

# Countryside Community Church

## WORSHIP



*There is Good*, Hannah Garrity, [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

## Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 22, 2026

† 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)**

Adam Witte

**PRELUDE**

*Tell Me Something Good*

Stevie Wonder

**WELCOME**

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

**†CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: God meets us in the places where love and sacrifice take root.

**Many: We come ready to follow the path that leads to life.**

One: Even when the road ahead is difficult, grace is already at work.

**Many: We worship the God whose love makes all things new.**

**†PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: The Peace of God be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

*Peace I leave with you:*

my peace I give you. I do not give to you as  
the world gives. Do not let your hearts be  
troubled and do not be afraid. ~ John 14:27

**†HYMN OF RESPONSE**

Hymn #656 *God of Freedom, God of Justice*

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

Heather Moran

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

**SUNG RESPONSE**

***Go Now in Peace (x 2)***

**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: John 8:2-11

Reader: Joyce Davis

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and, making her stand before all of them, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, sir." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again."

## MUSICAL REFLECTION

*There's A Wideness In God's Mercy*  
Countryside Choir

Thomas Wesley

## SECOND LESSON: Matthew 23:23

Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others."

**MESSAGE** *The good news is...rooted in justice, mercy & faithfulness* Rev. Dr. Jenny Shultz-Thomas

# Responding to the Word

## PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Mother and 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**

Adam Witte

Please find the QR code within the bulletin or at the Spotlight table in the narthex for more information about how to support our community partners this month through The Box and Fingerprints and also to contribute to Countryside's annual mission spending plan (budget). Countryside is 100% dependent on member giving to support the mission and ministries of our church. We are grateful for all the ways you give to sustain our vibrant and welcoming community!

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)****Generous God,****we offer these gifts as signs of our gratitude and trust in you.****Bless them and use them to bring hope, healing, and justice into the world.****May our lives, like these offerings, be given in love for the sake of others. Amen.***Sending***†SENDING HYMN**Hymn #486 *Who Is My Mother, Who Is My Brother?***†BENEDICTION****POSTLUDE***Watersign*

Jeff Lorber

Countryside Community Church Choir - Adam Witte, director  
Diane Hill, organ and piano - Matt Wallace, saxophone - Rick Avard, piano  
Greg Ahl, drums - Steve Gomez, bass

**Countryside  
Giving**

Give a little, help a lot! Scan the QR code to support Countryside's mission, Easter Offering, The Box and Fingerprints. Your generosity keeps our community warm, welcoming and full of life!



# 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 am 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 the church office at 402.391.0350 or email [office@countrysideucc.org](mailto:office@countrysideucc.org).*

## **Prayers of Gratitude for the following Joys:**

March is a transitional month blending spiritual introspection with natural renewal, heavily featuring the Lenten season. Lent calls for renouncing the pursuit of power, focusing instead on faithfulness and trust in God's, rather than seeking control. It is a time for quiet reflection, removing personal "logs" (faults) before addressing others' issues.

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

Please surround **Dan Loven-Crum** and his family with prayers of comfort following the death of Dan's mother on March 14.

Prayers of comfort for the family of **Carol Burhenne**, a longtime member, who died on March 6.

Prayers of comfort for the family of **Jody Hobson** (mother of **Chris Gruttemeyer** and grandmother of **Tyler Gruttemeyer**), who died on her 98th birthday, March 16. Her funeral will be held here on March 27.

Prayers for **Marcy (Joel) Patton**, who has been diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and is undergoing chemotherapy.

**Margie and Glenn Phillips** ask for prayers for their 8-year-old granddaughter, Divina, who has neurofibromatosis. She has tumors growing at the top of her cervical spine and is currently undergoing testing. Her parents will soon meet with a surgeon to schedule a spinal fusion.

Prayers for **Derek (Sarah) Miller** as he continues chemotherapy for testicular cancer.

# Fifth Sunday of Lent

the good news is...rooted in justice, mercy & faithfulness



## There is Good

Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Matthew 23:23

18"x18" Hand-dyed and collaged newspaper with paper lace overlay

In this series of scriptures, gathered crowds drew my attention.\* Jesus always drew a crowd, but so did the voices of hate in his time. In our current historic moment, this dichotomy of crowds for justice and crowds for injustice confounds me. Are all crowds worthy of joining? In the background of this piece, I dyed and collaged together

torn newspaper, representing the fabric of the world, to portray the cacophony of crowds gathering. What is drawing them in? Is everything that compels us to gather right and good? No.

The clarity comes in this scripture: "For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith" (Matthew 23:23). Most especially, in the context of Jesus denouncing the scribes and Pharisees, the crucial point is that gathering to enact justice is good and gathering to enact injustice *is not*.

The crowd depicted in this artwork is inspired by the 100,000 who gathered strong in Budapest, Hungary, in June, 2025. The Hungarian parliament had outlawed Pride as part of a larger systemic effort to take away the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community in Hungary, and a "wider effort to curb democratic freedoms ahead of a hotly contested national election next year."\*\*

In the four corners of the artwork, symbols of justice, mercy, and faithfulness echo the clarity of Jesus. Gathering for justice is the work of the gospel. **Hannah Garrity**

## Look

*If you could place yourself in this image, where would you be and why?*

\*In Matthew 23, Jesus is preaching to the crowds and disciples, denouncing the hypocrisy of many religious leaders.

\*\* Rutai, Lili. "Tens of thousands defy Hungary's ban on Pride in protest against Orbán." *The Guardian*. June 28, 2025. [theguardian.com/world/2025/jun/28/tens-of-thousands-defy-hungarys-ban-on-pride-in-protest-against-orban](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jun/28/tens-of-thousands-defy-hungarys-ban-on-pride-in-protest-against-orban).