

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2020

Adaptive Worship Service



1812 North Highland Avenue
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Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Welcome! Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. On this day we have closed the Sanctuary to the general public amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This bulletin is designed to be used at home, following along with the service online (either live streaming or pre-recorded). Anyone can serve as the Worship Leader in this order of service. The Holy Communion section is worded as if it is being distributed to the homebound. So if you have pre-consecrated communion elements, you can partake.

GATHERING SONGS

All Are Welcome

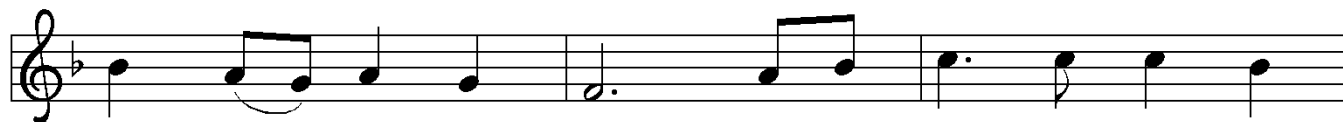
Verse 1



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly



live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how



hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of



Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,



all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

Refrain

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling

Verse 1

1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,
Refrain
watch - ing for you and for me. "Come home, come home!
You who are wea - ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,
Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847-1909
Music: THOMPSON, Will L. Thompson

GREETING

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

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: Let us pray. Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Introduction to the Lesson: *Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the Lord, designating David as the Lord's chosen successor to Saul.*

Reader: The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you go on grieving over Saul? I have rejected him as king of Israel. But now get some olive oil and go to Bethlehem, to a man named Jesse, because I have chosen one of his sons to be king." "How can I do that?" Samuel asked. "If Saul hears about it, he will kill me!"

The Lord answered, "Take a calf with you and say that you are there to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will tell you what to do. You will anoint as king the man I tell you to."

Samuel did what the Lord told him to do and went to Bethlehem, where the city leaders came trembling to meet him and asked, "Is this a peaceful visit, seer?"

"Yes," he answered. "I have come to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. Purify yourselves and come with me." He also told Jesse and his sons to purify themselves, and he invited them to the sacrifice.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Jesse's son Eliab and said to himself, "This man standing here in the Lord's presence is surely the one he has chosen." But the Lord said to him, "Pay no attention to how tall and handsome he is. I have rejected him, because I do not judge as people judge. They look at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart."

Then Jesse called his son Abinadab and brought him to Samuel. But Samuel said, "No, the Lord hasn't chosen him either." Jesse then brought Shammah. "No, the Lord hasn't chosen him either," Samuel said. In this way Jesse brought seven of his sons to Samuel. And Samuel said to him, "No, the Lord hasn't chosen any of these." Then he asked him, "Do you have any more sons?"

Jesse answered, "There is still the youngest, but he is out taking care of the sheep."

"Tell him to come here," Samuel said. "We won't offer the sacrifice until he comes." So Jesse sent for him. He was a handsome, healthy young man, and his eyes sparkled. The Lord said to Samuel, "This is the one—anooint him!" Samuel took the olive oil and anointed David in front of his brothers. Immediately the spirit of the Lord took control of David and was with him from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

JOHN 9:1-41

Introduction to the Gospel: *Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to John in the 9th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been born blind. His disciples asked him, “Teacher, whose sin caused him to be born blind? Was it his own or his parents' sin?”

Jesus answered, “His blindness has nothing to do with his sins or his parents' sins. He is blind so that God's power might be seen at work in him. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me; night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light for the world.”

After he said this, Jesus spat on the ground and made some mud with the spittle; he rubbed the mud on the man's eyes and told him, “Go and wash your face in the Pool of Siloam.” (This name means “Sent.”) So the man went, washed his face, and came back seeing.

His neighbors, then, and the people who had seen him begging before this, asked, “Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?”

Some said, “He is the one,” but others said, “No he isn't; he just looks like him.”

So the man himself said, “I am the man.”

“How is it that you can now see?” they asked him.

He answered, “The man called Jesus made some mud, rubbed it on my eyes, and told me to go to Siloam and wash my face. So I went, and as soon as I washed, I could see.”

