

FIRST UNITED  
METHODIST  
CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO  
(269) 381-6340 † www.umc-kzo.org

February 25, 2024  
10 am



SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

# COMMUNITY:

**Sacred relationship with God and one another**

MARK 1:9-15

We would like to connect with you.

Please fill out the attendance pad and introduce yourself as you pass it to your neighbor. You are invited in these beginning moments to use the green prayer cards found in the pews. During the opening hymn, ushers will collect the prayer cards to be shared with clergy.

*\* Please rise in body or in spirit*

**PRELUDE**    *Our Father in Heaven*

H. Scheidemann

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** (praying responsively)

Jonathan Townley

One: We gather for worship today as a community called by Jesus Christ to worship.

**All: We gather finding sacred relationship with God and one another.**

One: This is where our stories and God's story are woven together.

**All: In our worship today, as we participate in the baptism of one of our youngest disciples, and as we hear of God's work through the lives and the hands of this community, may all our lives be woven with God's story.**

**\*OPENING HYMN #2137**    *Would I Have Answered When You Called*

(FWS)

**WELCOME**

Rev. Matt Weiler

**COVENANT OF BAPTISM FOR HAZEN LINDSTROM** (see blue insert)

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**We are a Reconciling Congregation, welcoming all.**

First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo invites all persons to join us on our journey of faith. Jesus Christ calls us to be an inclusive church that exemplifies the kingdom of God. We strive to move toward reconciling relationships with all, affirming those who are marginalized for any reason, including sexual orientation or gender identity.

We welcome all with *open hearts, open minds, open doors.*

**CALL TO CONFESSION** - verse 1 (sing two times)



1. O - pen our hearts and our minds to your love. Let us  
2. For - give us our fail - ings, our fears and our doubts. Let us



seek your grace and wis - dom.  
seek your love and com - pas - sion.

Text & tune by J. Stilger ©2024

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Merciful God, we confess that we claim to follow Jesus but have not taken his path of sacrificial love. We profess to be disciples, but we are not willing to bear the cost of discipleship. We affirm the virtue of self-denial, but we indulge our selfish desires and seek earthly gain. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for sincere repentance through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**REFRAIN** (see above) Verse 2 of *Call to Confession* (sing two times)

**ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

**LIGHTING THE PEACE CANDLE AND STORY**

Vickee Seals (Co-Lay Leader)

One: Each one of us has an individual story.  
All: **A story that is living, unfolding, and continually created anew.**  
One: Our faith community has a collective story  
All: **entwining our individual stories together and weaving with God’s story.**  
One: The Holy Spirit is guiding and shaping our story  
All: **and there is much more to be discovered and lived.**  
One: We dwell in a story that in the end is filled with hope, resurrection, life,  
and love eternal.  
All: **This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.**  
One: As we journey through Lent and seek the Easter dawn,  
All: **may we dedicate our stories to being the kingdom of God here on earth.**  
One: It is a story to be told and celebrated. - in the light of this good news, let us  
stand in body or in spirit to share the peace of Christ.

**\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

**ANTHEM** *Give Me Jesus*  
Laurie Nelson, soloist

trad spiritual arr. Jester Hairston

**A READING FROM THE REV. DR. WILLIE JENNINGS**

**\*GOSPEL READING** Mark 8:31-38

This is what the Spirit is saying to the church  
**Thanks be to God.**

**MESSAGE** *Sacred Relationship with God and One Another*

Rev. Matt Weiler

**HYMN #2226** *Bind Us Together*

(FWS - black hymnal)

**DREAM KEEPERS STORY**

Chris Stamper

**CALL TO OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** *Kum Ba Yah*

arr. John Behnke

**\*THE DOXOLOGY**



Praise God, the Wea - ver of our days. In ev - ery thread God's  
love dis - played. To Christ, the Son, our prais - es  
soar. Wea - ving our stor - ies ev - er - more.

