I send?**

Who do you say that I am?

**Who sinned?**

How many times shall I forgive?

**If God is for us, who can be against us?**

Scripture is full of questions,

so just like those in our scriptures, may we bring our full curiosity and wonder into this space.

**Let us ask and seek after our merciful God.**

**Call to Confession**

**Jim Quindlen**

## Prayer of Confession

*Jim Quindlen*

ONE: Who here has sinned?

**ALL: We have sinned. We put our heads in the sand. We ignored people in need. We make false assumptions and fail to be kind. We are in need of forgiveness.**

Good news! Our God is a merciful God. God does not punish, hold grudges, or keep score. When you suffer, God weeps. When you sin, God forgives. When you lose your way, God comes running.

**Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

## Words of Forgiveness

*Jim Quindlen*

Have you sinned? I have sinned. I put my head in the sand. I ignore people in need. I make false assumptions and fail to be kind. I, too, am in need of forgiveness.

**ALL: Good news! Our God is a merciful God. God does not punish, hold grudges, or keep score. When you suffer, God weeps. When you sin, God forgives. When you lose your way, God comes running.**

Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

**Passing the Peace** : The Peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

**Opening Hymn**    “We Come With Questions” LOBE DEN HERREN (*“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”*)

1. We come with questions assuming that there will be answers  
Setting the world in an order that obeys our grammar  
We want to know where Spirit’s river will flow  
Frustrated by her meanders
2. Here is the mystery we claim as the followers of Jesus:  
Christ has died, Christ is raised, Christ daily comes to redeem us  
Grace free, not earned, whether or not we deserve  
God works beyond rules and boundaries
3. God help us live into mystery beyond comprehension  
Quiet our minds always clamoring for some direction  
Give us your peace with all that we can’t perceive  
Holding us within the tension

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## Time for Children

*Donna Benson*

### Scripture

**John 9:1-41 (CEB)**

*Jim Quindlen*

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who was blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> Jesus’ disciples asked, “Rabbi, who sinned so that he was born blind, this man or his parents?”

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, “Neither he nor his parents. This happened so that God’s mighty works might be displayed in him. <sup>4</sup> While it’s daytime, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” <sup>6</sup> After he said this, he spit on the ground, made

mud with the saliva, and smeared the mud on the man's eyes. <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (this word means *sent*). So the man went away and washed. When he returned, he could see.

<sup>8</sup> The man's neighbors and those who used to see him when he was a beggar said, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?"

<sup>9</sup> Some said, "It is," and others said, "No, it's someone who looks like him."

But the man said, "Yes, it's me!"

<sup>10</sup> So they asked him, "How are you now able to see?"

<sup>11</sup> He answered, "The man they call Jesus made mud, smeared it on my eyes, and said, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and then I could see."

<sup>12</sup> They asked, "Where is this man?"

He replied, "I don't know."

<sup>13</sup> Then they led the man who had been born blind to the Pharisees. <sup>14</sup> Now Jesus made the mud and smeared it on the man's eyes on a Sabbath day. <sup>15</sup> So Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. The man told them, "He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and now I see."

<sup>16</sup> Some Pharisees said, "This man isn't from God, because he breaks the Sabbath law." Others said, "How can a sinner do miraculous signs like these?" So they were divided. <sup>17</sup> Some of the Pharisees questioned the man who had been born blind again: "What do you have to say about him, since he healed your eyes?"

He replied, "He's a prophet."

<sup>18</sup> The Jewish leaders didn't believe the man had been blind and received his sight until they called for his parents. <sup>19</sup> The Jewish leaders asked them, "Is this your son? Are you saying he was born blind? How can he now see?"

<sup>20</sup> His parents answered, "We know he is our son. We know he was born blind. <sup>21</sup> But we don't know how he now sees, and we don't know who healed his eyes. Ask him. He's old enough to speak for himself." <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they feared the Jewish authorities. This is because the Jewish authorities had already decided that whoever confessed Jesus to be the Christ would be expelled from the synagogue.

<sup>23</sup> That's why his parents said, "He's old enough. Ask him."

<sup>24</sup> Therefore, they called a second time for the man who had been born blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know this man is a sinner."

