

The United Church of Chester

Sunday March 14, 2021

Fourth Sunday in Lent

PRELUDE *Arioso* C. Penfield

INTROIT *Battle Hymn of the Republic* W. Steffe

ANTHEM *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* G. Martin

HYMN *As the Serpent Raised By Moses*

As the serpent raised by Moses healed the fiery serpent's bite,
Jesus now himself discloses to the wounded sinner's sight.
Hear his gracious invitation, I have life and peace to give,
I have wrought out full salvation, sinner look to me and live.

Grieve about your sins no longer, well I know their mighty guilt;
But my love than death is stronger, I my precious blood have spilt:
Though your heart has long been hardened, look on me, it soft shall grow;
Your transgressions shall be pardoned, and I'll wash you white as snow.

I have seen what you were doing, though you little thought of me;
You were madly bent on ruin, but, I said, it shall not be;
You had been forever wretched, had I not espoused your part;
now behold my arms outstretched to receive you to my heart.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bidden or unbidden, **God is present.**

Whether we are together or distanced, **God is present.**

In our hearts and our minds, **God is present.**

And in our love for our neighbor, **God is present. Amen.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of our grieving and God of our healing, we confess the times that we have abandoned both you and our best selves. When you ask that we trust you in the good times and the bad, we put our trust elsewhere because we are afraid of our fragile faith. Forgive us for trying to neatly divide our lives into the sacred and the secular. We have tried to make decisions without consulting you. We have limited what is devoted to you. Forgive us and help us live in ways that will more nearly reflect what we say we believe. Help us to be what you desire us to be, drawing us into your healing presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

SCRIPTURE LESSON **Numbers 21.4-9**

From Mount Hor the people set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.' Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, 'Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.' So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

REFLECTION

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER (*"trespasses"*)

POEM *"All The Fruit"* Friedrich Holderlin

BLESSING & BENEDICTION