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (praying together)

Loving God, Jesus asked the question, “What would it profit us to gain the world and yet forfeit our lives?” As we dedicate this offering to you let us trust in your grace and your provision, and may these gifts we bring bear witness to the sacred community you have formed, where our collective lives are woven together to tell the story of a radical love.

**OUR SHARED LIFE**

**\*HYMN #415** *Take Up Thy Cross*

(UMH-red hymnal)

**BLESSING .**

**POSTLUDE** *Preambulum in d*

H. Scheidemann

† A Lenten practice suggestion from *The Poetry of Lent* devotional booklet, available at the Welcome Center or get an electronic copy. Please email [jcelorio@umc-kzo.org](mailto:jcelorio@umc-kzo.org) for more information.

Experiment with a “criticism fast,” refraining from disparaging yourself and others, thereby making room for words of support and appreciation.



## **WORSHIP LEADERS**

Rev. Matt Weiler, Julia Librizzi, Jonathan Townley

**Director of Music**      **Organist**

Jacqueline Stilger      Bernie Foulk

**Audio-Visual Team:** Bryan Heany, Drew Eaton,  
Lucas McGinnis, Thom Victor

**Acolytes:** Grace Harthorn and Lilly Nolan

## **INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE**

In our worship, we strive to witness to the wholeness of God, embracing the diversity of images of God that are found within Scriptures. We will seek to include male, female, and gender-neutral language and imagery for God, and utilize language that helps to avoid binary terms in pronouns and images of people. In our hymns and liturgy, we invite you to use pronouns that best express your practice and affirm your faith.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Retirement Reception.** Please join us after church in the PERKS area today for a Retirement Reception for long-time Director of Business Administration, Ruth LaMachia. There will be a basket for your cards and notes. This is an opportunity to come together in community to celebrate and thank Ruth for her many years of dedicated service.

**Community Homeworks.** Chris Praedel, the Executive Director of Community Homeworks, one of our former Dream Team partner organizations, will be leading a class today after worship in the Parlor. Join us to learn how this non-profit organization assists homeowners in our community make critical home repairs, as well as how our church has helped in this mission over the past few years.

**Faith Milestones.** A group for 3rd through 5th graders only. Faith Milestones are those firsts as we grow in our faith. Faith Milestones is happening today at 6:00 pm. Contact Julia, [jlibrizzi@umc-kzo.org](mailto:jlibrizzi@umc-kzo.org) for more information.

**Community Health.** Acknowledging a community rise in illness of all sorts, please feel welcome to wear a mask while at church.

**Easter Flowers.** As we prepare to celebrate Easter, we would like to extend an invitation for you to remember your loved ones by providing Easter tulips for the floral decoration on Easter Sunday or by giving a monetary gift to the church Memorial Fund. Forms are the pink insert and may be left at the Welcome Center. Each tulip plant is \$6

**Organ Recitals** - Thursdays at noon during Lent. This Thursday, February 29, we welcome Christoph Hintermüller, Music Director, St. Mary Catholic Church, Marshall, MI . Please join us!

## **Adult Sunday School Opportunities.**

**The New Storyteller!** 9:00 am in room 304.

**Searching for Peace in the Middle East.** The class is taking a break today so all may hear from Chris Praedel of Community Homeworks during the Sunday School Hour. The Lenten class will resume on March 3 and run through March 24 (Palm Sunday). John Clark will lead the discussion in the Parlor.

**Family Foundations:** 11:15 am - Room 209

**Anti-Bias/Anti-Racist.** As part of Kalamazoo First United Methodist Church's vow to resist oppression in all its forms we, the Church Council, commit ourselves to the decisive action that is needed to resist and dismantle racism at every level. This action must go beyond our historically empty rhetoric about repentance and broken promises to be a church that is a credible and active witness for peace, equity and justice in the face of harm visited upon communities of color. We beckon our clergy and lay leadership to unapologetically shine the light of truth on our church community so that we recognize our complicity in systemic racism, recognize and condemn white supremacy as sin, and seek a deep knowing of what God calls us to do. We make these vows so that every person – especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) – may live in safety, health, and freedom.

