

Welcome, Announcements, and Land Acknowledgement Anne Krauss (worship elder)

As we come to worship in Jesus' name we acknowledge with gratitude and respect the Lkwungen people – the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ – on whose traditional and unceded territory we gather. We recommit ourselves to just and respectful relationships within our congregation and our neighborhood.

➤ *Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary (repeat)*

Call to Worship – Lenten Liturgy

In the wilderness, Jesus was tempted to abandon God

for the false hopes of indulgence, arrogance and certainty.

During our Lenten journey, we recognize we too are tempted

to turn aside from seeking only God and God's ways.

As we worship, may we celebrate all the bounty of God's grace

and always return with mindfulness and gratitude to God.

✠ Gathering Prayer and Words of Hope

As Jesus was driven in to the wilderness in the power of the Holy Spirit, so we pray that we too might be led to contemplate your will in the same Spirit.

For the work of the Spirit in creation which we enjoy, we praise you – for the loving sacrifice of Jesus Christ by which we are saved, we worship you – for your raising him from death to give us hope of eternal life, we give you the glory – for the fellowship of believers in the church universal, we thank you – and for the same guidance of the Spirit today as Christ received in the wilderness, we look to you in adoration and confidence as we make our confession together...

Merciful God, we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart, we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We repent and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life. We pray together in Jesus' name. Amen

Persistently, patiently, lovingly, God pours out grace and joy into our lives – healing our brokenness – forgiving us and setting us free to be the healing hands and feet of Jesus wherever we go. Thanks be to God.

➤ *Bless the Lord (seated – repeat)*

PWS&D Sharing **Overcoming Adversity in Ghana**

Abdul Razak Ayawin, a 23-year-old from Bugri community in Northern Ghana, faced a life-altering accident that led to the amputation of his left leg. Unable to continue his education due to financial constraints and fear of stigma, Razak was distraught.

Then, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program identified him to provide support. Razak enrolled in a dressmaking apprenticeship and received a sewing machine and a small stipend. He learned quickly, became self-employed and gained confidence in his new skills.

The CBR program, which is supported by PWS&D, also facilitated his assessment for a prosthetic limb. Despite the financial challenges, Razak is determinedly raising funds so that he can get the prosthetic. "I am working hard to raise enough with the dresses that I am making for my customers. I hope I will be able to get the prosthesis. Thanks for your love and support," he expresses.

This Lenten season, thank you for faithfully responding to Christ's call to help ensure people have the tools they need to create a livelihood and learn new skills.

➤ *Your word, O God, awoke the uncreated*

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✠Prayer for Understanding Heather Anderson

Holy and Gracious Creator, as we enter this Season of Lent, may we find wisdom that comes through faithfulness, and may we discover your steadfast presence with us on our journey. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Scripture **Deuteronomy 26:1-11** [OT 180]

When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us."

When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, you shall make this response before the LORD your God: *"A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When*

the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me."

You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 responsive/displayed

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD,

"My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

For the Lord will command the angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

Those who love me, I will deliver;

I will protect those who know my name.

When they call to me, I will answer them;

I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them. With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

Romans 10:8b-13 [NT 160]

"The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.

The scripture says, *"No one who believes in him will be put to shame."* For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

Luke 4:1-13 [NT 61]

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished.

The devil said to him, *"If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread."*

Jesus answered him, *"It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"*

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, *"To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."*

Jesus answered him, *"It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"*

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying 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 protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"*

Jesus answered him, *"It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"*

When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Message

➤ *Lord Jesus, who through forty days*

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✠Offering and Prayer

We all have something to share. As we present our offering this morning, know that what we share enables the Church to reach out in Jesus' name, meeting needs, offering hope, and working for the justice Jesus proclaimed.

Generous God, we thank you for all the goodness we receive in Christ and in creation. Bless the gifts we offer to share in the work of the kingdom Jesus declared and bless our lives so that we may be witnesses to his love and mercy. Amen

✠ Pastoral Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

God of grace, transform us with your love and harness our energy for your purposes in the world. Hear us as we pray for the world, the church and our community...

We pray for your creation, staggering under the demands of human activity and expectation. May this planet be held in reverence in every culture. Where we are tempted to use resources carelessly – where human lifestyles endanger homes and habitats of other peoples or other species – where immediate gain tempts people to give no thought for the future – send your wisdom to guide citizens and decision makers to act responsibly.

We pray for the church facing the challenges of rebuilding ministry and mission in times of uncertainties and possibility. Where congregations are tempted to guard traditions and resist new possibilities – where people magnify differences instead of celebrating unity in Christ – where energy for leadership and community life has grown weary – send your healing and transforming grace.

We pray for relationships tested by conflicts and the lack of mutual understanding. Where families are tempted to nurse grudges and harbour complaints – where friendships have been wounded by misunderstanding or neglect – where workplace tensions have arisen over clashing opinions or exhausting demands – send your reconciling and restoring mercy.

We pray for the world filled with increasing threats and conflicts. Where countries are torn by unrest and persecution – where communities are diminished by prejudice and discrimination – where those with power and authority degrade or dismiss their critics – empower those who work for just solutions and advocate for the powerless. We remember silently or aloud current situations brought to our attention in the news...

We pray for all who are troubled and find it hard to face uncertain times – we pray for those who face illness or loss of any kind – for those challenged by economic hardship – and for those faced with the reality of death, their own or of someone dear. We name those on our hearts today...

Embrace each one with your compassion and courage, O God, and in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Even as we remember the many challenges around us, we give thanks for the blessings we know: for moments of pleasure – for laughter shared – for conversations that brighten a day – for quiet beauty and joyful noise – for hope and the promise of better days. We offer our prayers in Jesus' name... **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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen**

➤ *With the Lord as my guide*

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Blessing

Go in peace; be of good courage – hold fast to what is good – render no one evil for evil – strengthen the fainthearted – support the weak – help the afflicted – honour all people – love and serve God and may the blessing of Creator, Christ and Spirit embrace and remain with you forever. Amen

➤ *Go now in peace*