

Devotion for the Fourth Week of Lent



Open Hands

We are born with the ability
to wrap our fingers around another,
to hold tight to what we know.
Maybe that's where the instinct comes from—
this clinging, this sinking,
this holding on.
Maybe that's why Peter cries, "Never!"
when Jesus must leave.
From the very beginning
we've known how to hold tight.
So I pray: open up my hands.
Uncurl my fingers one by one.
Loosen the grip
that I hold unyielding.
Remind me that birds must fly
and children must grow
and leaves must fall.
And even though
we are born with the ability to hold tight,
we can learn how to love
with open hands.

By Sarah Speed

Would you describe yourself as having open hands or closed hands? In what area of your life, do you choose to hold tight? Uncurl your fingers? Name one area of your faith where you need God to help you loosen your grip.



Heyward St UMC

2501 Heyward St
Columbia, SC 29205

www.heywardst.church



When your world unravels and your beliefs are tested, you may cling to what you know. As Jesus foretells his death and resurrection, Peter protests. Peter is fixed upon the way he thinks things should go; he resists the pain of what will come. But Jesus is fixed upon his calling and calls Peter out. For everyone, there comes a time when your faith is tested and you will have to face difficult and inconvenient truths. We may want to take the easier path, the path with less pain. We may want to cling to easy or simplistic answers. Instead, what does it look like to welcome complexity? Can you stay fixed upon your convictions while also expanding your perspective?

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The Fourth Sunday of Lent

Gathered to Worship

March 10, 2024

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Song *My Feet Are on the Rock* Praise Team

Lenten Candles

As the days lengthen, we follow Jesus on his journey to the cross. The light grows dim as we anticipate Jesus' sacrifice and as we hope for the dawn of Easter morning.

Lenten Response A Prayer of Confession UMH 8

**Merciful God,
we confess that we have not loved you
with our whole heart.
We have failed to be an obedient church.
We have not done your will,
we have broken your law,
we have rebelled against your love,
we have not loved our neighbors,
and we have not heard the cry of the needy.
Forgive us, we pray.
Free us for joyful obedience,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

Though there are many days when we fail to love as you loved, we know you let us start anew each day. With humble hearts, we accept the grace freely offered.

Scripture Matthew 16:21-23 Pew Bible p 18

Receiving of the Offering

Hymn *Come Thou Fount (v 1&3)* UMH 400

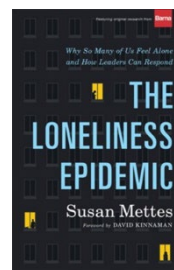
Sermon I'm Fixed Upon It Rev. Blom

Song *Even If* Praise Team

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

Closing Song *We Are One* Praise Team

Benediction / Extinguish Lenten Candle



The Books Have Arrived!

United in Faith, our quarterly book club, is reading *The Loneliness Epidemic* by Mettes. We will meet to discuss the book on May 21 at 6:30 pm. Copies of the book may be purchased for \$10. Please see Pastor Tammy.

Please Donate Filled Plastic Easter Eggs

We are hosting an Easter Egg Hunt as part of the preschool's family gathering on March 25. We need filled eggs to hide. Please donate a dozen, or more, by March 24.



A Drop In Event on Maundy Thursday, March 28

Self-guided reflection/interactive stations will be available in sanctuary 11 am – 1 pm. The stations will be "Through the Eyes of Peter" as Jesus makes the final steps toward the cross.

We hold Gaye Besly and Wayne Whitworth **in our prayers** as they recuperate.

2501 Heyward Street, Columbia, 29205 (803) 771-4540