GATHERING MUSIC Mark Mathias

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Dave Bartley

PRELUDE Aria – C. Dobrinski

Handbell Choir

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST Acolyte

Eden Juhasz

CALL TO WORSHIP Barbara Brehm

Scripture is full of questions...

**Where are you?**

Am I my brother’s keeper?

**Whom shall I send?**

Who do you say that I am?

**Who sinned?**

How many times shall I forgive?

**If God is for us, who can be against us?**

Scripture is full of questions, so just like those in our scriptures, may we bring our full curiosity and wonder into this space.

**Let us ask and seek after our merciful God.**

\*OPENING HYMN #719 Come, Labor On

\*CALL TO CONFESSION Barbara Brehm

In today’s text, the disciples ask Jesus, “Who sinned?” They want to know who around them could be blamed for suffering. The disciples want to identify who around them had done wrong. In the prayer of confession, we stop pointing fingers at others. In confession, we turn our attention toward ourselves and invite God into that honest and vulnerable space.

So, do this counter-cultural thing with me today. Let us pray together using the prayer of confession, printed in your bulletin (or visible on your screen). Let us prayer:

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION Barbara Brehm

Who here has sinned?

**We have sinned. We put our heads in the sand. We ignored people in need. We make false assumptions and fail to be kind. We are in need of forgiveness.**

Good news! Our God is a merciful God. God does not punish, hold grudges, or keep score. When you suffer, God weeps. When you sin, God forgives. When you lose your way, God comes running.

**Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

**Have you sinned?**

I have sinned. I put my head in the sand. I ignore people in need. I make false assumptions and fail to be kind. I, too, am in need of forgiveness.

\*CONGREGATIONAL SUNG RESPONSE Restore in Us, O God

*Please see hymn insert*

\*WORDS OF HOPE Rev. Dave Bartley

**Good news! Our God is a merciful God. God does not punish, hold grudges, or keep score. When you suffer, God weeps. When you sin, God forgives. When you lose your way, God comes running.** Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE Rev. Dave Bartley

May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also, with you.**

TIME WITH CHILDREN Rev. Dave Bartley

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Barbara Brehm God of Good news, there is reading your Word, there is hearing your Word, and then there is tunneling ourselves into your Word— harvesting your Word, building a home in your Word, laying your Word over us like a blanket, wrapping ourselves in your Word, know your Word like the back of our hand, singing your Word, planting ourselves like a garden in your Word. God, we could listen to scripture like we listen to the news, or we could cocoon ourselves in your Word and it could change us entirely. So, bundle us up. Give us the latter. We want to know you. With hopeful hearts we pray, amen.

FIRST LESSON: John 9: 1-7 Barbara Brehm

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 Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM  Be Thou My Vision – C. Young

Chancel Choir

SECOND LESSON: John 9: 8-41 Rev. Dave Bartley

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 worshipped him. Jesus said, ‘I came into this world for judgement 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.

The Word of God in Scripture, the Word of God among us, and the Word of God within us.

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON “Seeking: Who Sinned?”

Rev. Dave Bartley

HYMN #792 There is a Balm in Gilead

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH Rev. Dave Bartley

We believe in a merciful God,

**a God who does not keep score,**

**a God who wants good for us.**

We believe in a creative God,

**a God who would heal with mud,**

**a God capable of seeing what we cannot.**

We believe in a saving God,

**a God who heals,**

**a God who greets our questions with patience,**

**a God who sends us out with hope in our step.**

What wondrous love is this. Amen.

INVITATION TO OFFERING Rev. Dave Bartley

OFFERTORY Amazing Grace – J. Michel

OFFERTORY RESPONSE For the Life that You Have Given

*Please see hymn insert*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION Rev. Dave Bartley

CONGREGATIONAL CALL TO PRAYER We Seek You with Our Questions, God

*Please see hymn insert*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Rev. Dave Bartley

\*CLOSING HYMN #720 Jesus Calls Us

\*CHARGE & BENEDICTION Rev. Dave Bartley

As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking. Seek out the hungry. Seek the weary. Seek the good in every person you pass. Seek out the hopeful. Seek the faithful. Seek God in each of us. As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for. In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. Amen.

\*SENDING SONG Go, My Children, with My Blessing

*Please see hymn insert*

CARRYING OUT THE LIGHT OF CHRIST Acolyte

Eden Juhasz

\*POSTLUDE   In the Cross of Christ I Glory – J. Leavitt

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