

God's Service Sunday, March 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday in Lent

ELW Holy Communion Setting One



WELCOME

God promises Jeremiah that a “new covenant” will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God’s heart through Christ and draws God’s love and truth into our hearts. We join together in worship, sharing in word, song, and meal, and leave strengthened to share God’s love with all the world. Let us take a moment now to prepare our hearts and minds for God’s Service as we listen to the prelude.

PRELUDE *Beneath the Cross* arr. by Lasky

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 *Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery* (ELW 334) – v. 1, 2, 3, & Lent 5

- 1 Tree of Life and awesome myst'ry,
in your death we are reborn;
though you die in all of hist'ry,
still you rise with ev'ry morn,
still you rise with ev'ry morn.

- 2 We remember truth once spoken,
love passed on through act and word;
ev'ry person lost and broken
wears the body of our Lord,
wears the body of our Lord.

- 3 Christ, you lead and we shall follow,
stumbling though our steps may be;
one with you in joy and sorrow,
we the river, you the sea,
we the river, you the sea.

Lent 5

God of all our fear and sorrow,
God who lives beyond our death,
hold us close through each tomorrow,
love as near as ev'ry breath.

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GREETING (ELW p. 98)

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. 102)

Let us pray.

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, 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: Holy Week puppet show

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34

The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.

A reading from Jeremiah.

³¹The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 51:1-12

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your ¹ steadfast love;
in your great compassion blot out ¹ my offenses.

²**Wash me through and through ¹ from my wickedness,
and cleanse me ¹ from my sin.**

³For I know ¹ my offenses,
and my sin is ev- ¹ er before me.

⁴**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil ¹ in your sight;
so you are justified when you speak and right ¹ in your judgment. R**

⁵Indeed, I was born ¹ steeped in wickedness,
a sinner from my ¹ mother's womb.

⁶**Indeed, you delight in truth ¹ deep within me,
and would have me know wisdom ¹ deep within.**

⁷Remove my sins with hyssop, and I ¹ shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be pur- ¹ er than snow.

⁸**Let me hear ¹ joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken ¹ may rejoice. R**

⁹Hide your face ¹ from my sins,
and blot out ¹ all my wickedness.

¹⁰**Create in me a clean ¹ heart, O God,
and renew a right spir- ¹ it within me.**

¹¹Cast me not away ¹ from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spir- ¹ it from me.

¹²**Restore to me the joy of ¹ your salvation
and sustain me with your boun- ¹ tiful Spirit. R**

SECOND READING: Hebrews 5:5-10

Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.

A reading from Hebrews.

⁵Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”;

⁶as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,
according to the order of Melchizedek.”

⁷In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent

submission. ⁸Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him,

¹⁰having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 102)

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a¹ single grain;* but if it dies, it¹ bears much fruit. (*John 12:24*)

GOSPEL: John 12:20-33

Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Passover festival. Here Jesus' words about seeds planted in the ground turn the disaster of his death into the promise of a harvest in which everyone will be gathered.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁰Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

²²Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

²⁷"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—"Father, save me from this hour"? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." ²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." ³⁰Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ³³He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Now the Green Blade Rises* (ELW 379)

- 1 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
love lives again, that with the dead has been;
love is come again like wheat arising green.

- 2 In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,
thinking that he would never wake again;
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen;

love is come again like wheat arising green.

3 Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,
he that for three days in the grave had lain;
raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen;
love is come again like wheat arising green.

4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
your touch can call us back to life again,
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;
love is come again like wheat arising green.

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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.

God of the covenant, through the church you draw us into community. We give thanks for the means of grace around which we gather. Inspire writers, musicians, and artists whose creative gifts adorn our worship. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all that exists, you lavish the earth with extravagant beauty. Preserve the rich and complex diversity of living things. Support local, national, and international efforts to protect the environment for future generations. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of the nations, you desire peace and plenty for all people. Defend those who challenge oppression and expose corruption. Support advocates for human rights, social justice, and the welfare of children. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of good will, you restore what is broken. We pray for any experiencing estrangement, conflict, or abuse in families and intimate relationships. Protect and comfort all who are vulnerable, especially those living in institutions. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of every time and place, you are with us. Support ministries of prayer and presence in this congregation. Move us to reach out to any who are homebound, lonely, grieving, in treatment, or ill. We especially pray for Grace, Shirley, Jim, Melissa, Heather, Lars, Anna, Gene, Susan, Cheryl, Carolyn, and these others we name now in our hearts and with our voices. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of promise, we give thanks for the saints whose faith inspires us (*especially Patrick, missionary to Ireland, whom we commemorate today*). Grant us faith to trust in your everlasting love. 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. 106)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