“Where is he?” they asked.

“I don't know,” he answered.

Then they took to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. The day that Jesus made the mud and cured him of his blindness was a Sabbath. The Pharisees, then, asked the man again how he had received his sight. He told them, “He put some mud on my eyes; I washed my face, and now I can see.”

Some of the Pharisees said, “The man who did this cannot be from God, for he does not obey the Sabbath law.”

Others, however, said, “How could a man who is a sinner perform such miracles as these?” And there was a division among them.

So the Pharisees asked the man once more, “You say he cured you of your blindness—well, what do you say about him?”

“He is a prophet,” the man answered.

The Jewish authorities, however, were not willing to believe that he had been blind and could now see, until they called his parents and asked them, “Is this your son? You say that he was born blind; how is it, then, that he can now see?”

His parents answered, “We know that he is our son, and we know that he was born blind. But we do not know how it is that he is now able to see, nor do we know who cured him of his blindness. Ask him; he is old enough, and he can answer for himself!” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, who had already agreed that anyone who said he believed that Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. That is why his parents said, “He is old enough; ask him!”

A second time they called back the man who had been born blind, and said to him, “Promise before God that you will tell the truth! We know that this man who cured you is a sinner.”

“I do not know if he is a sinner or not,” the man replied. “One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see.”

“What did he do to you?” they asked. “How did he cure you of your blindness?”

“I have already told you,” he answered, “and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Maybe you, too, would like to be his disciples?”

They insulted him and said, “You are that fellow's disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for that fellow, however, we do not even know where he comes from!”

The man answered, “What a strange thing that is! You do not know where he comes from, but he cured me of my blindness! We know that God does not listen to sinners; he does listen to people who respect him and do what he wants them to do. Since the beginning of the world nobody has ever heard of anyone giving sight to a person born blind. Unless this man came from God, he would not be able to do a thing.”

They answered, “You were born and brought up in sin—and you are trying to teach us?” And they expelled him from the synagogue.

When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

The man answered, “Tell me who he is, sir, so that I can believe in him!”

Jesus said to him, “You have already seen him, and he is the one who is talking with you now.”

“I believe, Lord!” the man said, and knelt down before Jesus.

Jesus said, “I came to this world to judge, so that the blind should see and those who see should become blind.”

Some Pharisees who were there with him heard him say this and asked him, “Surely you don't mean that we are blind, too?”

Jesus answered, “If you were blind, then you would not be guilty; but since you claim that you can see, this means that you are still guilty.”

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Eyes Opened

Toward the end of today's lengthy gospel reading, religious leaders summon, for a second time, the man who was blind from birth and whose sight Jesus restored one sabbath day. Confounded by Jesus' disregard for the sabbath, they judge him a sinner and ask how a sinner could have worked such healing. They cry to the newly sighted man, “Give glory to God! We *know* that this man is a sinner.’ He answered, ‘*I do not know* whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see” (John 9:24-25; emphasis added).

It is such a radically simple answer. But this clear testimony does not align with the preconceived judgment of the religious leaders, who won't rejoice that the man's eyes have been opened. Instead, the blame game initiated by Jesus' disciples rages on in altered form. While the disciples wondered if it was the man's or his family's *fault* that he was blind to begin with, the religious leaders focused on a way to discredit the one who had restored his sight. Neither the disciples nor the religious leaders seem empathetic about the man's blindness, nor joyful about the new possibilities for his life and participation in community now that he can see.

As we listen to the narrative unfold, perhaps we recognize some of the voices blaming, accusing, or (as with the man's parents) seeking to withdraw from the controversy. The story stands in John's gospel as another important sign, identifying Jesus as “light of the world” (John 9:5). But it also serves to remind us of ways we are blinded by our judgments and critiques of others and of ourselves. To what and whom are our eyes closed? What mixture of mud and washing might open us to see differently and, in so doing, restore us in and to community?

