

Service of Worship

March 22, 2026

5th Sunday in Lent

Psalm 130:5: I wait for the LORD; my soul waits, and in God's word I hope

Welcome/Announcements

Special Music

Call to Worship

Welcome to the weary and the worn.

Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.

Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.

Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.

Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.

Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.

Welcome to the sinners and the saints.

This is God's house. You can make yourself at home here.

Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God!

Hymn of Gathering #435 **There's a Wideness in God's Mercy**

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, we love to live our lives by the rules. We love clear answers. We love right and wrong. We love swift justice. We love to pick up stones, but you show us another way. You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation. You prioritize mercy over legality. You prioritize people over tradition. You prioritize love over everything. Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters. Forgive us for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you. Forgive us. Soften our hearts. Root us in mercy, justice, and love.

Silent prayer

With hope for a better tomorrow, we pray. **Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

Scripture Lesson: John 8:2-11 (p.1037)

Music for Meditation

Scripture Lesson: Matthew 23:23 (p.959)

Sermon

Rev. Todd Davidson

Offering

Doxology – Hymn #582 **Glory To God, Whose Goodness Shines On Me**

Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People/Lord's Prayer

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in the good news of Jesus Christ. It sounds like welcome and feels like home. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy. It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table, so we believe in the good news of Jesus Christ. We have seen it alive in the world. And even when our hearts ache, even when wars rage, even when mercy feels out of reach, we remember the one who welcomed the children and led with nonviolence. We remember the one who cared for the vulnerable and inspired those around him. We remember that the good news really is good news, for we have seen it alive in the world. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Hymn of Sending #649 **Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound**

Benediction Poem: The Things That Matter Most (insert)

The Things That Matter Most

I wrecked the family car, an old gold minivan
that had traveled every inch of I-95. It had worn cushions
and an old school map in the glove box.

It held a folder full of mix CDs under the passenger seat
and every memory of every family trip,
and I wrecked it.

I called the tow truck while the engine
hissed and smoked. I called my dad,
my own apologies tripping over themselves
to get to the front of the line.

I expected to be grounded.

I expected a “How could you?”

But when I got home that night,
my dad held me close and said,

“A car is just a car, but you are my child.

The only thing that matters is that you are okay.”

And I knew it for what it was.

It was mercy. It was love.

It was the thing that mattered most.

By: Rev. Sarah Are Speed

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