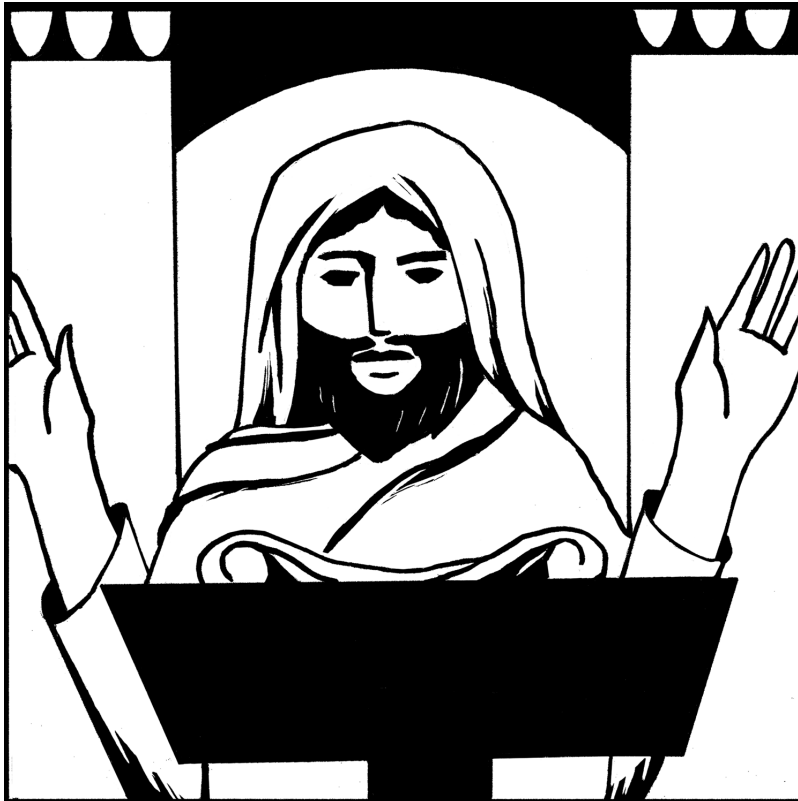


3rd Sunday After Epiphany

January 23, 2022

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

727-446-5026

office@GraceCLW.com

Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.

There are a few things to know about this service: you are not required to stand at any point though you can move around anytime you want or need, prayer slips are available for your prayers to be included in Prayer Time, and Holy Communion is served with gluten-free bread and grape juice.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

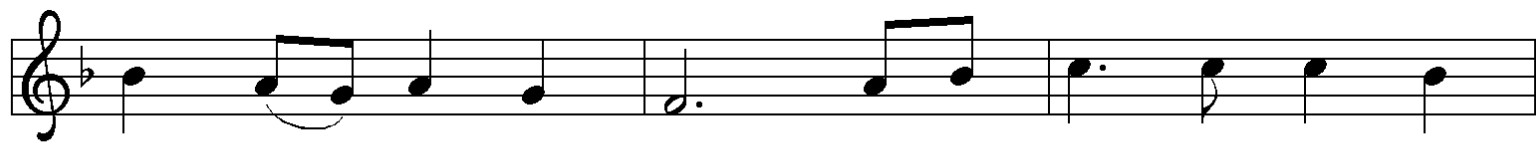
Verses 1 & 5



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.

5 Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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GREETING

Pastor: 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

Pastor: Let us pray. Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Introduction to the Lesson: The exiles have returned and rebuilt Jerusalem. Now Ezra, the priest, reads the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it, they weep for their sins and for the long years in exile, but Ezra reminds them that “the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Reader: By the seventh month the people of Israel were all settled in their towns. On the first day of that month they all assembled in Jerusalem, in the square just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra, the priest and scholar of the Law which the Lord had given Israel through Moses, to get the book of the Law. 2 So Ezra brought it to the place where the people had gathered—men, women, and the children who were old enough to understand. 3 There in the square by the gate he read the Law to them from dawn until noon, and they all listened attentively.

5 As Ezra stood there on the platform high above the people, they all kept their eyes fixed on him. As soon as he opened the book, they all stood up. 6 Ezra said, “Praise the Lord, the great God!”

All the people raised their arms in the air and answered, “Amen! Amen!” They knelt in worship, with their faces to the ground.

8 They gave an oral translation of God's Law and explained it so that the people could understand it.

9 When the people heard what the Law required, they were so moved that they began to cry. So Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra, the priest and scholar of the Law, and the Levites who were explaining the Law told all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God, so you are not to mourn or cry. 10 Now go home and have a feast. Share your food and wine with those who don't have enough. Today is holy to our Lord, so don't be sad. The joy that the Lord gives you will make you strong.”

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord. **Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 4:14-21

Introduction to the Gospel: *Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth. In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and mission.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Luke in the 4th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Pastor: 14 Then Jesus returned to Galilee, and the power of the Holy Spirit was with him. The news about him spread throughout all that territory. 15 He taught in the synagogues and was praised by everyone.

Jesus Is Rejected at Nazareth

16 Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath he went as usual to the synagogue. He stood up to read the Scriptures 17 and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written,

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,

to set free the oppressed

19 and announce that the time has come
when the Lord will save his people.”

