



Monroe United Methodist Church

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First Sunday in Lent

March 10, 2019 8:00 and 10:45 Worship

The Church Gathers in God's Name

PRELUDE

Julie Shipe McClain

PRAYER OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

O Lord, grant that throughout this season of Lent I may enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ and draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit to identify and resist temptation. Amen.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING CHORUS Sanctuary Randy Scruggs & John Thompson

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary: Pure and holy, tried and true.
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

**Lead me on, Lord, from temptation, purify me from within.
Fill my heart with your Holy Spirit. Take away all my sin.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

HYMN

Jesus, Tempted in the Desert

Jesus, tempted in the desert, lonely, hungry, filled with dread:

“Use your power,” the tempter tells him;

“Turn these barren rocks to bread!”

“Not alone by bread,” he answers, “Can the human heart be filled.

Only by the Word that calls us is our deepest hunger stilled!”

Jesus, tempted at the temple, high above its ancient wall:

“Throw yourself from lofty turret; angels wait to break your fall!”

Jesus shuns such empty marvels, feats that fickle crowds request:

“God, whose grace protects, preserves us, we must never vainly test.”

Jesus, tempted on the mountain by the lure of vast domain:

“Fall before me! Be my servant! Glory, fame, you're sure to gain!”

Jesus sees that dazzling vision, turns his eyes another way:

“God alone deserves our homage! God alone will I obey!”

When we face temptation's power, lonely struggling, filled with dread,

Christ who knew the tempter's hour, come and be our living bread.

By your grace, protect, preserve us lest we fall your trust betray.

Yours, above all other voices, be the Word we hear, obey.

Herman Stuempfle © 1993 GIA Publications, Inc.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, you have given us the great gift of free will.

It is proof of your love so that we can love you willingly.

Yet it carries great danger. When we turn away from you,

we choose lesser things to control us. These include flashes of emotion, temporary pleasures, and shallow happiness.

We confess we are easily distracted by powers stronger than we are but not stronger than you are.

When we turn toward you, O God, we are welcomed by grace,

empowered by the Holy Spirit, and inspired by eternal truth.

Help us identify our temptations before they ensnare us in sin.

Jesus, you have done this; please teach us how. Amen.

TIME FOR SILENT PRAYER

The Church Hears God's Word

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Jesus Fed All the People

SPECIAL MUSIC Prayer of St Francis (Pote) Chancel Choir (8:00)
Think About His Love Tony Kitchell (10:45)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 3: 1 – 13, ESV

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

GOSPEL READING

Luke 4:1-13, ESV

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." And Jesus answered him, "It is written,

'You shall worship the Lord your God,
and him only shall you serve.'"

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,'
and

'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot
against a stone.'

And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

EPISTLE READING

James 1:13-15

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

SERMON

enticement, desire, captivation, conception, sin, growth, death

The Church Responds to God

SHARING PRAYER CONCERNS AND JOYS

RECEIVING TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Just As I Am

Bell Choir

PERSONAL PRAYER, PASTORAL PRAYER, 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

I Need Thee Every Hour

#397

DEPART WITH BLESSING



Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 14:6)

Our church exists so that all people might

find the Way, know the Truth, and experience the Life!"

March Stewardship Message

You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

– Amy Carmichael

Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

Luke 12:34

Communion At Monroe United Methodist Church –

everyone is invited, no matter your church membership. Our founder John Wesley said that sometimes it's in taking communion that people experience grace and want to follow Jesus.

We use grape juice instead of wine.

Pastor Randy has gluten-free wafers for communion.

If you are unable to come forward for communion, notify an usher who will in turn notify the communion servers to go to you.

10 Jesus feeds 5,000

John 6:1-14 Jesus fed all the people

January 15, 2019

CONSIDER THIS

O.K., Pinterest Nation, no pin-throwing. This post is not against pinning but an effort to help us understand the nature of sinning. How does sin work? According to James the progression looks something like this:

ENTICEMENT—DESIRE—CAPTIVATION—CONCEPTION—SIN—GROWTH—DEATH

We need look no further than the original sin to see the pattern at work.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food

[ENTICEMENT],

and that it was a delight to the eyes **[DESIRE]**,

and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise

[CONCEPTION],

she took of its fruit and ate **[SIN]**,

and she also gave some to her husband who was with her **[GROWTH]**, and he ate **[DEATH]**. Genesis 3:6.

Now, the big problem we have with sin and the reason we so ineffectively deal with it is because we don't seriously engage the

problem until it reaches the stage of behavior. We mistakenly think of sin as external behavior when in reality it is an internal disposition. Didn't Jesus say as much in the Sermon on the Mount concerning adultery and murder? He identified the internal dispositions of lust and anger as the genesis of the problem.

So what if instead of the futility of trying to manage our behavior we developed a strategy of discipling our desires. Until desire comes under the discipline of the Word of God and the Spirit of God it is inherently untrustworthy and predisposed to evil. As my friend and mentor, Timothy Tennent, is fond of saying, "Sin must cease to be our secret lover and be clearly identified as our mortal enemy."

Our discipleship must get beneath our legalistic, shame-based orientation with sin as behavior. We must become discerning and unflinchingly honest about our dispositions. What are our particular proclivities toward sin? Where are we most subject to being enticed? Rather than betting the farm on a legalistic "don't look" approach, we must learn the way of delighting ourselves in the Lord. Psalm 37:4 comes to mind: "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."

Back to Pinterest. Pinning is an exercise in delighting. As I said, it's not a bad thing, until it is. For me, it's a pretty short journey from pinning to "Buy Now with One Click" on Amazon. Seriously, instead of knocking the practice of pinning, what if we learned to "pin" all the ways and means and reasons for which we might delight ourselves in the Lord?

Hoping we are going to overcome sin, especially those besetting sins that plague us, will never get it done. Hope, as has been famously said, is not a strategy. Sin creates the most sophisticated strategies known to the human race. Left to our own devices, we don't stand a chance. Grace offers a superior strategy with the capacity to utterly destroy sin in our lives. So why do we keep getting "dragged away" as today's text so graphically puts it? I've got a theory on that.

We aren't losing the battle to sin for lack of going to church and bible study and prayer and even fasting. We are losing because we are trying to go at it alone. We are losing because we haven't trusted another human being with the vulnerable knowledge of our own broken dispositions, sinful proclivities and otherwise untrained desires. Sin wins in isolation. It doesn't stand a chance against the humble and holy work of brothers and sisters watching over one another in love.