



Theme: The Art of Salvation – Jesus in the Gospel of Luke
“Salvation in Forgiveness”

Sermon preached by Jeff Huber, April 2-3, 2022, at Summit Church, Durango

Weekly Memory Verse:

⁹ Jesus responded, “Salvation has come to this home today... ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.” – Luke 19:9a and 10

VIDEO **Sermon Starter** (Luke 19:1-10 from Lumo Project
<https://www.bible.com/videos/25193-luke-19-1-27?collection=21>)

SLIDE **“Salvation in Forgiveness”**

This has always been one of my favorite Bible stories. I thought it was ironic and great that we had this lift in the sanctuary this week as we replace our lighting system. I thought it would be great if I could preach from the lift, like Zacchaeus was up in the tree, as I was short growing up and sometimes had a hard time seeing over the crowd. Not sure I cheated people out of lots of money, but I think this story of Zacchaeus can connect with anyone who feels far away from God.

GRAPHIC **Lift**

GRAPHIC **Jeff in Lift**

GRAPHIC **Jeff in Lift with leaves** (if possible)

All kidding aside, here is the first thing we learn about Zacchaeus that can be true for all of us. We all can feel far away from God, and from others, like we're up a tree and there is this chasm in front of us. Today we continue our journey through the season of Lent, the 40 days and seven Sundays before we get to Easter. We are inviting each of us to read through the gospel of Luke, and I encourage you to use our Meditation Moments each day to read through that gospel over the next seven weeks.

SLIDE **Salvation = "to be restored and made whole"**

Salvation is one of the key themes in Luke's gospel and we hear it spoken loud and clear by Jesus as he interacts with Zacchaeus, who was a despised tax collector and seen by his whole town as a sinner. Zacchaeus has this deep need inside of him to be restored and made whole, and the key to that for him is something Jesus offers to each of us who long to experience salvation: forgiveness. Here is the main point of today's message, which culminates in a meal that is the ultimate offer of salvation and forgiveness.

SLIDE **Forgiveness is key to being restored and made whole.**

The truth is that forgiveness is essential to our lives. We can't survive in a marriage without extending or asking for forgiveness. We can't see our working relationships prosper without forgiveness. We are not going to have any friends for the rest of our lives if we don't learn how to do forgiveness. We would move from one friendship to another because the truth is that something always happens in a relationship that causes brokenness or hurt, and someone needs to either offer forgiveness or seek it out and be willing to take the first step. Societies cannot stand unless there is willingness for people on the two sides of any given equation to forgive those they disagree with. We need this as cultures and nations as well or we would forever be locked in constant world wars.

I have often told you as your pastor that there are six words that we must be able to say in order to have long-lasting, sustained relationships. If we don't know how to say these words, and mean them, then we will struggle in life. The first three are simply these words.

SLIDE "I am sorry."

If we can't say those three words, then will find our life is much more difficult than it needs to be. If we can't say these last three words, then will find our life is filled with bitterness and hurt and pain.

"I forgive you." (Please have fly in and added to above slide)

These six words are essential to our lives. While we can learn to say them, we also must learn to feel them in our hearts, which in some ways is much more difficult. This was something Zacchaeus learned from Jesus that enabled him to experience salvation, where his apology was followed with action of returning what he had taken, plus interest, to others.

I find it interesting that there are now websites you can go to in order to apologize to people. If you don't know how to get in contact with the people with whom you need to apologize or if you want to give it a trial run by apologizing anonymously and then follow through a personal note, this is a great website that clearly is needed based on all the responses you find on it. Here are a few of them from www.letmeapologize.com and www.joeapology.com.

To all the customers of the local florist who got sneezing powder in their Mother's Day flowers, I apologize. You were really not the intended victims. I just want to make you angry at the florist, my stingy employer, but I wasn't trying to hurt you. Jed

I'm sorry. You were waiting for the car to get out of the parking place so you could back in. I slipped in front of you. I had to do this because I was desperate to get into the store so I could use

the men's room and there were no other spaces. My apologies. I hope you read this and understand. Signed, driver of gray Honda.