20 Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him, 21 as he said to them, “This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read.”

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

A New Kind of Justice

All sorts of social cues tell us that “justice” requires vengeance, punishment, pain for pain, or even death, in the case of violent crime. This is what we call “retributive justice.” In our reading today Jesus claims fulfillment of God’s promise as proclaimed by Isaiah; Jesus has come “to bring good news to the poor” and “to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18). This is not a kind of justice that promises peace at the expense of others. Rather, the justice to which Jesus alludes is restorative.

Our culture encourages a retributive mindset. We want offenders to suffer, thinking that it will deter them and others from such actions. It seldom does. The thinking is that retributive violence is required in response to wrongdoing. But this dynamic only reinforces the spiral of violence. Restorative justice, in contrast, is the turning around offered by Jesus when he states that Isaiah’s prophecy has been fulfilled.

Restorative justice is the foundation of salvation. By his coming into the world, Jesus brings with him the salvation that will proclaim liberty to all of us who are captive to something, whether we deserve that liberty in the eyes of society or not. Restorative justice reminds us that love is not about deserving, and that God’s will for you and for me is to be so filled with God’s grace that we are once again made complete, made whole, and restored. Jesus is sending a signal that his coming into the world is an invitation to look at everything we think we know from a different perspective. Everything that Jesus says has been fulfilled is something that restores righteousness to the universe and heals and builds relationship.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Hark, the Glad Sound! verses 1 & 2



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751

Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each part of the prayers ends with the words:

“Lord, in your mercy,”

and we respond:

“**Hear our prayer.**”

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the “Donate” button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our

way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.
Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: 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.

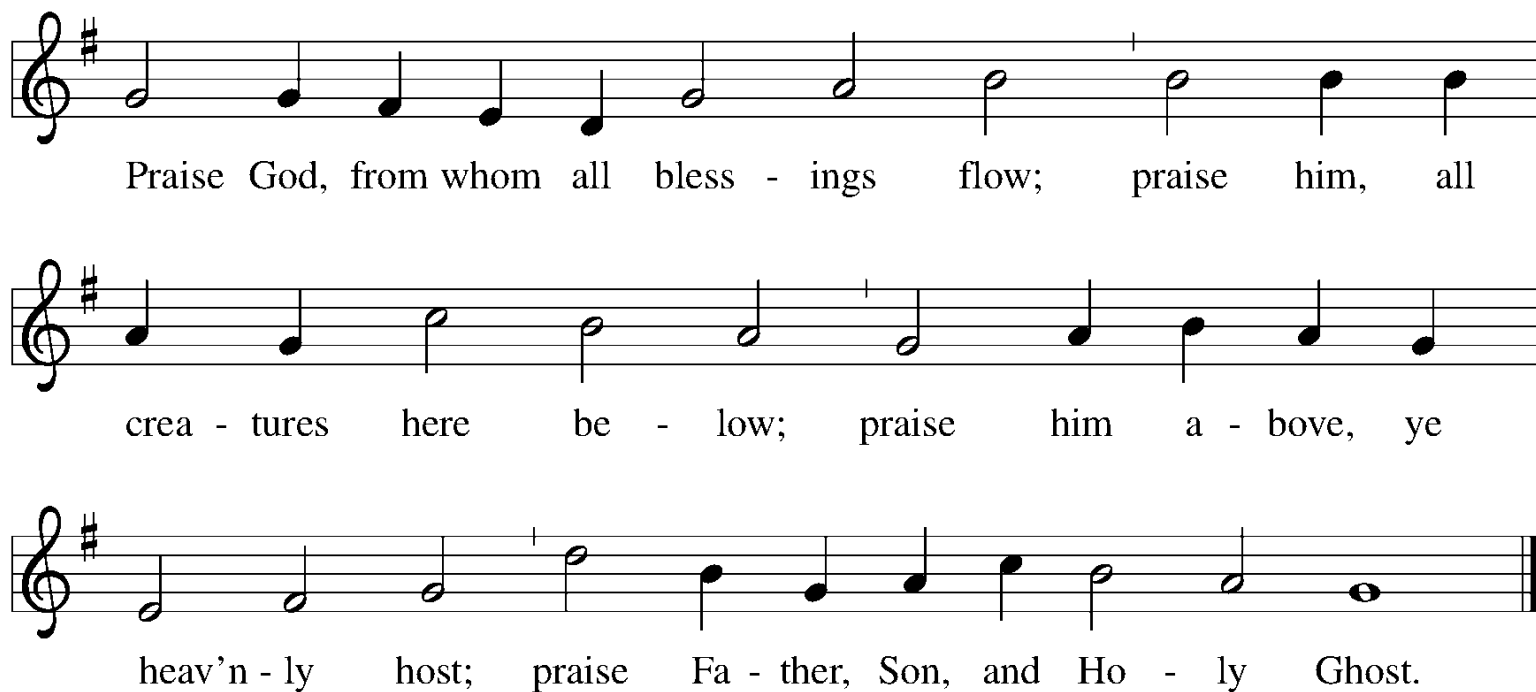
BLESSING

Pastor: 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



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

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. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

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