**Splendid Suppers for Seven!** Sign-up will continue at the welcome desk for the Splendid Suppers for Seven. Suppers will begin in March and carry into April. Hosts have volunteered to open their homes to groups of seven. Plan to choose a date that works for you, and then anticipate a postcard in the mail with details, including the main course and your dish-to-pass assignment!

**Cookbooks.** Do you know someone who is looking to expand their culinary repertoire? Or someone just beginning to explore the joys of cooking? There are currently more than 50 cookbooks waiting for a new home in the bookcase located in the East lobby. Please feel free to browse and re-home one...or two...



**UPCOMING WORSHIP**

Sunday, March 3

**10:00 am Worship**

Rev. Julie Kline

*Third Sunday of Lent: Bent on  
Mercy*

John 2: 13-22

Sunday, March 10

**10:00 am Worship**

Rev. Matt Weiler

*Justice: Restoration of Equity and  
Wholeness*

John 3: 14-21

**We're glad you are our guest today!**

If you are worshipping with us for the first time, please stop by the Welcome Center.

**Child care** with trained and fully vaccinated staff is provided on the second floor for infants through three-year-olds.

**Worship activities for children** can be found on a cart outside the side sanctuary doors.

**LARGE print** Bibles and Hymnals are available at the Park Street entrance.

**Hearing assistance devices** are available at the Welcome Center.

**Today's service is being livestreamed and recorded.** You can request a free

copy of the DVD from the office. You can

find previous worship services on our

website: <http://www.umc-kzo.org/mp3.asp>.

You may view worship services on our

YouTube channel: [YouTube.com/c/](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCALAMAZOOfirstunitedmethodistchurch)

[KALAMAZOOfirstunitedmethodistchurch](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCALAMAZOOfirstunitedmethodistchurch)

**Church Staff**

Rev. Julie Kline.....Lead Pastor

Rev. Matt Weiler ..... Comm. Formation

Ruth LaMachia . Church Business Admin

Jacqueline Stilger .....Director of Music

Julia Librizzi.....Children & Families

Thom Victor..... Technology Specialist

Bernie Foulk.....Organist

Andrew Bolton..... Bldg. Superintendent

Christine Landreville.....Office Manager

Walt Whitfield..... Bookkeeper

Christiane Stakely .....Office Assistant

Jose Celorio ... Communications Coord.

Michael Lee..... Custodian

Andrew Weare ..... Building Hospitality

Ava Loncharte ..... Building Hospitality

Jonathan Townley ..... Youth/YA Intern

**OUR MISSION**

We are called to

Experience God's love

Celebrate God's love

Share God's love

**OUR VISION**

We are a Christ-centered

community where our stories are

woven with God's story.

**OUR VALUES**

Love: God is Love and all

creation is made in love,

by love, for love.

Community: Sacred relationship

with God and one another.

Inclusion: All identities belong

and are loved in Christ.

Justice: Restoration of equity and

wholeness.

