

WELCOMING WORD *The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: You who fear the LORD, give praise!

C: Stand in awe of the LORD, all you offspring of Israel.

L: For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;

C: but when they cry out, the LORD hears them.

L: The poor shall eat and be satisfied,

C: Let those who seek the LORD give praise!

OPENING HYMN #377 Lift High the Cross

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

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

Led on their way by this triumphant sign,
The hosts of God in conqu'ring ranks combine. **REFRAIN**

All newborn soldiers of the Crucified
Bear on their brows the seal of him who died. **REFRAIN**

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: by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, 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 17:1-7, 15-16 ¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

SECOND LESSON: Romans 4:13-25 ¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38 ³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

MESSAGE Pastor John Twiton

HYMN #494 *Jesus Calls Us; O'er the Tumult*

Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea,
Day by day his clear voice sounding, saying "Christian follow me."

As of old St. Andrew heard it by the Galilean lake,
Turned from home and toil and kindred, leaving all for his dear sake.

Jesus calls us from the worship of the vain world's golden store,
From each idol that would keep us, saying, "Christian, love me more."

In our joys and in our sorrows, days of toil and hours of ease,
Still he calls, in cares and pleasures, "Christian, love me more than these."

Jesus calls us! In your mercy, Savior, make us hear your call,
Give our hearts to your obedience, serve and love you best of all.

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.

Your gift of grace is for all people. Give confident faith to all the baptized, that they may follow you wholeheartedly. Give new believers joy in your promises; give hope and courage to those who suffer for their faith. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: All the ends of the earth worship you. From galaxies to microorganisms, preserve your creation. Teach humanity to wonder at your works and to join you in tending to creation's well-being. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: You rule over the nations. Raise up advocates for peace and reconciliation within and between nations. Give life where hope seems dead; call into existence new realities we cannot even imagine. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: In Jesus you joined humanity in suffering and death. Reveal to all the depth of your love shown on the cross. Accompany all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit. Restore all who are sick or grieving (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: You made Abraham and Sarah the ancestors of a multitude of nations. Bless grandparents, parents, and foster parents, and the children who look to them for care and guidance. Console those who deal with infertility, parents who have entrusted their children to adoption, and children longing to be adopted. Equip ministries and services to families. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: We await the day of Christ's coming in glory. Lead us by the example of all the saints whom you have called to take up their cross and follow you, that together we may find our lives in you. 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: #383 Rise Up, O Saints of God! (vs. 1-3, 5)

Rise up, O saints of God! From vain ambitions turn;
Christ rose triumphant that your hearts with nobler zeal might burn.

Speak out, O saints of God! Despair engulfs earth's frame;
As heirs of God's baptismal grace, His word of hope proclaim.

Rise up, O saints of God! His kingdom's task embrace;
Redress sin's cruel consequence; give justice larger place.

Commit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod
And quickened by the Spirit's power, rise up, O saints of God!



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

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, **Tuesdays, March 9th & 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.

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.



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*

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.sugarcreek bible camp.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.sugarcreek bible camp.org>, for youth

DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 28, 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 105:1-11,37-45, God's Faithfulness to Israel

Tuesday, Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19, The Meaning of Faith

Wednesday, Jeremiah 30:12-22, Restoration Promised

Thursday, Psalm 19, God's Glory in Creation and in the Law

Friday, Exodus 19:9b-15, The People are Consecrated

Saturday, Exodus 19:16-25, God's Presence on the Mountain

TALK: Consider some of these ideas: "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it." (Mark 8:35). *After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.*

- Under what circumstances would you risk your life to save someone else?
- Have you ever been asked to sacrifice for the sake of following Jesus?
- What does it mean for your faith that Jesus gave up his life for your sake?

PRAY: O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, 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.**