LENTEN EARLY MORNING PRAYER **MARCH 4, 2026**

6:30 – 6:40am: Praise Song

-During this time, we will learn a new praise song that invites us to open our hearts before God

Before the Throne of God Above - Shane and Shane
https://youtu.be/BX-YH8qBbc0
Songwriters: Charite Bancroft

Before the throne of God above
I have a strong and a perfect plea
A great high priest, whose name is Love
Who ever lives and pleads for me

My name is graven on his hands
My name is written on his heart
I know that while in heaven he stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart
No tongue can bid me thence depart

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within
Upward I look and see him there
Who made an end of all my sin

Because a sinless savior died
My sinful soul is counted free
For God, the Just, is satisfied
To look on him and pardon me
To look on him and pardon me

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, praise the one
Risen son of God

Behold him there, the risen lamb
My perfect spotless righteousness
The great unchangeable I am
The king of glory and of grace

One in himself, I cannot die
My soul is purchased by his blood
My life is hid with Christ on high
With Christ, my savior and my God
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6:40 – 6:50am: Scripture Reading & Devotional

Today's reading comes from John 9:26-41.

We continue with the debate between the healed blind man and the religious authorities. And here is the climax of the argument – the moment that reveals how truly blind the religious authorities are and how truly the healed blind man can now see.
For the fifth (or sixth, or seventh?) time, the authorities are asking this man about who and how he was healed. And the man responds sarcastically – "do you want to become his disciples, too?" It was common practice for those studying the Scriptures to repeat them multiple times. To sit and discuss with others the same precepts over and over to gain understanding. Obviously, the authorities do not want to become disciples of Jesus.

And here is the proof in the pudding, they claim that they know God spoke to Moses but don't know if God spoke to Jesus. And the healed blind man calls them out on their false faith.

If they truly believed God has spoken to Moses, then why did they not recognize that is the same God who is working through Jesus? The same God the authorities claim to believe is precisely a God who listens to the one who worships Him. That line (in verse 31) is taken almost directly out of the Old Testament. It's littered throughout the Psalms. It's the refrain on the prophets' lips. And here is where the healed blind man can truly see - he sees and believes that the miracle and the healing comes only from God, performed through Jesus who is sent by God and does God's will.

Conversely, the authorities are truly blind. They accuse the man of being born in sin. Remember back when the chapter began and the disciples asked Jesus the question – "who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Yet, regardless of whether it was him or his parents, the authorities have now judged and condemned this man to be full of sins.

And at the end, it is decision time. We, the readers, who have watched the healing, have peeped in on the debate, how will we respond to Jesus?
The healed blind man has made his decision. He will choose to believe.
What will we choose?
Will we come to the cross, laying down our own pride and asking for the ability to see as Jesus sees? Or will we remain stubborn, thinking that we can see perfectly find without God, and reject Jesus?

6:50 – 7:10am: Prayer

First, pray for peace around the world. Specifically, we continue to lift up the middle east. There are hundreds of thousands affected by the violence and destruction there. Let us pray for lives lost and for healing for grieving families. For rescue and relief. Let us pray for the end of war.

Secondly, pray for our country. For the raising up of leaders who serve the whole people and not just big money interests. For the election of leaders who serve with morality and integrity.

Thirdly, pray for our church and its ministries. For the God's blessing so that we may make a difference in this community through growing in faith, through connections and serving God and others. For the courage and the ability to live into God's purpose for our church.

Lastly, pray for us as we come to the cross to surrender to Jesus. To ask where we have been blind and ask for forgiveness and healing. For boldness of faith to proclaim belief in Jesus.

7:10 – to whenever: Personal prayer time

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