



First Parish of Westwood UCC

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Rev. Dr. Jill Edens, *Interim Pastor*
Rev. Richard Edens, *Interim Pastor*

February 28, 2021
2nd Sunday in Lent

Gathering

PREPARATION

The cross of Christ cannot be reduced to an example for the cross of those who follow him.... Mark reads no doubt intentionally, not that the disciple should take up 'his,' that is Christ's cross, but 'your' cross. There is no question of their being on the same level, as is shown by the story of Gethsemane. Jesus suffered and died alone. But those who follow him suffer and die in fellowship with him....

One follows Christ in one's own response to the mission of Christ at the present day and in taking up one's own cross.

Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, pp. 55 & 60

RINGING OF THE HOUR

Jesse Aguilar with Fina Aguilar

WELCOME

Nancy Hyde, Chair of the Pastoral Search Committee
Bob Deininger, Chair of the Transition Committee

CALL TO WORSHIP IN MUSIC

Excerpt from *First Arabesque*

Claude Debussy
Dr. Sarah Tocco, Director of Music

Encountering the Word

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Abraham and Sarah:

Rev. Richard Edens, Interim Pastor

"This will be a sign of my covenant with you; you will be ancestors of a multitude of nations." Genesis 17

Reader: Bob Deininger

LESSON

Mark 8:31-38, NRSV

"Saving" or "losing" one's life may have to do with courtroom solidarity under pressure of threat. To be ashamed of Jesus and renounce him may "save" one's skin but "lose" one's life – as it dawns on Peter in the high priest's courtyard. In any event, the topic remains the freedom to die. What goes unnoticed is the first mention of the resurrection in Mark's gospel. Think of it as a half-smile breaking through heavy talk or the countenance of God shining through the clouds of God's absence.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

MESSAGE

Rev. Richard Edens, Interim Pastor

PASTORAL PRAYER CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Richard Edens, Interim Pastor

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, for ever. Amen.

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ANTHEM

Before Your Cross, O Jesus

Frederick C. Maker
Dr. Sarah Tocco, Director of Music

*Before your cross, O Jesus, our lives are judged today,
the meaning of our eager strife is tested by your way.
Across our restless living the light streams from your cross,
and by its clear, revealing beams we measure gain and loss.*

Giving Thanks in Response to the Word

OFFERING OURSELVES TO GOD AND TO ONE ANOTHER

Rev. Richard Edens, Interim Pastor

Until that day when we gather again in the sanctuary, please send your tithes and gifts for First Parish to the church office at 252 Nahatan Street, Westwood, MA 02090.

Sending

BENEDICTION

Rev. Richard Edens, Interim Pastor

BLESSING IN MUSIC

Go in Peace

First Parish Choir
Dr. Sarah Tocco, Director of Music