**THIS WEEK'S EVENTS**

**Sunday, February 25**

10:00 am Sunday Worship - Sanctuary

11:15 am Sunday School for all ages

11:15 am Retirement Reception - Perks

6:00 pm Youth Group - Youth Center

6:00 pm Faith Milestones - Arches

**Monday, February 26**

11:30 am Prayer Group - Chapel

**Tuesday, February 27**

9:30 am Worship Planning - Zoom

9:45 am Book Club - Chapel

12:30 pm Facilities Mtg- Parlor

4:15 pm First Beats - Choir Room

6:30 pm Manna - Youth Center

**Wednesday, February 28**

9:00 am Dawn Patrol - Parlor

12:00 pm Cuppa Inspiration - Facebook Live

12:30 pm Food Pantry

3:00 pm HON - Zoom

**Thursday, February 29**

9:30 am First Stitchers - Fellowship Room

12:00 pm Lenten Organ Recital - Sanctuary

6:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal - Wesley Hall

7:15 pm Chancel Singers - Choir Room

**Friday March 1**

**Saturday March 2**

**Sunday, March 3**

9:00 am The New Storyteller - Rm 304

10:00 am Sunday Worship - Sanctuary

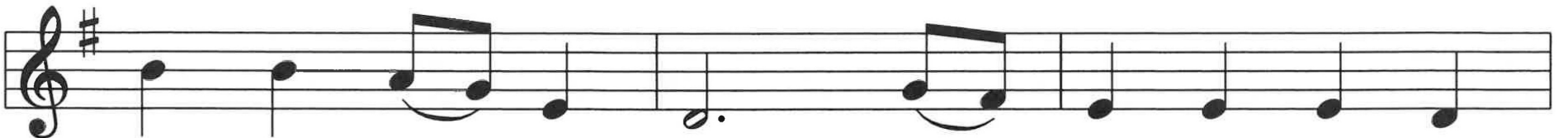
11:15 am Sunday School for all ages

6:00 pm Youth Group - Youth Center

# Would I Have Answered When You Called



1. Would I have an - swered when you called, "Come,
2. Would I have fol - lowed where you led through
3. Would I have matched my step with yours when
4. O Christ, I can - not search my heart through



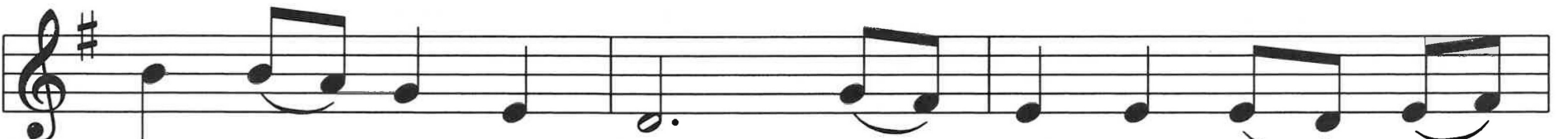
fol - low, fol - low me!"? Would I at once have  
an - cient Gal - i - lee, on roads un - known, by  
crowds cried, "Cru - ci - fy!" when on a rock - y  
all its tan - gled ways, nor can I with a



left be - hind both work and fam - i -  
ways un - tried, be - yond se - cu - ri -  
hill I saw a cross a - gainst the  
cer - tain mind my stead - fast - ness ap -



ly? Or would the old, fa - mil - iar round have  
ty? Or would I soon have hur - ried back where  
sky? Or would I too have slipped a - way and  
praise. I on - ly pray that when you call, "Come,



held me by its claim and kept the spark with -  
home and com - fort drew, where truth you taught would  
left you there a - lone, a dy - ing king with  
fol - low, fol - low me!" you'll give me strength be -



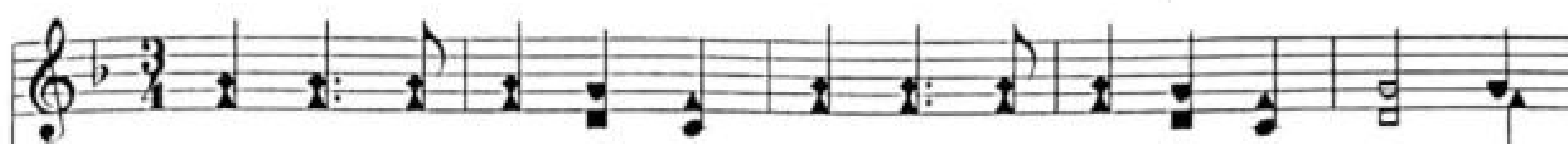


in my heart from burst - ing in - to flame?  
not dis - turb the or - dered world I knew?  
crown of thorns up - on a ter - rible throne?  
yond my own to fol - low faith - ful - ly.