To all my high school classmates, I am so sorry for all the mornings that I came to school without brushing my teeth. I don't know where I got the idea that if I didn't eat, I didn't need to brush. I know you tried to hint, and I didn't get it. I'm really sorry.

Those are all kind of silly but there are some on the webpage where you could just feel the pain of losing out of the letter.

I am sorry for searching on Google Images for the leaked nude pictures. I am sorry, women, all women, for contributing to the violent nature that is behind this act. Breaking into your privacy, I may as well have been the one generating the random screen names and passwords to break into the accounts. I am sorry for all the female actresses I have done this too. I apologize to the everyday women, for the disgusting amount of time that I have logged watching pornography. Searching for images and videos of teenage girls. I wish I could go back to my childhood and change it all and start over again.

Paul Tillich, the Greek 20th century theologian, wrote a sermon about 50 years ago entitled, ***"To Whom Much is Forgiven."*** He had this to say.

SLIDE *Forgiveness is the divine answer to the question implied in our existence.*

Forgiveness is God's answer to the question implied in our existence. What is the question implied in our existence? Here's another letter from one of the apology websites.

For all the things that happened to you as a kid that I never knew about. Maybe you are told not to tell me, but I should've

been there for you, and you should have been able to tell me anything. For the fact that you weren't, and I wasn't, I am truly sorry. Mom.

If you are the child in that apology who experienced abuse when you were little and your mother didn't do anything to stop it, the question that is implied in our existence is this:

SLIDE *"How do I keep bitterness and anger and hate and the desire for revenge from consuming me?"*

Forgiveness is God's answer to that question. If you are a parent who is living with guilt because you didn't step in, and you wished you had. You wished you had only known but you didn't or a part of you lived in denial, then there are several questions forgiveness is the answer to.

SLIDE *"How can I be reconciled to the one I wronged? How can I ever make this right? How can my burden of guilt be removed?"*

Forgiveness is God's answer to these kinds of questions, and we all ask them if we were honest. It may not be as serious as abuse, but we have all struggled with these questions because we are human. Because we are human, we are going to make mistakes. Because we are human, we are going to hurt other people. Because we are human, and others are human, other people are going to hurt us. We must know the answer to these broken relationships and broken moments is forgiveness. If we can't find our way to forgiveness, then we find ourselves stumbling in the dark and looking for meaning to the entire purpose of life, just like Zacchaeus. This is how important forgiveness is when it comes to our existence as human beings as it leads us to salvation, being restored and made whole.

In order to deal with forgiveness, we first must recognize the problem, which in the Christian faith we call, "sin." Whether we are inside or outside the church, the word "sin" itself can make us cringe.

We get in our mind preachers or sermons we have heard where sin has been used to beat people down.

There were some things that were called sins at one point in human history that we now look back at and realize it was rather silly. My grandparents grew up in the church and they were told that playing cards was a sin. They used to sneak downstairs in their basement as teenagers and play bridge by candlelight. My grandparents were living on the edge! They laughed at that story as they taught me as a teenager how to play bridge in broad daylight. Some were told not to dance or not to listen to certain kinds of music. We believed these things were sinful, and then one day we grew up and we realized that God wasn't probably too upset about me listening to the Beatles, or that I went to the movies and saw Star Wars, or that I learned how to disco dance like John Travolta. Well, God might've been upset about my version of the dance, which was very good, but it probably wasn't a sin. The bell bottoms, will they're back now, so they were clearly a sin!

We do have this picture in our mind of sin that often makes us throw the baby out with the bathwater. We simply say that there really isn't any sin and we don't want to worry about that. But we have to talk about sin, and we have to understand what is if we are going to understand forgiveness. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the major word used to describe sin has the same meaning. In the Hebrew Old Testament, the primary word for sin means, "to stray from the path." The New Testament Greek, the primary word for sin means, "to miss the mark."

SLIDE sin = "to stray from the path" or "to miss the mark"

The implication in both words is that there is a way to live as human beings. We are meant to love and do justice and care for people and put the needs of others before ourselves. We are meant to do kind things and to tell the truth. There is a path that God dreams for us to take, and it entails loving God and loving others. Even if you are an

atheist or an agnostic, you still agree with this idea that there is a certain way we are meant to live as human beings, and that most of us struggle and walking that path. We miss the mark, or we stray from the path.

