

Willow Springs Worship February 28, 2021 LENT #1

FOCUS

We are transformed by God as we follow God's voice along the path of life, a voice calling us to deep commitment. Even when our path leads deep into unfamiliar woods, as we lose ourselves, we are found.

Thematic Slide Show

Welcome

Call to Worship

One: God, you ask us to set our minds on you, to walk before you and be blameless.
You teach us what matters, and you do not hide your face from us.

**Many: With each step along the path, we are transformed
into who you made and called us to be.**

One: God, you teach us that when we lose our life, we save it.

Many: With each step along the path, we hope against hope in your promises.

One: God, you say you will make us exceedingly fruitful, that you will bless us.

Many: With each step along the path, we take up our cross and follow you.

**All: *We believe your everlasting covenant is to be God to us,
and that we will live forever.
We call out to you, as you call us deeper into this covenant.***

Song

Prayer of Confession and Assurance

Many: Deep calls to deep.

We call to you from the depths of our hearts.

One: We confess when we have stayed on the edges.

Not listening to each other.

Not taking the path you show.

We confess when we have strayed from the way.

Silencing suffering.

Forfeiting life.

(Silence. Or name the forces that keep us from deep commitment.)

Deep calls to deep.

You call to us from the depth of your love.

Many: Calling us to deep commitment.

We come to you, God.

Song

Children's time

Scripture: Genesis 15:1-5; 17:1-7, 15-17

Sermon: Sarah and Abraham a Walk of Commitment

Possible questions for reflection and response:

- How is God calling you to deep commitment?
- What do you sense God calling you to commit to more deeply?

Song

Sharing/Pastoral prayer

Offering our lives/song

Announcements - Discussion time following worship on **Sunday, February 28.**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFinFW3_shs&feature=youtu.be

SENDING BLESSING

Go deep into the woods of your week, knowing that you are called to the kind of commitment that will not leave you comfortable. Our God is not to be fully known or neatly packaged. Be ever ready for the transformation that accompanies deep commitment. Go, expecting surprise. Amen.

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Genesis 15:1-5 The Lord's Covenant With Abram

15 After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield,¹
your very great reward.²"

² But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit³ my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir." ⁵ He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring⁴ be."

Genesis 17 The Covenant of Circumcision

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty¹; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. ² Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

³ Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, ⁴ "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. ⁵ No longer will you be called Abram¹; your name will be Abraham,¹ for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶ I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. ⁷ I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

¹⁵ God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. ¹⁶ I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

¹⁷ Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"

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GOING DEEPER 2021

As you continue through Lenten worship this year, consider what other practices might help you go deeper with God and with one another.

Consider ways of “going deeper.”

Into Our Stories: Either throughout the week, share prayer requests with one other person and to pray for each other.

Into Scripture: Encourage at-home engagement with the Scripture texts throughout the week, such as reading, practicing *lectio divina* or guided meditations, writing/creating artistic responses, and sharing those creations on Sundays.

Into Silence: As we dwell on what we find to be most essential, deep at our core, bravely embrace silence in life, not filling every transition, not narrating every moment.

Into the Past: When this season of Lent comes around, pay attention to the anniversaries that your congregation is remembering, and consider how they need to be tended. How is your worship different this year from last year at this time? What events of 2020 are you remembering? What losses is your community grieving? What new discoveries fill you with gratitude? What has God revealed in these times? Make space to reflect on these things.

Into Voices Together: Page through the new hymnal reading the text of songs that catch for eye, sing familiar songs and hum the tunes to new ones. Use a bookmark to keep track of how far you have explored.