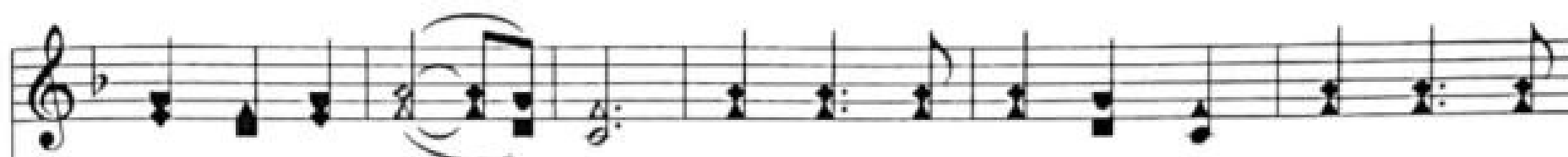
## Bind Us Together

F/A

*I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak. – Ezekiel 34:16*



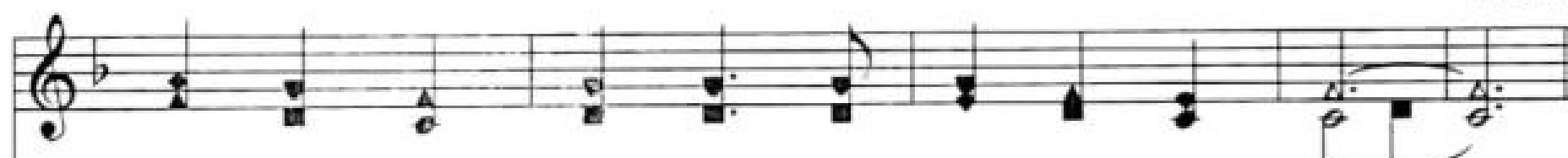
Bind us to - geth - er, Lord; Bind us to - geth - er with cords that



can - not be bro - ken. Bind us to - geth - er, Lord; Bind us to -



*FINE*



geth - er, Lord, Bind us to - geth - er with love.

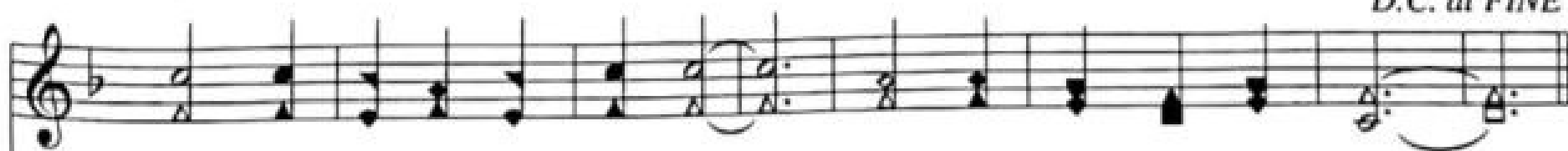


There is on - ly one God.

There is on - ly one King.



*D.C. al FINE*



There is on - ly one bod - y, That is why we can sing:



## Take Up Thy Cross

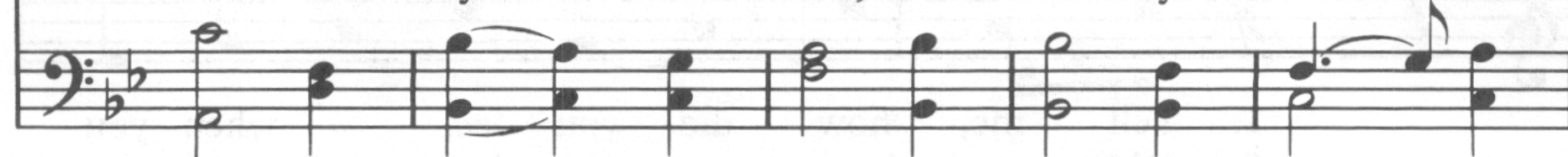
415



1. "Take up thy cross," the Sav - ior said, "if thou wouldst  
2. Take up thy cross, let not its weight fill thy weak  
3. Take up thy cross, nor heed the shame, nor let thy  
4. Take up thy cross and fol - low Christ, nor think till