Let me give you a simple line drawing of what this looks like. We have this path that is desired represented by this line with an arrow. This is what it means to be authentically human. We begin to stray off that line in many ways, and as we stray from that path, we find an increasing gap or gulf that exists between the other or God and ourselves. This could happen in our marriages and in our families and in our relationships at work and in our relationship with God. The further from that path we stray, we begin to do things that in essence erect a wall and caused the separation between us and God and us and each other. This is why John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, talked about sin is separation from God is separation from each other.

GRAPHIC 1 Our Desired Path

GRAPHIC 2 Life

GRAPHIC 3 Separation

GRAPHIC 4 Sin separates

We begin to feel that weight of separation over time and it takes a toll on our souls. This idea of separation, of straying from the path and missing the mark, is what is meant to be captured with the word, “sin.” Each of us sin and fall short when we recognize this definition because all of us stray from the path and miss the mark because we are human. We say things we wish we hadn’t said, and we do things we wish we hadn’t done, and we hurt others in that process. Sometimes we don’t say something we should have said, or we don’t do something we should have done and in the same way we missed the mark.

Part of the reason we struggle with this is because of our ego. Ego is important in that it helps us shape our self-identity. But when the ego

becomes the most important thing in our lives, and “I” am the most important thing in the universe, and I believe the world should revolve around me, then we run into trouble. I don’t really care about you anymore and I’m not interested in anything else going on in the world except for how it impacts me. I want to know how I can be happy, how I can be safe and how I can be okay and enjoy life. When I live my life with blinders on and only focus on myself and I’m no longer concerned with God or with others, then I stray from the path. I hurt you and you are going to hurt me, and as we move further and further from the path, the gulf gets bigger and wider which separates us from one another and from God.

Forgiveness is the response and the answer to this struggle. When we offer and receive forgiveness, that gap closes and we are reconciled with each other and with God. We not only get to come back on to this right path, but we bring healing to those we have wronged.

We also forget that each of us is made in the image of God, so when we wound someone else, we are wounding God. There is a piece of the divine living inside of each one of us and so when we experience this partition between us and others, we also experience a distance from God. We can begin to feel the weight of the separation and we drift father and farther from God over time. We pray but our prayers don’t seem to go anywhere. We don’t feel God’s presence anymore and after a while we wonder if God even exists. Life becomes harder than it was supposed to be because we are not walking on the path that God intended human beings to walk.

The writer of the Psalms felt this weight which is why we find seven penitential Psalms. These are Psalms in which you can feel the writer in anguish as they are separated from God. They feel a strong sense of guilt because of their sin or brokenness. The psalmist speaks of this in Psalm 38.

BIBLE

4 My guilt overwhelms me—it is a burden too heavy to bear. 5 My wounds fester and stink because of my foolish sins. 6 I am bent over and racked with pain. All day long I walk around filled with grief. 7 A raging fever burns within me, and my health is broken. 8 I am exhausted and completely crushed. My groans come from an anguished heart.

This idea of feeling crushed and exhausted and having a weight that is too heavy to bear is a helpful image. I shared this image with you before, but I find it a powerful enough metaphor to use it again. When we don't ask for God's forgiveness and we don't seek to be reconciled to God through repentance, which we will talk about in a minute, we carry around with us guilt and the weight of our sins. We may not even recognize it at first because some of them feel very small at first. These small rocks that I am putting in my backpack can represent a small insult or the little jab that we gave to someone. It might be simply walking away from someone who needs help, or how we treated somebody at the cash register at the gas station, or the way we snapped at our spouses or our children.

These larger rocks can represent those things which are more serious and sometimes are intentional things that we say or do which cause hurt. Maybe it's that lie we told at work, or the joke that we told that hurt, or the slap that ensued! So long as we don't confess them and repent, they become this weight that we carry around on our backs. Some of them, like these larger stones, become quite heavy, like an Academy Award! If they are not public, we worry that if somebody found out about these things, we might lose our jobs. We might find ourselves in violation of the law and looking at jail or other consequences. Every so often, something so significant happens that if it really became known, we might lose our family or the things most important to us. If we don't come to God and repent and ask for healing and deliverance, we carry them with us.

