

**Year A; Fourth Sunday in Lent**  
**Liturgical Elements**  
**Developed for March 19, 2023**  
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

**Lectionary Texts**

- 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- Psalm 23
- Ephesians 5:8-14
- John 9:1-41

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (*from Psalm 23*)

One: The LORD is our shepherd, we shall not want.

**All: He makes us lie down in green pastures; he leads us beside still waters; he restores our souls.**

One: He leads us in right paths for his name's sake.

**All: Even though we walk through the darkest valley, we fear no evil; for the LORD is with us; his rod and his staff — they comfort us.**

One: The LORD prepares a table before us in the presence of our enemies; he anoints our heads with oil; our cup overflows.

**All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives, and we shall dwell in the house of the LORD our whole life long. Let us worship God!**

**CALL TO CONFESSION** (*from Ephesians 5*)

We were once in darkness, but now in the Lord we are light. We are commanded to live as children of the light. Our sinful nature, though, wants to bind us to the darkness, and we continue to do unfruitful works of darkness. Let us confess when we have not been steadfast to what is good and right and true.

**SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*30 seconds*)

**CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*from Ephesians 5*)

**Father of mercies, you command us to live as children of the light. We, though, are shameful of various actions from our past where we have sinned against you and sinned against our neighbor. We are afraid to bring these unfruitful works of darkness into the light exposing them before you and before our neighbor. Awake us to these actions and to your love and mercy that we might bring these actions before you with the protection of your promised forgiveness. We pray this in the name of the one through whom our forgiveness was won, Jesus the Messiah, who is the light of the world. Amen.**

**KYRIE ELEISON**

**SUMMARY OF THE LAW** *(from Matthew 22)*<sup>1</sup>

Our Lord Jesus said: “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON** *(from Ephesians 5)*

Try to find what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness but only in what is good and right and true. Sleeper awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. Christ has come, been crucified, and arisen that his perfect and good kingdom might come into its fullness and has appointed us as agents of that kingdom — freed from sin and anticipating eternal life. Friends, hear and believe this good news!

**All: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION** *(from Ephesians 5; John 1)*

**God, our healer, though we were dead to our sin and captured in darkness, you have opened our eyes to what is good and right and true. We could not have turned from darkness to light through our own ability but only through your work in us. Grow your light in us that we may be made perfect and might reflect your glory to the world. Accept these gifts from the portion you have given each of us; may it make known our Lord Jesus — the light that overcomes darkness and the light the darkness cannot overcome. Amen.**

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<sup>1</sup> The Sharing of the Law or Summary of the Law is, also, taken from memory and based on common liturgy from Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church (NYC)

Elements in this document are based on the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV). Some portions are direct quotes; though, quotation marks and designations are usually left out for ease of use in bulletins and other worship resources. Usually, the Call to Worship is based upon the Psalm of the day and follows that Psalm very closely but modifying it for a leader vs. congregation responsive setting if necessary. Other elements usually deviate more significantly from the text. While they may quote very short sections, they are generally written in the theme of the text. Elements usually designate the book and chapter from which they are derived.

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