## Fourth Sunday in Lent

## ~ March 10, 2024 ~

## St. John’s & St. Peter’s

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Confession and Forgiveness**  Page 94

P: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

***C: Amen.***

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

***C:*** ***Amen.***

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

P: Most merciful God,

***C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen.***

P: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

***C:*** ***Amen.***

**Gathering Hymn *“Just As I Am, without One Plea”*** Hymn #592

Vs. 1 Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was

 shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Vs. 2 Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict,

 many a doubt, fightings and fears within, without,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Vs. 3 Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon,

 cleanse, relieve; because thy promise I believe,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Vs. 4 Just as I am, thy love unknown has broken ev'ry

 barrier down; now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

 **Greeting** Page 138

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

***C: And also with you.***

**Kyrie** Page 138

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

P: 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.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

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

***C: Amen.***

 **Prayer of the Day**

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.

**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.*

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.

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

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

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

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

**17Some were fools and took rebellious paths; through their sins they were afflicted.**

18They loathed all manner of food and drew near to death's door.

**19Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD and you delivered them from their distress. You deliver your people from their distress.**

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

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

22Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy.

**You deliver your people from their distress.**

**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.*

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.

**Gospel Acclamation**  Page 142

Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and

Merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in

Steadfast love, and abounding in steadfast love.

**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.*

[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.16For 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."

**Sermon**

**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.***

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

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

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

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

**Apostles’ Creed**  ELW pg. 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 the People**

 **“*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying***” ELW #752

Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

Trusting in God’s promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation and the 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 your liberating love. 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 especially

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 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, receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen**.

**“*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying***” ELW #752

Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

**Peace** Page 138

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

***C: And also with you.***

**Offering *“We Give Thee but Thine Own” vs. 1*** *Hymn #686*

We give thee but thine own, what e’er the gift may be;

All that we have is thine alone a trust, O Lord from thee.

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray, Blessed are you, O God maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love; through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, or Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Great Thanksgiving**  ELW pg. 145

P: The Lord be with you.

***C:*** ***And also with you.***

P: Lift up your hearts.

***C:*** ***We lift them to the Lord.***

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***C:*** ***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

**Words of Institution**

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

***C:*** ***Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.***

**Lord’s Prayer** ELW pg. 145

P: Let us pray as Jesus has taught us.

***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.***

**Communion**

**Post Communion Blessing**

**Prayer after Communion**

P: God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. ***Amen.***

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

**Sending Hymn *“Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”*** *Hymn #779*

Vs. 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.

Vs. 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!

Vs. 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.

Vs. 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.

Vs. 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.

**Dismissal**

L: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

***C: We will! Thanks be to God!***