

# *1st Sunday in Lent*

## *February 21, 2021*



1812 North Highland Avenue  
Clearwater, Florida 33755  
Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

727-446-5026  
[office@GraceCLW.com](mailto:office@GraceCLW.com)  
Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! 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.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. We have closed the Sanctuary to the general public amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: [GraceCLW.com](http://GraceCLW.com)

# SERVICE OF THE WORD

## PRELUDE

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

**Congregation: Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Worship Leader: Fountain of living water,

**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.**

Worship Leader: 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. Journey in the way of Jesus.

**Congregation: Amen.**

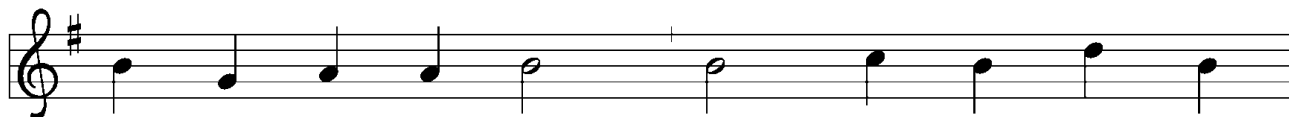
## GATHERING HYMN

## *The Glory of These Forty Days*

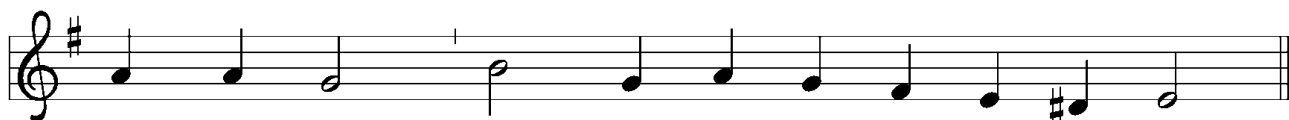
verses 1 & 4



1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we cel - e -  
2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the lov - ing  
3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de - liv - ered  
4 Then grant, O God, that we may, too, re - turn in



brate with songs of praise; for Christ, through whom all  
God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah,  
from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride - groom's  
fast and prayer to you. Our spir - its strength - en



things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.  
fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.  
friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.  
with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; tr. Maurice F. Bell, 1862–1947, alt.

Music: ERHALT UNS, HERR, J. Klug, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1543

Outside USA: Text from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906, All rights reserved.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

## APOSTOLIC 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 together the Prayer of the Day.

**Congregation: 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.**

## FIRST READING

## Genesis 9:8-17

Introduction to the Lesson: *Today's reading is the conclusion to the flood story. Because of human sin, God destroys the earth by flood, saving only Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Yet divine destruction gives way to divine commitment. As in the first creation, God blesses humanity and establishes a covenant with all creatures.*

Reader: <sup>8</sup>God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup>“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup>and 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. <sup>11</sup>I 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.” <sup>12</sup>God 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: <sup>13</sup>I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>I 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. <sup>16</sup>When 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.” <sup>17</sup>God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

*After the reading...*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 25:1-10

*The psalm for the day is read responsively with Lenten refrain sung first and then at each R:*



Cre - ate in me a clean heart O God and re-new a right spi-rit with-in \_\_\_ me.

Reader: <sup>1</sup>To you, O LORD,  
I lift up my soul.

**<sup>2</sup>My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

<sup>3</sup>Let none who look to you be put to shame;  
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

**<sup>4</sup>Show me your ways, O LORD,  
and teach me your paths. R**

<sup>5</sup>Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

**<sup>6</sup>Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,  
for they are from everlasting.**

<sup>7</sup>Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;  
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O  
LORD.

**<sup>8</sup>You are gracious and upright, O LORD;  
therefore you teach sinners in your way. R**

<sup>9</sup>You lead the lowly in justice  
and teach the lowly your way.

**<sup>10</sup>All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness  
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies. R**

**SECOND READING                      1 Peter 3:18-22**

Introduction to the Lesson: *As God acted through Christ's suffering and death to bring us to God, so God acts through baptism to save us from a sinful existence. This spiritual cleansing marks our new life in Christ.*

Reader: <sup>18</sup>Christ 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, <sup>19</sup>in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup>who 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. <sup>21</sup>And 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, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

*After the reading...*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

## LENTEN VERSE



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord. Save us as you prom-ised. We will trust your word.

## GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1:9-15

Introduction to the Gospel: *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.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Mark in the 1st chapter.

Congregation:



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: <sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>And 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. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

<sup>12</sup>And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup>He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

<sup>14</sup>Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup>and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

*After the reading...*

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation:



Pra-ise to— you—, O— Christ.

## GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

### Secure Even When It's Not Safe

The world is unsafe in countless ways. It contains wilderness after wilderness, places where temptation and danger seem to reign. Struggle, pain, fear, violence, hate, death, and suffering are all part of the uncertain world that we wake to each day.

Today, the Gospel of Mark discusses Jesus' own encounter with the wilderness. After he was baptized by John the Baptist, Jesus was driven into the desert wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan for forty days. What's more, when Jesus left the wilderness to re-enter society, he encountered another kind of dangerous wilderness, a world where John the Baptist had just been arrested for confronting Herod Antipas and his wife Herodias with some hard-hitting truth.