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Be Thou My Vision



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: God of insight, bring peace to all people and nations. Anoint leaders who seek goodness, righteousness, and truth on behalf of all. Frustrate the efforts of those who would seek to cause violence or terror. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: Hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: God of insight, you care for our needs even before we ask. Come quickly to all who seek prayer this day *especially* Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Kathleen Wacker, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George & Phyllis Clark, Jill Grote, Pastor Bruce Edwards, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia and family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Eliezar Granados, Deacon Connie Puls, , Joan Keeton, Alex Stevenson, Steve Davis, the Bell-Brown family and the family and friends of Kathleen Wacker, and those suffering from natural disasters, violence, and terror

(especially those impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak, those in harm's way while serving in the military, and those unjustly or unnecessarily separated from their parents or children, and *those we name now with our lips or in our hearts*). Accomplish healing through the work of doctors, nurses, physical therapists, nutritionists, and all who tend to human bodies. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: Hear our prayer.

God of insight, help this assembly lift up the unique gifts of each person who enters, no matter their physical capacity, cognitive ability, or sensory need. Help us to be creative and brave in making our facilities and our ministries accessible to all. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: Hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: 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, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Worship Leader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Worship Leader: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

Worship Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Worship Leader: When the congregation of Grace Lutheran Church last gathered for Holy Communion, we heard again of God's mighty deeds shown to us in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We thanksgiving we remembered that "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."

Congregation:



Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Worship Leader: 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.

Congregation:

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Worship Leader: Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

Prayer Leader: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another.

Congregation: Amen.

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

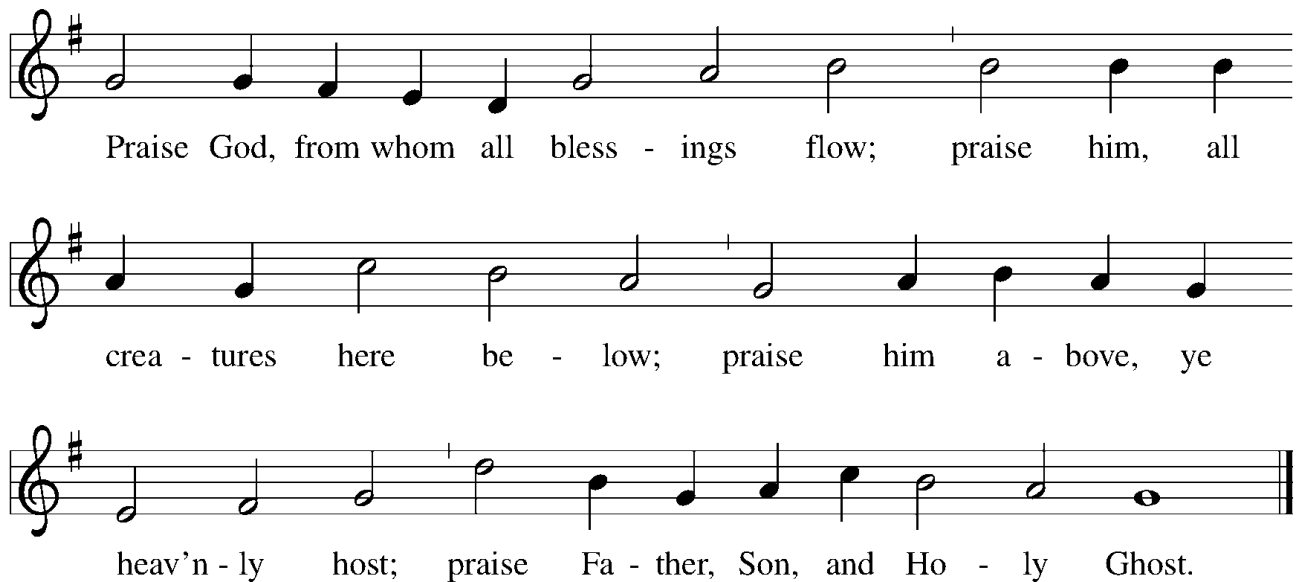
Congregation: Amen.

BLESSING

Worship Leader: 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.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG *The Doxology*



The musical notation for 'The Doxology' is presented in three staves. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The first staff contains the lyrics 'Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all'. The second staff contains 'crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye'. The third staff contains 'heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.' The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in Peace. Christ is with you.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