my dis - ci - ple be; de - ny thy - self, the  
spir - it with a - larm; his strength shall bear thy  
fool - ish pride re - bel; thy Lord for thee the  
death to lay it down; for on - ly those who



world for - sake, and hum - bly fol - low af - ter me."  
spir - it up, and brace thy heart and nerve thine arm.  
cross en - dured, to save thy soul from death and hell.  
bear the cross may hope to wear the glo - rious crown.







We come to this water as a community.

**All: We come to this water to renew our love as siblings in Christ, and to renew our baptism in the death and resurrection of Christ.**

***Pastor to the congregation***

One: Do you, Christ's Body, the church, reaffirm your rejection of sin  
and your commitment to Christ?

**All: We do.**

One: Will you be living witnesses to the gospel, individually and together, wherever you are,  
and in all that you do?

**All: We will live as faithful members of the Body of Christ and serve as Christ's representatives in the world.**

One: Will you nurture one another in living the faith through the church and include Hazen  
in your care?

**All: With God's help we will embody the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

We will surround Hazen with faith, hope and love that he may grow in grace and faith and  
learn to trust God and live in loving service in the world. We will pray for him and walk with  
him on his journey of discipleship among us.

## ***Thanksgiving over the Water***

One: The Spirit of God is among us.

**All: The blessing of the Beloved is upon us!**

One: Let us pray. Loving, life-giving God.....

.... And gave us life that cannot die.

**All: The river of God is full of water, the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the heart of God.**

One: We who are baptized into Christ.....

.....we too might walk in newness of life.

**All: Born of water and the Spirit, may we enter the Realm of God as children of God, born not of human will, but of God.**

One: Pour out your Holy Spirit in this water and bless Hazen who receives it, that claimed by your Word, nourished in your grace, washed from all sin and borne by your Spirit, he may live in freedom, trust and courage, sharing in the eternal life of Christ.

**All: Hazen, you are God's Beloved, in whom God is well pleased.**

One: All reverence and delight is yours, infinite and loving God, now and forever.

**All: All praise to you, Eternal God, Creator Son and Holy Spirit, in the present moment and in eternity. Amen!**

## ***Baptism with Laying on of Hands.***

One: Let us welcome our new sibling in Christ.

**All: Hazen, Child of God, claimed by water and the Spirit, you are joined to God's new creation. We are one in Christ Jesus, sharing in Christ's royal priesthood. With joy and thanksgiving, we welcome you as a member of Christ's church. God bless you now and in eternal life.**