After forty days of temptation, Jesus was met by yet another temptation: to play it safe in a world that had just silenced his friend for doing exactly the kind of thing that Jesus came to do. Despite the risk posed by worldly power players like Herod, Jesus proceeded to teach, heal, and spread the good news of God's kingdom. Despite the danger, Jesus trusted in the promise that God's love was bigger than the wilderness of human wiles.

The world is not safe, and believing in Jesus does not change this fact. However, we are secure in an unsafe world because of the promises made by God in baptism. Think of children who are secure in the love of their parents. They may go to school and face bullies—a painful experience, for sure—but they are less likely to trust the lies of the bullies because they know a deeper truth about themselves, a truth instilled by the love of their parents. So it is with us. There is danger and wilderness all around, but we are secure in the truth of our baptism: we are God's beloved children, with whom God is well pleased. Grounded in this secure love, we derive courage to set out into the wild.

## SERMON

### HYMN OF THE DAY *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God vs. 1 & 2*



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -  
2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -



to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and  
ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom



wins sal - va - tion glo - rious.      The old sa - tan - ic foe  
God him - self e - lect - ed.      You ask who this may be?



has sworn to work us woe!      With craft and dread - ful might  
The Lord of hosts is he!      Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,



he arms him - self to fight.      On earth he has no e - qual.  
God's on - ly Son, a - dored.      He holds the field vic - to - rious.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

*A brief silence.*

Prayer Leader: 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,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: 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,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: 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,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: Even in the wilderness you are with us. Walk alongside migrants and refugees crossing dangerous lands. Tend to those whose lives feel desolate. Give healing and strength to all who suffer (*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, 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 Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali



Garcia & family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vicki Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Lisa & Ty Hauschild, Bishop Pedro Suarez, Pastor Courtney Erzkus and family, Ralph Burson, Ellen Duncan, Luanne Sekel, Lorraine Chavez, Pat Fredell, Skylar Favos, and all those suffering from natural disasters [including all those affected by COVID-19 and severe winter weather], from violence, & terror, and the family & friends of the 490,000+ people in the US & the 2,400,000+ people worldwide who have died from COVID-19). Lord, in your mercy,  
**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: 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. Lord, in your mercy,  
**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Prayer Leader: 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, especially those resting within our Memorial Garden. Bring us with them to the fullness of your reign. Lord, in your mercy,  
**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Worship Leader: Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.  
**Congregation: Amen.**

## OFFERING

*Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at [GraceCLW.com](http://GraceCLW.com) (look for the "Donate" button), or 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 also fill out your attendance form on our website.***

## OFFERTORY *Create in Me a Clean Heart*



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take

not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of  
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923  
 Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

### OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Merciful God, receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving and the offering of our lives, that following in the way of the cross, we may know the joy of the resurrection; through Christ our Lord.

**Congregation: Amen.**

### THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader:

The Lord be with you.

Congregation:

And al- so with you.

W. Leader:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Cong.:

It is right to give our\_ thanks and praise.

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

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.**

## BLESSING

Worship Leader: 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. God bless you ☩ that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN

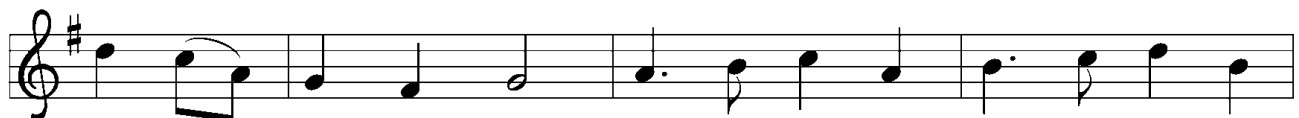
*Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer* vs. 1 & 2



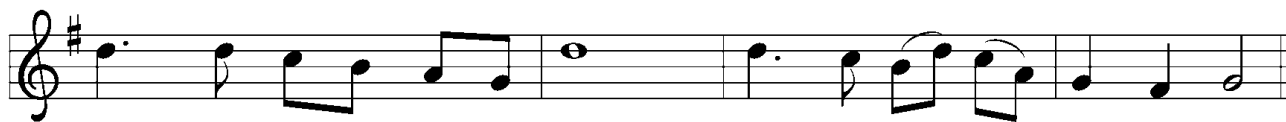
1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem-er, pil - grim through this  
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun-tain where the heal - ing  
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me  
wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me  
fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me



with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,  
safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es



feed me now and ev - er - more,  
shield me with your might-y arm,  
I will raise for - ev - er - more,

feed me now and ev - er - more.  
shield me with your might-y arm.  
I will raise for - ev - er - more.

Text: William Williams, 1717–1791; tr. William Williams and Peter Williams, 1722–1796, alt.  
Music: CWM RHONDDA, John Hughes, 1873–1932

## DISMISSAL

Worship Leader: Together we have heard God’s Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week’s service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Share the Good News.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #27824. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.