

Countryside Community Church WORSHIP



Mary & Martha, Lauren Wright Pittman, [Sanctified Art](#)

Second Sunday of Lent

March 16, 2025

Order of Worship

Sunday, March 16, 2025

† Indicates those places where those who are able are invited to stand.

Text in **bold** indicates places where the congregation is invited to join in response.

Gathering

COMMUNITY TIME (9:55)

PRELUDE

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

J.S. Bach

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

One: We come to God hurried, busy and distracted.

Many: We come to God quiet and curious like a child.

One: No matter how we come, God welcomes us with open arms

Many: Let us come to worship just as we are, beloved and wholly loved.

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The Peace of God be With You

Many: And also with you.

†HYMN OF RESPONSE Hymn #575 *Come and Find the Quiet Center* (vs. 1)

CHILDREN'S TIME

Children are invited to join Heather for a lesson at the chancel and then head to Discovery Kids classes. Nursery is available for children 0-4 years.

Sung Response

Go Now in Peace

Go now in peace, go now in peace,
may the love of God surround you
everywhere, everywhere
you may go.

Hearing the Word

FIRST LESSON Psalm 126

Reader: Sherryl Lilley

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

MUSIC REFLECTION

Take My Life and Let It Be Frances Havergal / H.A. César Malan

SECOND LESSON : Luke 10:38-42

Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

MESSAGE

Responding to the Word

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

SHARING OUR GIFTS

The Social Justice and Outreach Board has designated Restoring Dignity for the March Box donations.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Faithful and Generous God, we share this that which we are able, knowing that it is just a small portion of all that we have received. We pray that you will see these offerings used to benefit those in need, that they might be fed in body, mind, and spirit. We know that in the very act of giving, we ourselves are fed. We thank you for the opportunity to share our gifts, and we ask that you would inspire us to be ever more generous, as you are abundantly generous to us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: We lift them to God.

One: Let us give thanks to the God of love.

Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Words of Remembrance

As you are able, please come forward to receive the bread and cup. If you prefer to take communion in your seat, raise your hand and a server will bring the elements to you. At Countryside, we serve gluten-free bread and non-alcoholic grape juice to support a diversity of needs. Communion cups may be discarded in the basket as you leave the sanctuary.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks, gracious God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sending

†SENDING HYMN Hymn #461 *Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service* (vs. 2, 4)

†BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

A Mighty Fortress is Our God

Johann Pachelbel

Diane Hill, organ and piano - Tyler Gruttemeyer, vocals

Joys & Concerns

Join us as we pray for our congregation members and their loved ones who are on our Joys and Concerns list every week on Thursdays at 9 a.m. in the Sanctuary. If you have someone who would benefit from prayer, want to share a joy or be included on the bulletin list, and /or be included on Countryside's Prayer Chain, contact Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones at 402-391-0350, ext. 225 or sarahrj@countrysideucc.org

Please join in praying for the following new and ongoing concerns:

Please continue to pray for **Nancy Deetz**. She came home from the hospital but continues to struggle with feeling poorly. Please keep her in prayer as she heals and strengthens.

Please keep **Jane Frey** and her dear friend and companion, Jack Kiscoan, in your prayers. Jack was in a bad accident Tuesday night and is in Bergan Mercy. He will be having several surgeries this week due to his injuries. They are both surrounded by family and friends at the hospital but would appreciate many prayers.

Don Geiger is staying in a memory care facility in Palm Springs, and **Louise** plans to live there and visit every day. Their children also live close by. Please keep them in your prayers.

Keith & Reva Karstens ask for your prayers as Keith prepares for a surgical procedure called a laminectomy to address a spinal injury next Thursday, March 20. He will be at MD West and may go to an intensive inpatient rehab afterward. Please pray for all to go well and for peace of mind for both of them.

Artist Statement

Mary & Martha, Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Luke 10:38-42

On the Cover



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Growing up, I felt I had to decide whether I was a Mary or a Martha. I never identified with Martha because the culturally-prescribed roles of a woman were my weakness, and I didn't identify with Mary either because she seemed more earnest than I felt.

Diving into the Greek of this text helped me work through my very well-worn opinions to find some nuance. Martha's work was not limited to cooking and cleaning; the Greek word used for her many tasks is *διακονία* which also means "service, ministering, and promoting religion." With this layered meaning in mind, it is clear to me that Jesus' response is not about Martha's ministry, but her preoccupation with Mary.

I think the most pivotal shift in translation is found in v. 42 where it is often translated, "Mary has chosen the better part." When you look at the Greek, however, it can also be translated as, "a good portion" or "a useful share."⁸ In light of this, I believe Jesus is not offering a value judgment between them, but assuaging Martha's worry by affirming that Mary is doing a good portion of the work too.

