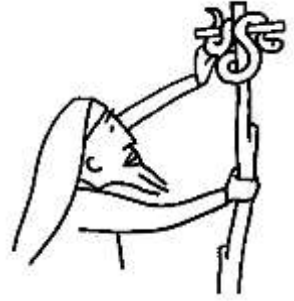


Worship Plan for Sunday, March 10, 2024

Fourth Sunday in Lent

ELW Service of the Word



WELCOME

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying. Let us take a moment and prepare our hearts and minds for God's service as we listen to the prelude.

PRELUDE *Near the Cross* arr. by Porter

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God,
who writes the law on our hearts,
who draws all people together through Jesus.

Amen.

Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.

Holy God,

**we confess that we are caught in snares of sin
and cannot break free.**

**We hoard resources while our neighbors
are hungry and cold.**

We speak in ways that silence others.

We are silent when we should speak up.

We keep score in our hearts.

We let hurts grow into hatred.

**For all these things and for sins only you know,
forgive us, Lord.**

Amen.

Here is a flood of grace:

Out of love for the whole world,

God draws near to us,

breaks every snare of sin,

washes away our wrongs,

and restores the promise of life through ✝ Jesus Christ.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Give to Our God Immortal Praise!* (ELW 848)

- 1 Give to our God immortal praise!
Mercy and truth are all his ways.
Wonders of grace to God belong;
repeat his mercies in your song.

- 2 God sent his Son with pow'r to save
from guilt and darkness and the grave.
Wonders of grace to God belong;
repeat his mercies in your song.

- 3 Give to the Lord of lords renown;
the King of kings with glory crown.
His mercies ever shall endure
when lords and kings are known no more!

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GREETING (ELW p. 213)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE (ELW p. 98)

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above,
and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world,
for the well-being of the Church of God,
and for the unity of all,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house,
and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen, amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 215)

Let us pray.

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9

Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.

A reading from Numbers.

⁴From Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the ¹LORD is good,
for God's mercy en- ¹dures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the ¹LORD proclaim
that God redeemed them from the hand ¹of the foe,**

³gathering them in ¹from the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and ¹from the south.

¹⁷**Some were fools and took re- ¹bellious paths;**

through their sins they¹ were afflicted.

¹⁸They loathed all man-¹ner of food
and drew near¹ to death's door.

¹⁹**Then in their trouble they cried¹ to the LORD
and you delivered them from¹ their distress. R**

²⁰You sent forth your¹ word and healed them
and rescued them¹ from the grave.

²¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your¹ steadfast love
and your wonderful works¹ for all people.**

²²Let them offer sacrifices¹ of thanksgiving
and tell of your deeds with¹ shouts of joy. R

SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:1-10

While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God's grace at work in our lives.

A reading from Ephesians.

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

GOSPEL: John 3:14-21

To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁴“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON (ELW p. 217)

HYMN OF THE DAY *Lift High the Cross* (ELW 660)

Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.

1 Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. *Refrain*

2 All newborn servants of the Crucified
bear on their brows the seal of him who died. *Refrain*

3 O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee. *Refrain*

4 So shall our song of triumph ever be:
praise to the Crucified for victory! *Refrain*

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CREED (ELW p. 105)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

Gracious God, your love unites. Give vision to the global church and foster cooperation in mission. Increase inter-religious understanding and ecumenical dialog. Make your church a sanctuary for all fleeing persecution, disaster, and war. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, your love enlivens. Restore balance to the earth's fragile habitats. Preserve wilderness lands, rainforests, and wildlife. Cleanse oceans and rivers. Make us good stewards of the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Righteous God, your love liberates. We give thanks for those who courageously witness to your liberating love (*especially Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, renewers of society, whom we commemorate today*). Free all people from the evils of racism, religious strife, and hatred. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Merciful God, your love heals. Care tenderly for all whose loved ones perished from pandemic disease in every nation. Strengthen health care workers, first responders, and caregivers. Relieve all who live with chronic illness and pain. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Incarnate God, your love enlightens. Open our hearts and minds to fresh understandings of our faith. Deepen our love for you and for one another. Teach us to pray for our enemies. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abiding God, your love saves. Those who died in the faith are made alive in Christ. We give thanks for your promise that we also will be raised to newness of life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE (ELW p. 217)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

THANKSGIVING

We give thanks for the saving Word and all the gifts of God.

SHARING GOD'S ABUNDANCE

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:17 NRS) As his body, the church, in this world we witness to God's great love and abundance by sharing what God has first given us that all might see and know the love of God for them. If you have offering to share this morning please raise you hand and an usher will be by to collect it. You may also give at any time by visiting landerlutherans.org. Let us together proclaim God's love for the world as we graciously share God's abundance.

OFFERING MUSIC *The Glory of These 40 Days* arr. by Porter

SETTING OF THE TABLE “*Create in Me a Clean Heart*” (ELW 186)

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

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THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD (ELW p. 220)

Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,

we give you thanks and praise.

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you.

For your Word of life, O God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 221)

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

**hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (ELW p. 221)

- Pastor Kris is in Denver visiting family and will return Tuesday to attend our soup supper and Lenten bible study.
- Lenten Bread & Broth, bible study and Holden Evening Prayer services continue throughout Lent on Tuesdays at 6pm.
- Holy Week Puppet Show - Sunday, March 17th during service!
- Sign-up to participate in dramatic readings on Palm Sunday or during Holy Week outside the church office.
- Sign-up to bring a dish for Easter brunch on the fridge!
- If you would like to bring lilies to decorate the altar for Easter service, please do so by Saturday, March 30th.

BLESSING

Beloved,
we are God's own people,
holy, washed, renewed.
God bless you and keep you,
shower you with mercy,
fill you with courage,
and ✝ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound* (ELW 779)

- 1 Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
 that saved a wretch like me!
 I once was lost, but now am found;
 was blind, but now I see.

- 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
 and grace my fears relieved;
 how precious did that grace appear
 the hour I first believed!

- 3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares
 I have already come;
 'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
 and grace will lead me home.

- 4 The Lord has promised good to me;
 his word my hope secures;
 he will my shield and portion be
 as long as life endures.

- 5 When we've been there ten thousand years,
 bright shining as the sun,
 we've no less days to sing God's praise
 than when we'd first begun.

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share your bread.
Thanks be to God.

Upcoming Commemorations

Harriet Tubman, died 1913; Sojourner Truth, died 1883; renewers of society Sunday, March 10, 2024

Harriet Tubman, born into slavery, helped about 300 others to escape slavery until the institution was abolished. Sojourner Truth, whose birth name was Isabella, was freed after slavery was abolished, and discerned a call to be a preacher. Taking the name Sojourner Truth, she set out on an evangelistic journey, where people found her testimony to be deeply moving.

Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, died 604 Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Born into wealth and power, Gregory was for a time the chief administrator of the city of Rome. Giving this up for a life in the church, he was elected pope in 590. He influenced public worship through the establishment of a lectionary and prayers to correlate with the readings. Gregorian chant is named in his honor.

GATHERING SONG *Give to Our God Immortal Praise!* (ELW 848)

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HYMN OF THE DAY *Lift High the Cross* (ELW 660)

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SETTING THE TABLE *Create in Me a Clean Heart* (ELW 186)

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SENDING SONG *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound* (ELW 779)

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