<sup>25</sup> The man answered, "I don't know whether he's a sinner. Here's what I do know: I was blind and now I see."

<sup>26</sup> They questioned him: "What did he do to you? How did he heal your eyes?"

<sup>27</sup> He replied, "I already told you, and you didn't listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?"

<sup>28</sup> They insulted him: "You are his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. <sup>29</sup> We know that God spoke to Moses, but we don't know where this man is from."

<sup>30</sup> The man answered, "This is incredible! You don't know where he is from, yet he healed my eyes! <sup>31</sup> We know that God doesn't listen to sinners. God listens to anyone who is devout and does God's will. <sup>32</sup> No one has ever heard of a healing of the eyes of someone born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man wasn't from God, he couldn't do this."

<sup>34</sup> They responded, "You were born completely in sin! How is it that you dare to teach us?" Then they expelled him.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard they had expelled the man born blind. Finding him, Jesus said, "Do you believe in the Human One?"<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>36</sup> He answered, "Who is he, sir?<sup>[b]</sup> I want to believe in him."

<sup>37</sup> Jesus said, "You have seen him. In fact, he is the one speaking with you."

<sup>38</sup> The man said, "Lord,<sup>[c]</sup> I believe." And he worshipped Jesus.

<sup>39</sup> Jesus said, "I have come into the world to exercise judgment so that those who don't see can see and those who see will become blind."

<sup>40</sup> Some Pharisees who were with him heard what he said and asked, “Surely we aren’t blind, are we?”

<sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you wouldn’t have any sin, but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

**Anthem** “Give Me Jesus” (arr. Benjamin Harlan) **Chancel Choir**

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**Message** **SEEKING: Who sinned?** **Rev. Patricia Abell**

**Response to the Word – Affirmation of Faith** **Rev. Patricia Abell**

ONE: We believe in a merciful God,

**ALL: a God who does not keep score,  
a God who wants good for us.**

We believe in a creative God,

**a God who would heal with mud,  
a God capable of seeing what we cannot.**

We believe in a saving God,

**a God who heals,  
a God who greets our questions with patience,  
a God who sends us out with hope in our step.**

What wondrous love is this. Amen.

**Prayer for God’s People, Church, & World** **Jim Quindlen**

**Lord’s Prayer**

**\*Doxology** “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” **UMH 95**

**Offering Prayer**

**\*Closing Hymn** “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus” **UMH 349**

Turn your eyes upon Jesus  
Look full in His Wonderful Face  
And the things of earth  
Will grow strangely dim  
In the light of His Glory and Grace

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**\*Benediction**

**Postlude** “Amazing Grace” arr. by Lee Dengler **Offered by Clarice Snyder**

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\*Please stand as able

### **Questions for Reflection**

*In 1 Samuel 16:1–13, Samuel is told that God does not look upon outward appearances, but looks upon the heart. Then God chooses David, the youngest son of Jesse, to be Israel’s next king. We know that as he grew and as life became very challenging, King David’s heart was not pure. He was a mixture of great courage and faithfulness—and great sin and failure.*

*What do you suppose God saw and loved in David’s heart?  
What do you think God loves when God looks upon your own heart?*

### **Household Prayer: Morning**

*Good morning, Lord. The day has dawned with the gift of sunlight, and I awaken from sleep into the light and grace of Christ. Thank you for this new day. Stay with me, I pray, shepherding me through all that the day will hold. Lead me into pleasant places, and give me the provisions I will need if I find myself in difficulty or danger. Whenever the cup of gladness overflows, help me to recognize that it is filled with your goodness and mercy. In praise and anticipation I begin this day; in Jesus’ name. Amen.*

### **Household Prayer: Evening**

*With the night, Good Lord, comes rest, and a chance for my soul to be restored.*

*You are with me in this and every darkness, so I will not be afraid. For all I have seen with my own eyes today, for all others have helped me to see, I give you thanks. For those things that I did not notice: signs of beauty and kindness, evidences of your grace, I pray that you will improve the eyes of my faith so that I can see you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly tomorrow, and all my tomorrows. In the name of your Son, my Savior, I pray. Amen.*

#### **RESOURCES:**

Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 © 2012 Westminster John Knox Press. Used with permission.

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