So long as we keep adding to these things every day and insist on

carrying them, we find a burden after a time becomes overwhelming, and we end up in a tree, far away from God and from the crowd. We can carry them at first, like this backpack which is weighted down with rocks. We might not even notice it very much, but the longer that we carry it, the heavier it becomes. Especially as we age, the weight of our sins can cause us to hunch over and can literally damage our bodies as well as our souls. We can't run anymore, and we find ourselves winded when we try to walk. The joy and strength are sapped out of us. We find ourselves feeling like the Psalmist in Psalm 32.

BIBLE

3 When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. 4 Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.

Our guilt overwhelms us like a burden that is too heavy to bear. We keep carrying it and we add to it and until we repent and come before God, that distance between us and God becomes wider and wider. God becomes more distant.

The good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ is that God is rich in mercy and abounding in steadfast love. God is taking the initiative to heal us from what is broken. God wants to take this burden and lift it from our shoulders. More than any other world religion I'm aware of, the Christian faith is one of grace and redemption and healing and forgiveness and mercy. I love how this is depicted in this story of Zacchaeus, where Jesus reaches out to him and helps him out of the tree.

Before Jesus was born, the Angel Gabriel called him Jesus, Emmanuel, the Savior. God took the initiative to save us from ourselves and from our broken places. As Jesus began his public ministry, he went about preaching the good news of the kingdom of God. He called people to repent, which meant to turn around and go in a new

direction. Repentance is about embracing the forgiveness offered by truly longing to live life anew. Remember that Jesus primarily ministered to those who felt estranged from God and from the church, which was the Jewish synagogue of the first century. He was constantly looking for the sinners, the tax collectors, the prostitutes, the thieves, the outcasts, and the broken who were lost and far away from God. Jesus wanted the pious religious folks, like you and I can get sometimes if we are honest, to recognize our need for salvation because we sin just like everybody else and stray from the path.

Jesus fellowshiped with them and ate with them, which was meant to be an intimate experience, dining with someone in their home. When Jesus ate meal after meal with those considered sinners, he was basically saying to them, **“I want you to be my friend. I want you to be reconciled to God.”**

When the woman came and was caught in the very act of adultery, it was the religious leaders who came to stone her to death, because the law prescribed this punishment. Remember what Jesus said as he stood in front of those holding up the rocks, “Let those of you who are without sin cast the first stone.” They all walked away, and Jesus turned the woman who was ashamed and filled with guilt and he looked her in the eyes and said, “Woman, where are your accusers? Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.” But his very next words in John 8 are profound for each of us today.

BIBLE

¹² Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”

The light illumines those dark places, so we don’t live in fear. The light of Christ allows to bring all of who we are before God, just as Zacchaeus did that day from a tree, where everyone, including Jesus, could see him. Remember that when Jesus taught his disciples, and us,

how to pray, one of the key parts the prayer contains these words in Luke 11.

BIBLE

**⁴ and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

When Jesus was eating the very last meal with his disciples, he took bread and he blessed it and he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, "This is my life which is given for you." Then he took the cup and he blessed it and said, "This is my blood, the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of your sins."

As Jesus looked down at the people who crucified him, he prayed in Luke 23 these words.

BIBLE

"Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."

As he hung on the cross, Jesus has this conversation a few verses later with a thief hanging next to him.

BIBLE

⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."

⁴³ And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Salvation is about being with Christ in the Kingdom of God and experiencing forgiveness that changes everything, not just in that moment, but forever. When Jesus was raised from the dead, John's Gospel records one of the commands he gives to his disciples was to go and to announce the forgiveness of sins.

SLIDE "Whoever you forgive, I forgive."

Paul, the great apostle of the Christian faith, started out as a man

who put to death the leading Christians of his day. He was known then as Saul, and he was one who had participated in the death of God's people and yet God redeemed him and saved him and gave him a new life. This is what God does and this is what the Scriptures teach us about forgiveness. That's why we read these words in Psalm 103.

BIBLE

8 The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.

10 He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. 11 For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. 12 He has removed our sins as far from us as far as the east is from the west.

