

WELCOMING WORD *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.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good,

C: for God's mercy endures forever.

L: You sent forth your word and healed them

C: and rescued them from the grave.

L: Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love

C: and your wonderful works for all people.

L: Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving

C: and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy.

OPENING HYMN # 520 - Give to Our God Immortal, Praise

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.

He 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.

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!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

C: Amen.

P: God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Fountain of living water,

C: pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.

P: Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are forgiven, and God remembers them no more.

C: Amen.

INVOCATION

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: O God,

C: 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 LESSON: Numbers 21:4-9 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.

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 2:1-10 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: John 3:14-21 [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."

MESSAGE Pastor John Twiton

HYMN # 390 - I Love to Tell the Story

I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story, because I know it's true;
It satisfies my longings as nothing else would do.

REFRAIN:

I love to tell the story; I'll sing this theme in glory
And tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story: how pleasant to repeat
What seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet!
I love to tell the story, for some have never heard
The message of salvation from God's own holy Word. **REFRAIN**

I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
I'll sing the old, old story that I have loved so long. **REFRAIN**

CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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.

OFFERTORY PRAYER Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in our Lenten journey, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P: Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

You sent your Son that the world might be saved through him. Inspire the witness of the church throughout the world. Empower missionaries, Bible translators, and ministries of service in your name. Bless our partners in ministry especially our partner congregation, Divine Savior in Cataño, Puerto Rico, as well as other ELCA global partner churches, and Young Adults in Global Mission. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: From east to west your steadfast love is shown. Nourish seas and deserts, wilderness areas and cities. Give water to thirsty lands; nurture spring growth that feeds hungry creatures; bless farmers as they prepare for the growing season. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: You sustained your people in the wilderness. Give courage to all who lead in times of crisis and scarce resources. Prosper the work of those who aid victims of famine and drought. Bring peace in places where scarce resources cause violence. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Your mercy endures forever. Deliver all who cry to you, especially those who are hungry or without homes. Give life in places where death seems triumphant; give healing to those who are sick and comfort to those who mourn (especially). Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: By grace we have been saved. Fill this congregation to overflowing with that grace, that we show mercy to others. Nourish any in our midst who are hungry, especially children, and bless our ministries of feeding and shelter. Give us patience and courage when the way seems long. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Your Son was lifted up that whoever believes might have eternal life. We praise you for all who have died in Christ. Bring us with all the saints into the fullness of your promises. Lord in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

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. 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.

BENEDICTION *May the blessing of God our creator, the love of Jesus Christ our redeemer, and the presence of the Holy Spirit the comforter, surround you and sustain you until we gather again.*

CLOSING HYMN: # 532 - How Great Thou Art

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed;

REFRAIN:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee, How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee, How great thou art! How great thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander, I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; **REFRAIN**

But when I think that God, his Son not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing, He bled and died to take away my sin; **REFRAIN**

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation, and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration and there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art!" **REFRAIN**

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Bonnie Bender
Norbert Haag (brother of Virgil Haag)
Allen Olson (father of Ingrid Frank)
Delores Bryant
Brock Howe
Brian Marshall (friend of Kim Kelliher)
Jeannie U'Ren
Mike Olson (Wendy Rasmussen's brother)
Irene Brufat
Connie Fausett (sister of Diane Twiton & Jean Bower)
Harlan Oimoen
Grace Aavang

Ginger Quaderer (Diane Mueller's cousin)
Richard Schuhler (friend of Ron & Bonny Kellogg)
Agnes Robertson (friend of Holly Thompson)
Makenzee Smith
Dianne Haskins (friend of Char Smith)
Mary Krantz
Ruth Ann Nemet
Sally Gaard (friend of Margie Kahl)
Laurie Duden (Brenda Martin's aunt)
Bill Steinhauer
Peter Toniazzo
Shirley Thompson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PARKING LOT WORSHIP We are planning to have parking lot worship on March 28th.

ELC YOUTH EASTER FUNDRAISERS -

EASTER EGG HUNT - HOME DELIVERY -
Youth will hide the treats for you!

EASTER CINNAMON ROLLS - Enjoy tasty homemade rolls on Easter!

Please sign up by March 19th

SIGN UP LINK:
<https://forms.gle/8YYGRQnynLws8RwK8>

HE IS RISEN
alleluia

ELC YOUTH EASTER FUNDRAISERS -

EASTER EGG HUNT HOME DELIVERY - Our ELC Youth would love to help your families this Easter by hiding 24 eggs at your home for your children. (A chance to have their own personal egg hunt.) Plastic eggs with treats inside, would be hidden either after 9 pm on Sat, or early Easter morning. (We are not responsible for any squirrels stealing them 😊) Sign up for egg delivery with your address & time preferred. Easter donation: \$25 dollars for 24 hidden eggs.

EASTER CINNAMON ROLLS - For a 'To-Go Easter Treat' this year, we are making homemade cinnamon rolls for pickup on Easter Sunday during our Drive-In service at 10 AM.

Please sign up by March 19th for both fundraisers.

SIGN UP LINK: <https://forms.gle/8YYGRQnynLws8RwK8>

Funds raised will go towards our youth summer programming, such as the Youth Gathering in 2022. Thank you for your continued support.

FUSE NIGHTS on ZOOM - Youth, who are 9th - 12th graders are welcome to join our high school group on ZOOM, Tuesday, March 23rd at 7 pm. Time for games and a chance to connect. Email Brenda for the link



FIRST COMMUNION RETREAT - March 20th, 11 AM-12 PM. Our 5th graders are invited to our First Communion Retreat on Zoom on Sat, March 20th. Packets will be available in early March for families to read over together, prior to the retreat.

YOUTH WEEKLY CLASSES ON ZOOM:

SUNDAY SCHOOL meets on Sundays at 9 am

CONFIRMATION meets on Wednesdays at 7 pm.

ELC 'COFFEE TIME' on ZOOM - Join us on Wednesdays at 10 AM each week to catch up with our church family. Time to connect and see each other! Zoom link is emailed each week. If you need the link, contact Pastor John, Tamara or Brenda.

CONFIRMATION CAMP (SAVE THE DATE) - ELC will be attending the Confirmation Camp at Sugar Creek Bible Camp the week of July 25 - July 30. 7th-8th graders are encouraged to attend. Register online: <http://wp.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org>.

SUGAR CREEK "BACK IN THE SADDLE" - Online Registrations are now available for Sugar Creek Bible Camp Summer programs. They have a variety of programs (new & favorites) listed on their website, <http://wp.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org>, for youth and families. Come and see in 2021!



DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 14, 2021

SHARE: What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

READ: Read the following daily readings to deepen your understanding

Monday, Psalm 107:1-16, Thanksgiving for Deliverance

Tuesday, 1 Corinthians 10:6-13, Warnings from Israel's History

Wednesday, Isaiah 60:15-22, God Gathers the People

Thursday, Psalm 51:1-12, Prayer for Cleansing and Pardon

Friday, Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a, Jesus' Genealogy and Birth (Commemoration of Joseph)

Saturday, John 12:1-11, Mary Anoints Jesus

TALK: Consider some of these ideas: "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). *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.*

- How often have you heard God described as an angry judge, ready to punish everyone?
- Jesus proclaims he comes as savior. Do you perceive your need of salvation?
- Are there any limits to the love Jesus brings?

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.**

BLESS: You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. **Amen.**