

WELCOMING WORD *On Ash Wednesday the church began its journey toward baptismal immersion in the death and resurrection of Christ. This year, the Sundays in Lent lead us to focus on five covenants God makes in the Hebrew Scriptures and to use them as lenses through which to view baptism. First Peter connects the way God saved Noah's family in the flood with the way God saves us through the water of baptism. The baptismal covenant is made with us individually, but the new life we are given in baptism is for the sake of the whole world.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

C: My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,

L: Show me your ways, O LORD,

C: and teach me your paths.

L: Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,

C: for they are from everlasting.

L: Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;

C: remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness O Lord.

OPENING HYMN #36 On Jordan's Bank (vs. 1-4)

On Jordan's banks the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail you as our Savior, Lord, our refuge and our great reward;
Without your grace we waste away like flow'rs that wither and decay.

Stretch forth your hand, our health restore, and make us rise to fall no more;
Oh, let your face upon us shine and fill the world with love divine.

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: Holy God, heavenly Father,

C: in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, 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: GENESIS 9:8-17 ⁸God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹²God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

SECOND LESSON: 1 PETER 3:18-22 ¹⁸Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

GOSPEL: MARK 1:9-15 ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” ¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. ¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

CHOIR ANTHEM

MESSAGE Pastor John Twiton

HYMN #693 *Baptized in Water*

Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, cleansed by the blood of Christ our king:
Heirs of salvation, trusting his promise, faithfully now God's praise we sing.

Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, dead in the tomb with Christ our king:
One with his rising, freed and forgiven, thankfully now God's praise we sing.

Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, marked with the sign of Christ our king:
Born of the Spirit, we are God's children; joyfully now God's praise we sing.

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.

In Jesus your realm has come near to us in every place and time. Give your church throughout the world a spirit of humility and repentance; teach us to trust always in the good news of your salvation.

Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: You have made a covenant of mercy with every living creature. Protect all the earth's creatures from destruction. Empower the work of biologists, conservationists, and science educators. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: All your paths are steadfast love and faithfulness. Direct the words and actions of leaders in our community and throughout the world, that they may maintain justice for the lowly. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: In the covenant of baptism you claim us as beloved children. Nurture us in our baptismal identity and teach us to live within it for the sake of others. Strengthen this congregation's ministries of care and concern. Lift up those who are in need of your healing and strength (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Even in the wilderness you are with us. Walk alongside those who are walking in dangerous lands. We pray for refugees from violence and natural disaster, relief workers who bring hope and healing. Those who serve their country far from home, as well as their families who await their return. Tend to all those whose lives feel desolate. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: In baptism you join us to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We praise you for all those who have died trusting in your faithfulness. Bring us with them to the fullness of your reign. 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: #194 All Who Believe and Are Baptized

All who believe and are baptized shall see the Lord's salvation;
Baptized into the death of Christ, they are a new creation;
Through Christ's redemption they will stand
Among the glorious heav'nly band of ev'ry tribe and nation.

With one accord, O God, we pray, grant us your Holy spirit;
Help us in our infirmity through Jesus' blood and merit;
Grant us to grow in grace each day
By holy Baptism, that we may eternal life inherit.



OUR SYMPATHIES AND PRAYERS are with the family & friends of Rolf Knittel, who recently passed away, and also with the **family & friends of Devon Schlegel** (Dawn Haag's father) who passed away February 19th.

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 Bruflat
Connie Fausett (sister of Diane Twiton & Jean Bower)
Harlan Oimoen
Grace Aavang
Vivian Stone

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

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



LENTEN PLAYS (Help needed)- During our Lenten Wednesday worship services this year, we will be sharing plays that have Paul (in heaven) reading and answering letters from 21st century people. We are in need of some volunteers to act out these plays. If you are interested in participating, please let Pastor John, Tamara or Brenda know.

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 FEBRUARY 21, 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 77, God's Mighty Deeds Recalled

Tuesday, 1 Peter 3:8-18a, Suffering for Doing Right

Wednesday, Proverbs 30:1-9, Human foolishness and God's Wisdom

Thursday, Psalm 22:23-31, Praise for God's Deliverance

Friday, Genesis 16:1-6, The Birth of Ishmael

Saturday, Mark 8:31-38, Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

TALK: Consider some of these ideas: *"He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him."* (Mark 1:13). The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the good news of God's reign.

- What have been the greatest times of 'testing' in your life?
- Where do you look for strength in those times?
- What does it mean for your faith that Jesus' was tested, just as we are?

PRAY: Holy God, heavenly Father, in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, 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.**