This is the heart and the character of God. Our God is a forgiving God who offers extravagant grace and mercy. We might know that with our heads, but sometimes we struggle to let that sink in your hearts. We keep carrying these burdens that God has already sought to remove. God wants to take them away, but we feel like we should keep carrying them, as if we could hide them in something like this backpack, hoping that God would see them. Over the years I've received a emails and letters from people seeking forgiveness and struggling. One of you wrote to me these words.

I struggle almost daily. I can see how God works in others' lives but in my own life I struggle. I know that God loves me no matter what I've done, or what I've been in my life, but to really feel it in the core of my being, I struggle.

One of our members who served in the military sent me this note several years ago.

In the military I took lives. I spent years filled with guilt because of this. Having been in close combat situations, where you are

looking at the person while you take their life, changes you. It's impossible to imagine God forgiving me for something I could not forgive myself for.

I saw one of our church members recently that I haven't seen in worship in a while and when I asked if everything was okay, he told me something I have heard more than once.

I'm having a hard time coming back to church because I did something I'm really ashamed of and I just feel like I can come back.

I encouraged him that this is where he needs to be. The church is for sinners. We sometimes carry these burdens with us unnecessarily because it's so hard to trust that God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. God reaches up into the tree in which we are hiding, or on the cross we have put ourself, and says, **"Give me your burdens and your baggage and your backpacks filled with rocks. Let me take it from you because I long for you to be set free."**

Paul Tillich said in his sermon this about faith and grace.

SLIDE Faith and grace is accepting God's acceptance.

God has already accepted you and me. When we turn to God and long to be with God, God is already reaching out his arms waiting for you, wooing you and longing for you to return. God has done everything necessary to forgive you and he offers this grace, which came at a great price. It is a free gift to each one of us. All we must do is accept that this is the nature and character of God.

When we talk about accepting that gift of grace and mercy, we talk about repentance. Repentance means to literally turn around and go in a new direction. Repentance means to see something and recognize that you don't want to keep going in that direction. Now you want to go in this new direction. Repentance is about turning away

from what is lead to destruction and separation and sin and brokenness and towards the path that God longs for us. Repentance begins with acknowledgment and awareness, “I stepped off the path. I recognize that I have hurt others. I miss my relationship with you God. I grieve that it hurts. I want to turn away and turned towards you.”

Repentance is an outward recognition, and an internal desire, to walk in a new direction. We confess and we ask for God’s mercy. We turn back towards God and towards those that we hurt. It’s very simple. I feel the burden of the gap and I turned towards God. I express my remorse and try to make amends in whatever way I can, and I asked for God’s forgiveness, and God forgives.

When I have done something that hurts my wife Tami, and I do that sometimes because I’m not perfect, I begin to feel a distance or a gap between us. I begin to feel the weight of whatever it is I said or did and I wonder, “Why did I say that or do that? That was really hurtful and stupid of me to say or do. God asked me to love this woman and to choose to love her and I didn’t act very lovingly towards her.”

I go to her and say, “Tami, I’m really sorry for that thing that I said or what I did. I know I hurt you and I don’t want to do that again. I’m really sorry.” She almost always does the same thing. She comes to me, and we embrace, and we tell each other that we love each other. When I feel that embrace from her, I receive a picture or a glimpse of what God does when we repent and confess and come before God with a contrite heart. That’s why in Psalm 32 we hear these words.

SLIDE

5 Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the Lord.” And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

We finally accept acceptance from God, and we trust in God’s grace and mercy. We take God at his word. We can remove this backpack of rocks and we feel the burden lifted. At that moment we

feel like we could jump 20 feet in the air, and we might even be able to fly. That is how we feel as we confess and lay before God our broken places. When we trust that God has forgiven us, we find that we can dance again and breathe again. We can run and not grow weary. We can walk and not be faint because we have experienced the grace of God, which is exactly what God wants us to know.

I want to be clear that God will not be played with. We can pretend we are asking for forgiveness and say sarcastically, “Sorry!” That doesn’t cut it anywhere, not with God or other people. True repentance is recognition that we have strayed from the path, and we have wronged someone. We have a heartfelt sense that we don’t want to do that again. Instead, we want to walk on the right path once more. Repentance is true when we come back to the right path. We can’t say we are sorry and then keep heading in the wrong direction and experience true repentance and forgiveness. True repentance means we get back on the path.

