



Worship @ Home Guide

Feb. 21, 2021- 1st Sunday of Lent

Woodstock Presbyterian Church

142 E. Court St., Woodstock, VA 22664

www.woodstockpresbyterianchurch.com

RECONNECT

Gathering Music/Announcements

Welcome & Prayer of the Day

Call to Worship

One: God meets us in the night—

**All: Before the sun rises,
Before the wound heals,
Before there are answers,
Before there is closure.**

One: God meets us in the light—

**All: Where joy is effervescent,
Where laughter is contagious,
Where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
And where people gather around the table.**

One: God meets us at the threshold—

**All: At the edge of the water,
At the beginning of the wilderness,
At the start of something new,
On the edge of faith.**

One: And if God meets us in all those places,
Then surely God meets us in between—

All: Staying with us through the wilderness.

One: We are not alone. God is all around.

All: Let us worship the God of the here and now.

Call to Confession

Again and again, God meets us where we are.

God's love knows no bounds, which is hard for us to understand and easy for us to forget.

Therefore, in confession we remember together that we are not alone.

And in a unified voice, we once again ask for God's grace in that holy reminder.

Family of faith, please pray with me.

Prayer of Confession

One: God who meets us where we are—

There is nowhere we can go that you are not.

All: You were with Jesus at his baptism.

You were with him in the wilderness,

And even in between, you were there,

Saying aloud, "This is my beloved."

One: We know that you are with us too—

In the good, the bad, and everything in between—

But so often we act like we are alone.

All: Instead of coming to you with our hurt,

We hold it in or cast it onto others.

Instead of coming to you with our joy,

We credit ourselves and offer you nothing.

One: How can we long for a deeper relationship with you

While living like you are nowhere to be found?

All: Forgive our self-centered ways.

Remind us that in every breath, in every step, you are there.

One: You are the God who meets us where we are.

All: Before and behind, above and below, within and around. Amen.

Hymn #375 – Shall we gather Gather at the River

**Shall we gather at the river,
Where bright angel feet have trod;
With its crystal tide forever
Flowing by the throne of God?**

Refrain:

**Yes, we'll gather at the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river;
Gather with the saints at the river
That flows by the throne of God.**

**2 On the margin of the river,
Washing up its silver spray,
We will walk and worship ever,
All the happy golden day. [Refrain]**

**3 Ere we reach the shining river,
Lay we ev'ry burden down;
Grace our spirits will deliver,
And provide a robe and crown. [Refrain]**

**4 Soon we'll reach the shining river,
Soon our pilgrimage will cease;
Soon our happy hearts will quiver
With the melody of peace. [Refrain]**

READ

Scripture Reading

Mark 1:9-15

The Baptism of Jesus

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved;^[a] with you I am well pleased."

The Temptation of Jesus

¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news^[b] of God,^[c] ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near;^[d] repent, and believe in the good news."^[e]

REFLECT

Message - Again & Again, God Meets Us

RESPOND

Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in a God who is everywhere and right here,
Bigger than the sky and in the smallest details,
All at once and in every moment.
We believe that God meets us where we are—
In heartbreak and high hopes,
Around crowded tables and in quiet homes,
In joy and in suffering,
In loneliness and in connection,
In sanctuaries and in living rooms,
In marches and in waiting rooms.
We believe that nothing we do or leave undone
Can distance us from God's love.
God is forever drawing us close and pulling us in.
Again and again, God meets us where we are
And invites us into wholeness.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

Offering

In Lent, we remember the gifts of nourishment that God gives us during our wilderness journey. Let us now share our gifts in joyful response to God's sustaining grace.

Prayers of the People

Holy God, we pray that you would empower us with courage and faithfulness as we embark on this Lenten journey. We seek renewal and restoration during these 40 days. Help us to remember Jesus' faithfulness in the wilderness, tempted by Satan. Be with us in our temptation. Let your grace follow us and go before us in each step of this journey. Enable us to accept spiritual disciplines for this journey. Let us pray daily and be especially attentive to the needs of others, and to our own needs.

God of the nations, we pray for peace with justice throughout the world, so that all your children may dwell secure, free of war and injustice. Move the hearts of leaders throughout the world to hear the cries of the poor and hungry, and to ensure a rightful share of the resources needed to sustain life. And as we continue to grapple with overwhelming pandemic challenges, we pray that you would grant

special measures of strength and endurance to healthcare workers and other essential workers who labor on the frontlines of this struggle. And we pray for all who are now facilitating vaccination and for those who are providing the vaccines. We pray for your comfort for all who are sick and for all who have lost loved ones. Grant us all wisdom and courage for the living of this hour. We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray, saying, Our Father...

“By the Waters of Babylon”

RETURN

Assurance

One: Friends, whether you are standing at the door of a deeper faith journey,
Unsure of what comes next,
Or running your way through that threshold,
You are claimed, forgiven, and loved by God.

**All: Again and again, we are forgiven.
Again and again, we are loved.
Again and again, we are invited in.**

One: Thanks be to God for a love like that.
if you hear nothing else today, hear this:
God is here. God sees you. God knows you. God meets you at the edge of every new beginning,
And God calls you beloved.

**All: We are washed by the water.
We are called beloved.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.
Amen.**

Charge & Benediction - again & again, a lenten refrain

**As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God’s goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God’s grace.
And may this be your rhythm—
Again and again and again,
Until God’s promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace.
Amen.**

Sending Hymn, # 166, vv1,3,5

Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days

**Lord, who throughout these forty days
For us did fast and pray,
Teach us to overcome our sins,
And close by You to stay.**

**3 As You did hunger and did thirst,
So teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and only live
By Your most holy word.**

**5 Abide with us that, when this life
Of suffering is past,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last!**

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Credits:

Hymns from Glory to God.

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Liturgy – A Sanctified Art

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