

# Westminster United Church

Order of Worship



March 10, 2019

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

(★ invites people to stand as they are able; **people's part in bold type**)

Entry into Celebration

(based on "We Dare to Imagine A World Where...")

by Linda Jones, in *Let Justice Roll Down*, p.36, *adapted*)

Today is the First Sunday of the Lenten Season.  
In our gathering here, we dare to imagine a new,  
different and better world - a world where hunger  
has no chance to show its face;

**A world where war and terror are  
afraid to leave their mark;**

A world of hope unchained and lives unfettered;

**A world where people break free.**

Dare we open our minds to difference?

Dare we open our lives to change?

**Your realm come, O Holy One.**

Your will be done...

*Moments of Quiet Contemplation...*

Opening Reflections

(Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer/wsj)

In hope, in longing,

**We're glad to come together.**

In trust, in community,

**We're glad to come together.**

In many moods, in many shapes and sizes,

**We're glad to come together  
in this Lenten Season...**

*The singing bowl is sounded three times...*

Opening Prayer

(Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer/wsj, *adapted*)

Remind us, O Spirit,

**Life is worth living.**

Remind us, O Creator,

**The struggle for justice is worth undertaking.**

Remind us, O Compassion,

**Love and action are one.**

May it be so. Amen.

★Opening Hymn VU 115

*"Jesus, Tempted in the Desert"*

A Conversation

*The Story of Lent*

★Hymn VU 108

*"Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights"*

A Litany for Lent

(D. McEwan/ml, *adapted*)

Giver and Sustainer of life,  
free your people from the temptations of power,  
from the urge to control rather than enable.

**Come, Spirit, liberate us from the forces  
of domination.**

Loving Empowerer, help us to challenge the abuse  
of authority wherever it is found,  
including in ourselves.

**Come, Spirit, give us strength  
not to walk by on the other side.**

Still Small Voice, help the People of God learn to listen to each other, and those in authority to understand the strength that comes from consultation.

**Come, Spirit of Understanding,  
deepen our insights.**

Loving Creativity, help us to affirm ourselves and others, understanding that we are all uniquely created and have a voice that needs to be heard.

**Come, Creator of Diversity,  
and help us see the value of difference.**

O God, who made both women and men in your image, may the world's religions, especially the Christian churches, discontinue defacing their images by treating women as inferior beings. Help us, as followers of Jesus, to recognize and challenge discrimination based on gender, race, sexual orientation, and other excuses for exclusion.

**Come, Spirit of Equality,  
and imbue us with values of inter-  
connectedness with all created nature,  
human and non-human.**

*Moments of Quiet Contemplation...*

### Sharing the Peace

May a heart of peace rest with you.  
**And also with you.**

**Choral Response MV 18** (sung twice)  
*“ Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary ”*

### READINGS FOR THE 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT

From the Gospels *Luke 4: 1-13*

From the 'New Testament'

*For Waiting in the Wilderness,*  
a poem by Keri Wehandler,  
in *A World of Blessing*, p. 142

### Reflections on Today's Readings

Let us recognize the seeds of truth and wisdom in these readings.

**May these seeds of truth and wisdom  
be planted in the fertile soil  
of our imaginations....**

**Choral Response MV 79** (refrain only)  
*“ Spirit, Open My Heart ”*

### Centering Silence

Let us open ourselves to sacred silence in this place.

*Silence*

May the strength of silence support our courage to endure, and open to us creative channels of the Spirit. Amen.

### Sermon

Rev. Del Stewart

*“ Those Wilderness Experiences of Our Lives ”*

## **Prayers of the People**

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)

## **Presentation of Our Gifts and Offerings**

★**Offertory Hymn VU 542**

*" We Give You But Your Own "*

## **Offertory Prayer**

★**Closing Hymn VU 670**

*" Precious Lord, Take My Hand "*

## ★**Parting Words**

As we prepare to depart from this sacred place let us resolve to embrace the wonder of this week with expectation and imagination. May our wisdom show itself in deeds of compassion and acts of understanding; and may the fruits of the spirit be apparent in our lives...

*The singing bowl is sounded three times*

★**Words of Blessing** (G.G. Brooks, *adapted*)

May the love that gives life its beauty,  
the reverence that gives life its sacredness,  
and the purposes that give life its deep significance  
be strong within each one of us, and lead us into  
ever deepening relationships with all of life...

★**Choral Response VU 148** (sung twice)

*" Jesus, Remember Me "*

## **Musical Postlude**