

Covenant Congregational Church

Third Sunday of Easter

Service of Worship April 30, 2017 10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE *I Stand Amazed* Gabriel

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Alynne MacLean

CHORAL INTROIT *Lift Thine Eyes* Mendelssohn

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Look up! Scan the horizon! From where will we find our salvation?

Our source of all help and all hope is the Holy One.

The Lord keeps our feet secure; the Lord keeps a watchful eye.

The Savior is our Guardian and Protector, now and always.

*HYMN *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above* #27

*UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

**O God, we gather together in Your presence with expectation,
hungry for an encounter with You, eager to hear Your Word.**

Open our eyes and ears to the presence of Your Holy Spirit.

May the seeds of Your Word scattered among us this morning fall on fertile soil.

May they take root in our hearts and lives,

and produce an abundant harvest of good words and deeds.

We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our teacher and our Lord. Amen.

*HYMN *Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast* #529

CHILDREN'S SERMON Alynne MacLean

(Children K through 3rd grade are dismissed to Junior Church at this time)

THE WORD OF GOD Janet Linehan

Gospel Reading: Luke 8:4-15 NIV (New Testament page 67)

⁴ While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁵ "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. ⁶ Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."

When he said this, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, "though seeing, they may not see;

though hearing, they may not understand."

¹¹ "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹² Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Response:

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

SERMON *Choose Your Own Adventure* Pastor Jason O. Mohn

*RESPONSE SONG *Holy Spirit, Come With Power* #521

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For all the blessings of this life, we give thanks to You, Creator God.

For families, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and strangers,
who nurture us, that the love of God may grow within.

That Your love, your Word, like a seed, may grow to produce in us, good fruit.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For the leaders of various nations and cities,
that they may lead with strong hearts and gentle hands and generous spirits,
with compassion and mercy, with wisdom and grace.

May they reflect your will guiding all their actions and decisions.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For those who serve in harms way, those who live in dangerous places,
those who live in areas of war and strife, those who live in fear,
those who worry about employment, bills, food,
and struggle just to find dignity in life.

May your grace bring peace and safety to all people, one to another.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For those who suffer from any illness or disease—of mind, body, or spirit.
Restore these, and all those we carry in our hearts, to fullness of health—

health as only you, O God, can bring.
May your mercy shower each of us with healing mercy and love.

May your love be like a seed, taking root and growing strong.

For those who are dying, and for those who have died.
Send forth your comforting love. Give solace to those who mourn.
Console those who grieve.

May your grace surround us like a mantle upon our heads,
a shawl upon our shoulders, a hand, to hold our hand.

May your love, be like a seed, taking root and growing strong. Amen

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Choral Anthem *Our Savior Is Alive* Price and Besig
Banjo: Dave Sproul

*Easter Doxology

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise him above ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen.***

* Prayer of Dedication

VITALITY TEAM COMMISSIONING

*BENEDICTION *Grace, Love, and Fellowship* Fettke

*POSTLUDE *I Will Arise and Go to Jesus* Traditional

*Please stand in praise to God, if able
CCLI #982653

Thank you for participating in this worship gathering! We are glad that you are here this morning and pray that this might be a meaningful faith-building experience for you and/or your family. To more deeply connect with this faith community, we invite you to stay following our worship gathering and enjoy a time of refreshments and fellowship in our Fireside Room and Narthex.



www.jtbarts.com

The Parable of the Soils

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