

## Sunday Service: March 21, 2021 (Fifth Sunday of Lent)

### *“Does God know the Path of a Tornado?”*

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Zoom service starts promptly at 10 am:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84841981079?pwd=OG1TMThyZFFQZ1Q0dStpZlJCdURUUT09>

#### **Lent–Easter 2021 Theme: Going Deep**

Nearly a year ago we entered the world of isolation and virtual connection with which all of us are now familiar. Suddenly the wilderness of Lent has become all too real, as we were stripped of our usual resources, surroundings, activities, and circles of relationship. During this time our world has experienced both deep grief and invitations to a new spaciousness of time, as we needed to release so much of what usually fills our lives.

In the Scriptures and the traditions of Lent, we see a scrubbing away of the excess to get to the core of our Christian journeys and of ourselves. The call to go deeper can be frightening or overwhelming when we feel we are not ready and do not know what we will find. We keep much of our pain in our depths. But only from these depths can the voice of God reach us and transform us.

#### **FOCUS for Fifth Sunday of Lent**

**Deep in the changing sky: Called to deep wisdom:** In the patterns and glory of God’s creation, and in God’s commandments and promises, we are called to obtain deep wisdom. God’s wisdom undermines our assumptions and takes us deeper than our efforts can lead us.

## 1. GATHERING

### Musical Prelude

### Call to Worship



**One:** The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

**Many:** Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

**One:** There is no speech . . . yet the voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

**Many:** In the heavens you set a tent for the sun. . . . Its rising is from the end of the heavens, its circuit to the end of them; nothing is hid from its heat.

**One:** The law of the Lord is perfect . . . sure . . . clear . . . true and righteous. The fear of the Lord is pure.

**Many:** God, clear us from hidden faults; teach us to trust you.

**All:** *Let the words and meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and redeemer. We call out to you, as you call us to deeper wisdom.*

*"Heavy hearts, like heavy clouds in the sky, are best relieved by the letting of a little water." — Christopher Morley*

### Opening Prayer

### Opening Song

### Prayer of Confession and Assurance

**Many:** Deep calls to deep. We call to you from the depths of our hearts.

**One:** We confess when we have settled into sameness, forgetting the rhythms of the heavens, ignoring the rhythms of justice. We confess when we have not looked up into the eyes of a neighbor, into your Word that still lives.

*(Silence. Or name the forces that keep us from deep wisdom.)*

Deep calls to deep. You call to us from the depth of your love.

**Many:** Calling us to deep wisdom. We come to you, God.

## 2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

### Scriptures (Psalm 19, Exodus 20:1-17)



**Psalm 19:1** The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. 2 Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. 3 There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; 4 yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, 5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his

wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. 6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hid from its heat. 7 The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes; 9 the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb... 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

**Exodus 13:19** And Moses took with him the bones of Joseph... 20 They set out from Succoth, and camped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. 21 The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

### Message: *“Does God Know the Path of a Tornado?”*



What do you see when you look up at the sky?

Today Geoff will talk about how weather phenomena, like God, can seem utterly random at times. Join as we discuss both the awesomeness and terribleness of high-impact weather events!

*“A dark cloud is no sign that the sun has lost his light; and dark black convictions are no arguments that God has laid aside His mercy.”*

— Charles Spurgeon

### 3. RESPONDING TO GOD



*“I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness; I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too. I feel the suffering of millions. And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better, that this cruelty too shall end, that peace and tranquility will return once more.” — Anne Frank*

#### **Response**

#### **Joys and Concerns**

#### **Sending Song**

#### **Sending Blessing**

The changing sky speaks about the larger rhythms of life. The moons and seasons that dance over the horizon reflect the language of the infinite. And when we notice our own smallness in relationship to the sky’s expansiveness, only then do we begin to be wise. Go into this week in search of deep wisdom. Go with humility. Amen.

*“Our mind is like a cloudy sky: in essence clear and pure, but overcast by clouds of delusions. Just as the thickest clouds can disperse, so, too, even the heaviest delusions can be removed from our mind.” — Kelsang Gyatso*