SHARING GOD'S ABUNDANCE

As I said in our introduction, our baptismal covenant draws us to God's heart through Christ and draws God's love and truth into our hearts. Therefore, we gratefully share the abundance of our God with our neighbors that all may have enough and experience that same love that helps align our hearts with God's. If you have abundance to share, please raise your hand and our ushers will be y to collect it. You may also give at any time at www.lander.lutherans.org. In the company of the Holy Spirit may we fearlessly share and proclaim the abundance of our God.

OFFERING MUSIC *Tree of Life* arr. by Biery

SETTING THE TABLE (ELW p. 106)

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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OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 107)

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE (ELW p. 107)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE (ELW p. 108)

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 108)

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

O God triune, how majestic
is your name in all the earth.
Over the eons your merciful might
evolved our home, a fragile tree of life.
Here by your wisdom
are both life and death,
growth and decay,
the nest and the hunt,
sunshine and storm,
darkness and light.
Sustained by these wonders,
we creatures of dust join in the ancient song:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer.
In Christ you bring life from death;
we remember his cross,
we laud his resurrection.
Broken like bread, he enlivens our body.
Outpoured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness.
Receiving this mystery,
we mortals sing our song:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

We praise you for the heart of Jesus,
so filled with your love for this earth.

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.

Gathered around this table,
we your children unite in this song:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you create the worlds,
you uphold the living,
you embrace the dead.
Send forth your Spirit
and renew the face of the earth.
Strengthen us for our journey with this meal,
the body and blood of Christ.
Give us a future that trusts in you
and cares for your earth.
Empowered by your promises,
we rise from our deaths
to praise you again:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

Amen, and amen.
Amen, and amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 112)

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Receive who you are, become what you receive. Here is bread for the journey.
A feast for hungry hearts. Come! All are welcome at this table.

COMMUNION (ELW p. 112)

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 112)

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.**

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC *Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley* arr. by Cooman

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous God,
at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.
As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,
now make us one loaf to feed the world;
in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.
Amen.

SENDING

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

SENDING OF COMMUNION (ELW p. 114)

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are *sick, homebound, and imprisoned*. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS (ELW p. 114)

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 *Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing* (ELW 545)

- 1 Lord, dismiss us with your blessing,
fill our hearts with joy and peace;
let us each, your love possessing,
triumph in redeeming grace.
Oh, refresh us; oh, refresh us,
trav'ling through this wilderness.

- 2 Thanks we give and adoration
for your gospel's joyful sound.
May the fruits of your salvation
in our hearts and lives abound.
Ever faithful, ever faithful
to your truth may we be found.

- 3 Savior, when your love shall call us
from our struggling pilgrim way,
let no fear of death appall us,
glad your summons to obey.
May we ever, may we ever
reign with you in endless day.

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DISMISSAL

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

Upcoming Commemorations

Patrick, bishop, missionary to Ireland, died 461
Sunday, March 17, 2024

A native of Britain, Patrick was kidnapped by pirates at age sixteen and sold into slavery in Ireland. After a few years, he escaped, returned home, and entered the ministry. Returning to Ireland, he successfully served as a bishop and missionary there.

Joseph, Guardian of Jesus
Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Though the Bible tells us little about the husband of Jesus' mother Mary, we know that he was a carpenter or builder by trade. He is also shown as being devoted both to God and to Mary and Jesus. It is assumed that he died before Jesus became an adult.

Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, martyr, died 1556
Thursday, March 21, 2024

Cranmer's lasting achievement is contributing to and overseeing the creation of the Book of Common Prayer, which remains (in revised form) the worship book of the Anglican Communion. He was burned at the stake under Queen Mary for his support of the Protestant Reformation.

Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, died 1758
Friday, March 22, 2024

A Puritan minister in Connecticut, Edwards is remembered as being a great preacher. Though his most famous sermon talks at length about hell, he was more concerned with God's love. He served both as missionary to the Housatonic people in Massachusetts, and as president of the future Princeton University.

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