I can hear some of you right now, “I have done that before and then I just start straying again, going in the wrong direction. Will God keep forgiving me?”

In those moments we need to remember what Jesus said to his disciples when they ask, “How many times do we have to forgive? Is seven times enough?” Jesus replied in Matthew 18 with these words.

BIBLE

²² “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!”

That is in essence infinity. When we earnestly repent. When we try to come back and close the gap, even if we stray again, God offers us grace and forgiveness. Listen carefully, however. That’s how it works with God but I’m going to suggest to you there are a few caveats to that in our relationships with each other because the truth is that there are sometimes real human consequences when we stray from the path that

can't always be fixed. But when it comes to God, God is always ready to receive us back when we earnestly repent of our sins. We trust this and then we find the words of the Psalm 32 become true for us.

BIBLE

1 Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! 2 Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

Ron Lee Davis wrote a book called *A Forgiving God in an Unforgiving World*. He told the true story in the book of a priest in the Philippines who was much loved and was doing an amazing job inviting his people to experience the love of God. He offered the sacraments to them and led them to experience the mercy and grace of Christ. But inside he struggled with the secret that he had all the way back from his days in seminary. He couldn't quite accept that God had forgiven him for this horrible thing he had done. He carried this burden even as he sought to alleviate the burdens of others as they came and confessed to him.

There was a woman in his congregation of whom it was said she had visions of Jesus in which Jesus would have conversations with her. People from all around come to see her and she would pray about their prayer requests and then she would have conversations with Jesus during her visions and she would share with them what the Lord had said to her. The priest was a bit skeptical about the woman and at the same time somewhat hopeful.

He went to her one day and said, "I understand you have visions of Jesus, and he talks to you."

To test her he said, "The next time you speak with Christ, I want you to ask him what sin your priest committed while he was in seminary." The woman agreed. A few days later the priest asked, "Well, did Christ visit you in your dreams?"

"Yes, he did," she replied.

"And did you ask him what sin I committed in seminary?"

"Yes."

"Well, what did he say?" His heart was now pounding in his chest.

"I told him that my priest was burdened by a sin that he committed in seminary, and he wanted to know if you know what it was. Jesus looked at me and said, 'Your priest's sin? I just don't remember what it was.'"

Jesus doesn't forget our sins but chooses not to remember them.

Karl Menninger, the famed psychiatrist, once said that if he could convince the patients in psychiatric hospitals that their sins were forgiven, 75 percent of them could walk out the next day! This is the promise of our faith.

Zacchaeus was a tax collector and an extraordinarily prolific and public sinner. Jesus REACHED UP and called him down from a tree. Jesus invited him to follow. That very day Zacchaeus gave up half of his wealth to the poor and he made amends with everyone he had wronged, and he began to follow Jesus. Notice that in reaching out to Zacchaeus, his life was changed, as were the lives of people around him. As a result, Jesus said these words, which is our memory verse for this week. Would you say them with us as you prepare for Communion?

BIBLE

⁹ **Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today..."**

¹⁰ **For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."**

I invite you to come to God and bring with you those rocks you have been carrying. Allow him to reach out to you, and then inspire you to make things right in those places where you can. In every other place, I invite you to give those to God.

GRAPHIC Zacchaeus in Tree (leave up for Communion)

April 2-3 Order

1. Ely welcomes people and says, **“Today we continue our journey through the gospel of Luke, focusing on how we can forgive others and forgive ourselves as we experience God’s forgiveness.”**
2. Two Songs
3. Jeff welcomes and invites people to wave and be seated.
4. Announcements by Jeff (Check News Section on Website)
 - a. Family Easter Event on Friday
 - b. Communion
 - c.
5. Invite congregation to prepare their hearts for the message.
6. Sermon
7. Prayer
8. Two Songs
9. Prayer and Lord’s Prayer
10. Offering SLIDE and Focus (New Offering Boxes UMCOR)
11. Care Ministers (If any are present)
12. Prayers and Closing Thoughts
 - a. Richard Siegele’s service
 - b. Easter Invites
 - c. New Worship Schedule
13. Closing Prayer