

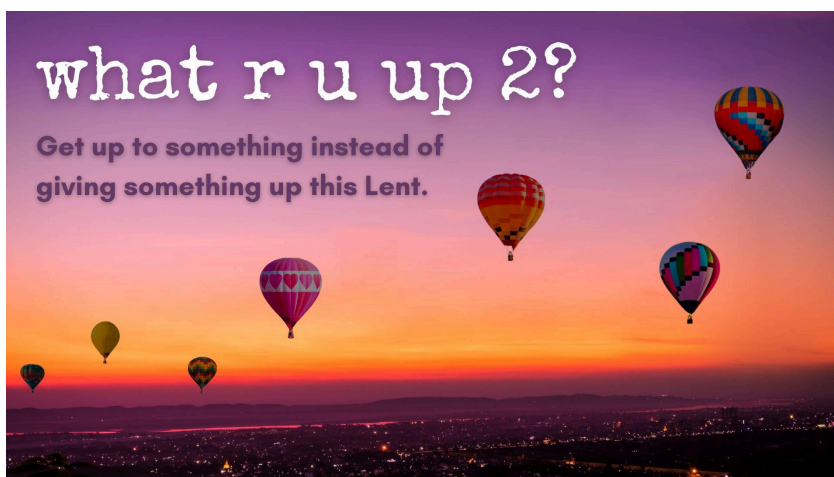
## March 17, 2024 Worship Guide

### 5th Sunday of Lent

Co-Pastors: Rev. Ron Harris and Rev. Karla Sheffy

**Worship Musicians:** Sue Woods, Cheryl Doty & Abby Worley

**Ministry of Music:** Sue Woods & Cheryl Doty



### Gathering Up Music

#### Welcome - Welcoming - Ed Bashaw

Welcome to our KVOE listeners and to those watching online.

My name is Ed Bashaw, and this morning I am your worship reader.

Welcome to Emporia First United Methodist Church. We are all beloved children of God. Together, we are a Christian community committed to accepting, valuing, and loving all. We seek to live, grow, and serve as Jesus taught us: loving one another, transforming lives, and making disciples. Let us now worship.

**Prelude** and Lighting the Candles - **Acolyte:** Lucy Barrett

#### Confession/Assurance - Rev. Karla Sheffy

*"You Raise Me Up"*

"When nothing else would help, love lifted me!" says the old Gospel song. To be lifted up is to be drawn into the love of God. Jesus drew all kinds of people to him during his short tenure on earth, drawing no boundaries for who was invited into that love. As his hour to die drew nearer, he spread the message that all things would be enveloped in his love even after he was gone. What uplifting message will we pass on to others?

When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary  
When troubles come and my heart burdened be  
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence  
Until You come and sit awhile with me

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas  
I am strong, when I am on Your shoulders  
You raise me up to more than I can be  
*[underscoring may continue]*

Let us pray together:

Amazing God of Grace, you offer each one of us

a life-changing love that leaves no one out.  
Sometimes our hearts feel so heavy  
that we struggle to rise up and claim it.  
In this moment of quiet, we lift up to you  
those things we'd like to give up for good...  
for the sake of The Good.

### *Meditative Moment*

Hear assurance in what the Psalmist proclaims:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me...Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. (*Psalms 51, excerpts*)

In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.  
In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.  
Glory to God, Amen!

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas  
I am strong, when I am on Your shoulders  
You raise me up to more than I can be

### **The Peace - Rev. Karla Sheffy**

As a people forgiven and freed, we reach out to lift others up, offering the peace of Christ.  
Peace be with you!  
And also with you!

### **Opening Song**

**"Love Lifted Me"**

**W&S 3101**

### **What's Up? with Children - Rev. Karla Sheffy**

I'm gonna believe that you are up to something good  
I'm gonna believe that you are up to something good  
When I can't understand the things that happen in my life  
I'm gonna believe that you are up to something good

### **The Word Uplifts — Ed Bashaw**

*Scripture* John 12: 20-33

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew, then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain, but if it dies it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor. "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say: 'Abba, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Abba, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this

world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

**Music for Soaring**

**“In Christ Alone”**

**Sue Woods & Cheryl Doty**  
**Piano Duet**

**Sermon**

**“Lift Up”**

**Rev. Ron Harris**

**Up to Something Good—Rev. Karla Sheffy “Let My Prayers Rise Up”**  
**“Let My Prayer Rise Up”**

Let my prayer rise up  
like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands  
as an offering to you.

**Let my prayer rise up  
like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands  
as an offering to you.**

We seek your vision, O God, to restore our sight so that we may see all people and all things as connected to you and forever redeemed by your love. We ask for you to make your presence known among us and to lift our spirits high with your hope and joy, and we pray that we can be “up to something good” for ourselves, our neighborhoods, and our world. And so this week we start with thanksgiving for these acts of uplifting goodness:

**Let my prayer rise up  
like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands  
as an offering to you.**

We call upon you, O God, to incline your ear and extend your love and healing power for these laments:

**Let my prayer rise up  
like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands  
as an offering to you.**

We call upon you, O God, to give us the strength and courage to be up to something good for the sake of The Good. In this moment — in our mind’s eye — we imagine and offer our commitment to one small thing this week that will lift someone up, elevate and affirm the good when we see it, and bring a bit more calm or joy where we are. And if we find we are not up to it, we pray we can accept the goodness of others and feel your encouraging love.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray...

**Lord’s Prayer**

**Let my prayer rise up  
like incense before you,  
the lifting up of my hands  
as an offering to you.**

**Offering—Uplifting Messages of Support - Rev. Karla Sheffy**

During this series, we will offer our support for our church activities, mission, and budget in the usual ways, but we will also be creating a visual installation featuring “uplifting messages” to the world. As we listen to our Offertory music, you are invited to write a message that you want to put

out into the world on the card insert. We will gather these... We will be adding these to our hot air balloon throughout the season [for use in our social media and for display on Easter Sunday outside the church].

### **Doxology**

**Offertory Prayer - Rev. Karla Sheffy**

Spirit of Encouragement, we ask you to glorify and grow these gifts up from seeds of potential into the fuel needed to raise up our community, lifting the spirits of all to new heights offering life-giving hope where needed most.

### **Closing Hymn**

**“To God Be the Glory”**

**UMH 98**

**Announcements - Rev. Karla Sheffy**

**Blessing for the Journey - Rev. Ron Harris**

And so now go forth with no limits on love,  
imagining a mighty Spirit wind beneath your wings  
that will raise you up to new heights  
and give you the assurance  
that you have all you need to be up to something.

When someone asks you, “What are you up to?” you can respond,  
**“With God’s help, I’m up to something good!”**

Let the people say, Amen!

**Amen!**

### **Postlude**