

Sunday, February 28, 2021  
 Mantua Center Christian Church  
 MCCC Remote Worship

**Order of Worship**

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS - Chad**

Good Morning and a blessed season of Lent to everyone...

Welcome to the Mantua Center Christian Church. Remember we gather not as perfect people, but as people perfectly loved, seeking to live and love like Jesus. We are apart, but we are bound together through the power of the Holy Spirit. Be blessed, be encouraged, and believe that God is near!

Today is the second Sunday in Lent. As we walk with Jesus to Holy Week, this morning we learn a lesson about Repentance. As God's people seeking to live the Resurrection we must be a people who bear the marks of repentance...what all does that entail? There may be more to it than we imagine. Together will look at Jesus' words in the Gospel of Luke and deeper into what repentance might really mean for us.

So then! Let's prepare our minds and hearts for worship, let's take a deep breath and Light a Candle.

Together we have set this time and space aside for the worship of God. Let's give to God our joys, worries, and sorrows and open ourselves up to what God has to say to us today. Let us worship the Lord...

**SONG - Weave (Pam and Beth - in the folder)**

*Weave, weave, weave us together. Weave us together in unity and love.  
 Weave, weave, weave us together. Weave us together, together in love.*

**SCRIPTURE READING - Kuchenbeckers**

**OPENING HYMN Open My Eyes (Chalice hymns)**

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT - Ally Hurd**

**PASTORAL PRAYER - Sarah Smith**

**SONG RESPONSE Shepherd Me, O God (Pam and Beth)**

*Shepherd Me, O God beyond my thoughts,  
 beyond my fears, from death into life*

**SCRIPTURE READING****Luke 13:1-5****SERMON - Metanoia: Repentance - Chad Delaney**

2021 - 6 - Lent 2 - Repentance - Luke 13 - Feb 28

Luke 13:1-5

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup>He asked them, 'Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?' <sup>3</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup>Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem?' <sup>5</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.'

**Metanoia: Repentance**

This Lenten season we are talking with Jesus about what we need to take with us as his followers. Last week we saw how Jesus was calling his followers to be people of compassion. The story of the Good Samaritan illustrates that beautifully. This week we see that a community that honors his life and teachings bears the marks of repentance.

Today I want to share with a couple personal stories of repentance.

While at Hiram College, I got caught complaining (gossiping) about one of our club leaders. I was frustrated they were trying to change some things, but didn't realize they could hear. It was very painful, but there was another layer besides the gossip and betrayal which I didn't realize until much later. I also shut out the only black leader of the group. She was wanting to make the group more open to the black students...but I didn't see it that way. We had a way of doing things (a white way) and I had totally squelched her voice, perspective, and hope for a more inclusive change. She even had me sit down with a group of black students to discuss it, but I was defensive and just didn't want to admit what was staring me right in the face.

After these events and even to this day, I've had to think about what it means to hold mutuality, diversity, and genuine listening in a group. How do we stand with, ally with, and also just simply get out of the way so people can lead? What needs to change about me?

Another time when I was a young teenager, I was riding my bike across and went to cross the street without looking, but hesitated because I heard that voice in my head (my dad's voice) saying "Look both ways." So I did. At that very moment a car sped by, recklessly came up on the curb and on to the sidewalk...if I had been just a few steps forward....

After this happened, I just stood there stunned. Trembling I got back on my bike, turned around and went home. I kept replaying what happened in my mind. Running it over again to see what I could have done differently and promising myself I would never skip the "look both ways part" again.

Ok...there's my two stories. There's plenty more where that came from but I'll spare you a Pastor Confession hour. I tell you the stories to illustrate maybe a different way of looking at repentance. In the first story, its easy...my sins of gossip and racism were utterly apparent and I had to do some soul searching. But...in the bike episode, would we usually think of that as a time for repentance?

Usually we think of Repentance as a time to say "I'm sorry." Feeling sorry for what we've done and confessing it to another person or to God. We associate repentance with feeling bad and guilty about something and confessing it. And while that can be a part of repentance...it doesn't actually get at the whole meaning of the word as Jesus used it.

The Greek word Jesus uses here to call the people to repentance is *metanoia*. It actually literally means "change thought" (*meta--noia*), or "changed after" or "think differently afterwards". To change one's mind.

Repentant people are those who experience an event and then "think afterwards", who change their minds. Wonder what they could have done differently. Take time to learn from their mistakes so they don't repeat them. Who try to see the bigger picture. Now hopefully we are all thinking **before** as well....but hey....we're human. We are all going to make mistakes. Thinking before doesn't always happen, so we need to put our minds to thinking, praying, and reflecting afterward. What needs to change? What could we do differently?

This is actually always hard to do. There are plenty of reasons we don't see repentance in this way. We just want to throw in our "I'm sorry" and be done with it. We will have a great impulse to avoid responsibility and to point fingers. To deny and blame. In the stories Jesus references today I'm sure people would have happily blamed many others and wondered at why Jesus was calling the community to repent. Jesus calls the whole community to look at what has happened--and to repent. It wasn't just for those individuals but for the whole community. Together to think afterward. To change their minds. Learn to do something different. In this way, repentance isn't used as a tool by Jesus to castigate and cast them down. To fuel their guilt and shame (Lord knows, we don't need more of that), but instead to lead them and guide them and urge them to change direction, to think differently, to imagine a new way that leads to life. Everything Jesus does is trying to create a community of Resurrection--where the least are lifted up, the poor are given justice, where all are moved to nurture and build the Kin-dom of God of life and love.

Inevitably we're going to have issues with a friend, a co-worker, a stranger, family member, or even against ourselves!! We are going to have issues as a nation and world for which we need to repent for. We definitely need to be ready to say apologize AND...if we are to truly take repentance with us as a people...if we are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus....we will be a people who THINK AFTER. A reflective people who really care about who we are and our imprint on the world. We are quick to see how our actions or inactions contributed to what has happened. Unafraid to admit wrong and change course. Who are unafraid to adjust and adapt and even change our minds. Pliable to the whisperings and leanings of the Holy Spirit calling for a more justice, merciful, and welcoming world for all.

To truly embrace Christ's call to metanoia--we embrace a transformational process of learning, acknowledging, regretting, considering, reflecting, changing, and committing to something different.

For this will be a sign of love, a sign of true transformation, a sign we are seeking to follow Jesus Christ and live the Resurrection. May we do so within the grace-filled, forgiving, and merciful LOVE of our Creator who will guide us and sustain us. Amen

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**SPECIAL MUSIC - Softly and Tenderly (sung by Joy Wyatt)**

**HOLY COMMUNION - Drema Herron**

**Communion Song - Be Known To Us in Breaking Bread (Jan - in folder)**

**Meditation**

Communion Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution

*As we gather around Christ's Table we remember that on the night that Jesus was betrayed, he took the bread and broke it, gave thanks and said to his Disciples, "This is my body which is given for you, eat of it all of you in remembrance of me." In like manner he took the cup and blessed it saying, "This is the cup of the new covenant in me, as often as you drink of it do so in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's life, death, and resurrection until he comes again. Remember, all...ALL are welcome at the Lord's Table.*

*(Share in the Bread and Cup together)*

**CLOSING SONG**

**Breathe on Me, Breath of God (Chalice)**

**BENEDICTION - Sarah**