**Amen.**



# Willie James



# Jennings

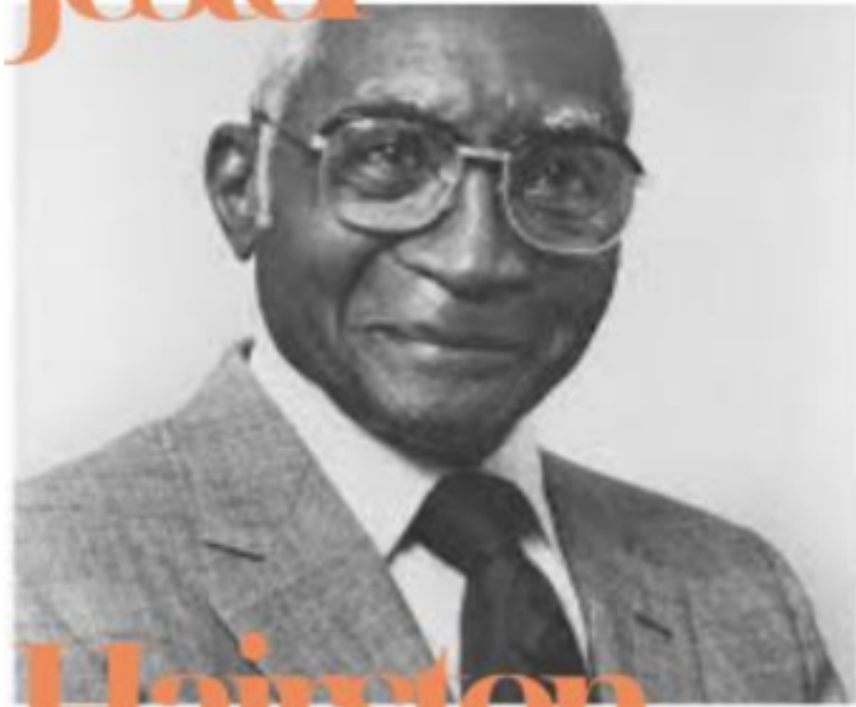
Willie James Jennings was born and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan, graduated from Calvin College, and now serves as the Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies at Yale Divinity School. Dr. Jennings's work highlights the ways in which white colonialist movements have dominated the Christian narrative and offers a compelling vision for radical transformation. A prolific author, his book, *The Christian Imagination: the Theology and Origins of Race* (Yale 2010) has won numerous awards and has been labeled a theological masterpiece. In the biographical introduction to this great work Jennings notes that as a child he was an enigma to his pastor for the barrage of challenging questions he would bring week after week. They were questions born from his budding

understanding of the gospel and a keen awareness of the conflict he was experiencing as a young black man in the highly segregated, and highly religiously Christian Grand Rapids. This experience and his academic rigor have given Jennings the voice of prophet, pastor, and teacher at this time.

We need at this moment a Christian faith that can start to break our deep connection to whiteness by resisting its vision of maturity...The paths that have been formed by whiteness, carved on the earth and in bodies, cannot be undone, but they can be redirected, drawn into new paths that lead away from death and into life. It all begins again with the land, with dirt, air, water, cities, towns, neighborhoods, and homes. It begins with new kinds of intentional communities that challenge where people live and how people live in places....it all comes to rest in geography and living spaces. Whiteness comes to rest in space. The maturity whiteness aims at always forms segregated spaces. It forms lives lived in parallel, whether separated by miles or inches. It constructs bordered life, life lived in separate endeavors of wish fulfillment.

Segregated spaces must be turned toward living places where people construct together an everyday that turns life in health-giving directions. Overcoming whiteness begins by reconfiguring life geographically so that all the flows work differently; the flows of money, education, support, and attention move across people who have been separated by the processes that have formed us racially, economically, and nationally. We start with the communities that have been left behind in the movement toward maturity, those no longer imagined through the goals of ownership, citizenship, or productive labor, and we join them, we move to them, or we stay in them, or we form them, or we advocate for them, or we protect them. The we here are the Christians and all those willing to live toward a different formation of places. We fight against the segregation that shapes our worlds, and we work to weave lives together...the point not to be missed is that we should feel compelled to form what Gerhard Lohfink many years ago called a contrast society by forming contrast communities. But that contrast must be formed on the actual ground in neighborhoods and living spaces. Indeed, this is what Christian mission at its best was always aiming at - following Jesus into new places to form new life together.

# Jester



# Hairston

On this final Sunday of Black History month, we will sing the traditional spiritual "Give me Jesus" arranged by the multitalented Jester Hairston. Hairston was among the first black students admitted to Tufts University in 1929 where he studied music and after graduation studied for a time at the Juilliard School of music. Eventually he went on to act and sing on Broadway, in numerous films, and on television shows. His compositions vary in genre from secular scores to arrangements of spirituals like the one we sing in worship today. In 1961 Hairston was appointed by the US State Department as a Goodwill Ambassador. From this role he led performances and lectures in high schools and around the world on the "folk music of the slaves." Hairston died at the age of 98 on January 18, 2000, in Los Angeles.