

Banning United Methodist Church

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 19, 2023

GATHERING MUSIC

Maxine Hoth

MEDITATIVE THOUGHT

Denise Cosgrove

God, as I encounter others at worship today, help me look on their hearts, as You do. Then lead me to share a caring word.

PRELUDE

"Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus"

Maxine Hoth

WELCOMING FRIENDS and NEWCOMERS

Denise Cosgrove

We ask that you please sign the attendance book, then pass it to the middle aisle. If you are here this morning as a guest, please include your address and phone number, so that we can reach out to you.

If this is your first time visiting and would like to introduce yourself, please raise your hand, and a microphone will be brought to you.

WELCOME and PASSING OF THE PEACE

Pastor Doug

MINISTRY MOMENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Denise Cosgrove

†CALL TO WORSHIP

Denise Cosgrove

L: When the world is dark and full of hate and fear, when we cannot see God

P: we will turn on the light.

L: When we cannot find our way back to love and peace

P: we will turn on the light.

L: When our vision dims due to the darkness within

P: we will turn on the light.

L: Christ opens our eyes with the gift of sight.

P: The light of the world is Jesus Christ.

L: Come and worship the One who brings sight to the blind.

P: Hallelujah! Praise God, the light of the world! Amen.

†OPENING HYMN

"I Love to Tell the Story" vs. 1, 2, & 4

Hymn #156

OPENING PRAYER

Denise Cosgrove

Gracious God, Who created us in God's own image, we are grateful for all that you have done for us, for all that You are doing in us, and for all that You will do through us. Open our eyes to see Your presence among us, moving in powerful ways at all times and in all places. Open our ears to hear familiar words in new ways—ways that will change us and challenge us to become the people You created us to be. Grant us the power and the courage to come out of the darkness and into the light of Jesus Christ, that we may serve You by serving others. We love You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Psalm 23 NRSV

Denise Cosgrove

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

†GOSPEL READING

John 9:1-41 NRSV

Pastor Doug

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.

Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

†HYMN

"Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"

Hymn#277

SERMON TITLE

"Blindness, Vision, and Awareness"

Pastor Doug

PRAYERS OF THE PASTOR and PEOPLE

Pastor Doug

Children in Prayer

(After all slides: In Your mercy, **Lord, hear our prayer**)

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

GIVING BACK TO GOD (TITHES AND GIFTS)

Denise Cosgrove

OFFERTORY

"What Can Wash Away My Sins?"

Maxine Hoth

†DOXOLOGY

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

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

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Denise Cosgrove

Generous God, You tenderly care for each person You have created. You miraculously restore people to health and shine light into the lives of those who are discouraged. Guide us so that we will not regard others according to outward appearances but seek to find Your love in their hearts. We dedicate our offerings and ourselves to contribute to the work of Your Kingdom on earth until Christ returns in glory. Amen.

†CLOSING HYMN

"There Is a Balm in Gilead"

Hymn #375

†BENEDICTION

Pastor Doug

POSTLUDE

"We're Marching to Zion"

Maxine Hoth