Mary sits at the feet of Jesus, a place that was reserved for men. I wonder if Martha was concerned about what might happen to Mary for being out of "her place." Jesus' response is radical because he affirms she has chosen a good portion of the work, and even though she is not where she is expected to be, no one can take that away from her. Jesus protects her right to assume the position of a disciple.

In this image, Mary eagerly reaches toward Jesus. Her clothing is patterned with mustard seeds and flowers because her faith may seem small, but her boundary-breaking faithfulness will nurture her faith to grow beyond what seems possible. Martha reaches toward Mary to pull her into more "appropriate" work. Martha's dress is patterned with open hands to image her vital ministry of welcome, service, and cultivating space for Jesus' message to take root. I imaged Jesus equally affirming both Mary and Martha's lived-out faiths. He is green, the combination of Mary and Martha's colors (yellow + blue), showing that he embodies the integration of both faith and works.



Wildfire

I can picture it—salty sweat, accumulating in her bangs. The scent of toasted sesame seeds, crushed oregano, sumac, and cumin. Flour on her hands, painting streaks of white in her hair when she ties it back. The sweet date she samples—the way it stretches and clings to the back of her teeth, leaving the taste of honey in her mouth.

I can picture Martha in that kitchen, plating meals, eager to see their eyes close. Their heads nod. To hear the swell of approval that rises from their lips. And I can picture her sister. Brows scrunched. Fingers fidgeting, wishing for a pen, for paper, for a way to write it down. I can see her mouth part like a fish in the air, questions forming and reforming on her curious lips. I can see her lean in, knees tucked, eyes bright. I can see her imagining the world he dreamed of.

And I can picture how,
for generations, this story of two brazen women in scripture, a story of two women so close to Jesus, may have felt like an untamed wildfire. I can picture the way we put these women in boxes. I can imagine how people saw their full hearts, their untamed energy, and decided to label that as good and bad, better and worse. I can imagine how Martha's questions were interpreted as nagging, or the interruption interpreted as needy.

I can picture how it happened,
but what if it was all more beautiful than that? What if these sisters discovered a ministry of cooking? What if they discovered the faithfulness of learning, the kind of friendship that allows you to ask questions, or something in between?

I can imagine it. Can you?



Lenten Season

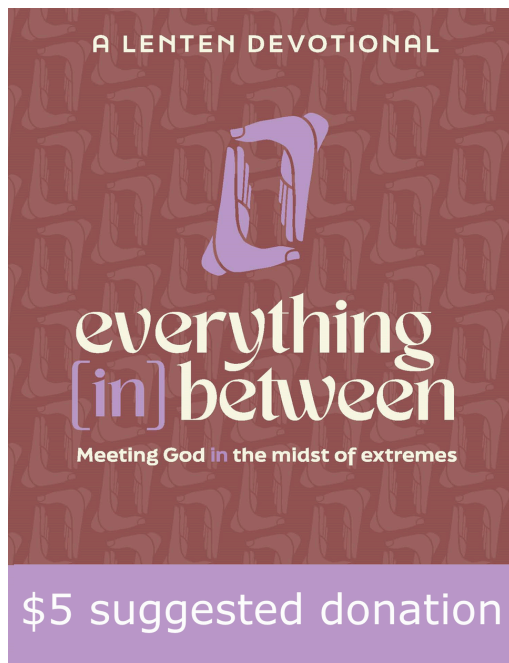
- Labyrinth Prayer Walk: through Thursday, April 17
- Art Walk: through Thursday, April 17
- Poetry Journey: through Sunday, April 20

Sundays, March 9 through April 13

- Contemplative Lenten Taizé Worship, 8:30 a.m.
- Traditional, Jazz and Communion Worship, 10 a.m.

Mondays, March 24, 31 & April 7

- Discover Awe Book Study, 12 p.m.



Holy Week

Sunday, April 13, Palm Sunday

- Procession, 9:45 a.m.
- Service, 10 a.m.

Friday, April 18 - Good Friday

- *Tenebrae* Service, 7 p.m.

Easter

Sunday, April 20 - Easter Sunday

- Sunrise Service, 7 a.m.
- Worship Service, 9 a.m.
- Easter Brunch & Egg Hunt, 10-11 a.m.
- Worship Service, 11 a.m.



Scan the QR code or visit countrysideucc.org/lent for the complete Lenten and Easter Guide

Sunday Flowers This Week

Flowers were given today by Gloria Ried
in memory of Glenn Ried.