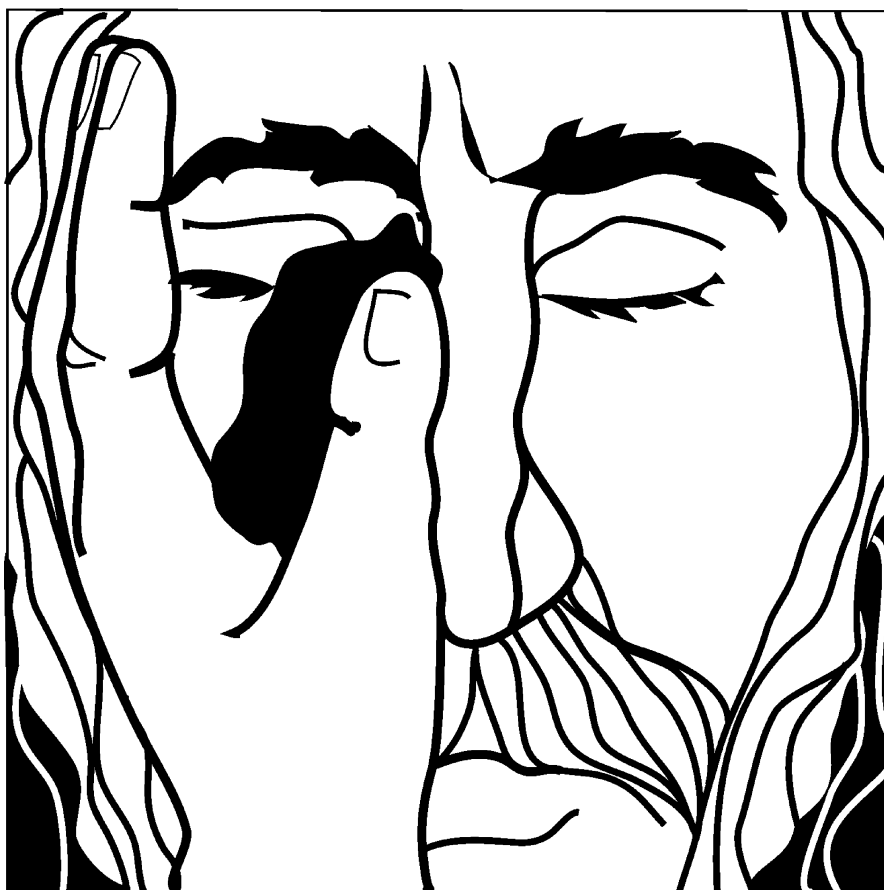


Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 19, 2023

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

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.

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, and Holy Communion is served with gluten-free bread & grape juice.

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
Refrain
Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,
all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling

Verse 3



2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for



you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,

Refrain



mer - cies 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!”

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. 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.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Ephesians 5:8-14

Introduction to the Lesson: *Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our activity is truly pleasing to God.*

8 You yourselves used to be in the darkness, but since you have become the Lord's people, you are in the light. So you must live like people who belong to the light, 9 for it is the light that brings a rich harvest of every kind of goodness, righteousness, and truth. 10 Try to learn what pleases the Lord. 11 Have nothing to do with the worthless things that people do, things that belong to the darkness. Instead, bring them out to the light. (12 It is really too shameful even to talk about the things they do in secret.) 13 And when all things are brought out to the light, then their true nature is clearly revealed; 14 for anything that is clearly revealed becomes light. That is why it is said,

“Wake up, sleeper,
and rise from death,
and Christ will shine on you.”

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.*

Pastor: 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. 2 His disciples asked him, “Teacher, whose sin caused him to be born blind? Was it his own or his parents' sin?”

3 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. 4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me; night is coming when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light for the world.” 6 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 7 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. 8 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?" 9 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." 10 "How is it that you can now see?" they asked him. 11 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." 12 "Where is he?" they asked. "I don't know," he answered.

13 Then they took to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. 14 The day that Jesus made the mud and cured him of his blindness was a Sabbath. 15 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." 16 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. 17 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. 18 The Jewish authorities, however, were not willing to believe that he had been blind and could now see, until they called his parents 19 and asked them, "Is this your son? You say that he was born blind; how is it, then, that he can now see?" 20 His parents answered, "We know that he is our son, and we know that he was born blind. 21 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!" 22 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. 23 That is why his parents said, "He is old enough; ask him!"

24 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." 25 "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." 26 "What did he do to you?" they asked. "How did he cure you of your blindness?" 27 "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?" 28 They insulted him and said,

“You are that fellow's disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. 29 We know that God spoke to Moses; as for that fellow, however, we do not even know where he comes from!” 30 The man answered, “What a strange thing that is! You do not know where he comes from, but he cured me of my blindness! 31 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. 32 Since the beginning of the world nobody has ever heard of anyone giving sight to a person born blind. 33 Unless this man came from God, he would not be able to do a thing.” 34 They answered, “You were born and brought up in sin—and you are trying to teach us?” And they expelled him from the synagogue.

35 When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” 36 The man answered, “Tell me who he is, sir, so that I can believe in him!” 37 Jesus said to him, “You have already seen him, and he is the one who is talking with you now.” 38 “I believe, Lord!” the man said, and knelt down before Jesus. 39 Jesus said, “I came to this world to judge, so that the blind should see and those who see should become blind.” 40 Some Pharisees who were there with him heard him say this and asked him, “Surely you don't mean that we are blind, too?” 41 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...

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

There Is a Balm in Gilead

verses 1 & 2

Refrain



There is a balm in Gil - e - ad to make the wound - ed whole;

there is a balm in Gil - e - ad to heal the sin - sick soul.



1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,
3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;



but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."
and if you lack for knowl - edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: BALM IN GILEAD, African American spiritual

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Lord, in your mercy, **Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with hunger for justice. Equip the feeding ministries of this congregation and community, especially our Community Breakfast ministry, the food bank of Hope Villages of America, and the Adaptive Worship Café. Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve. We pray for those on our prayer list, those suffering from war and terror such as the people of Ukraine and victims of mass shootings, those suffering from natural and manmade disasters including hurricanes, blizzards, floods, and chemical spills, & and these people and circumstances we name now..... and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts Give them your living water always. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Pastor: 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

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name.

Pastor: 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.

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.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a hymn. The first staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 7/8 time signature. The melody is written on a single line. The second staff is identical to the first. The lyrics are written below the notes.

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.



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

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.

TABLE BLESSING (*AFTER COMMUNION IS SERVED*)

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Congregation: Amen.**

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

Pastor: 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. 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.**

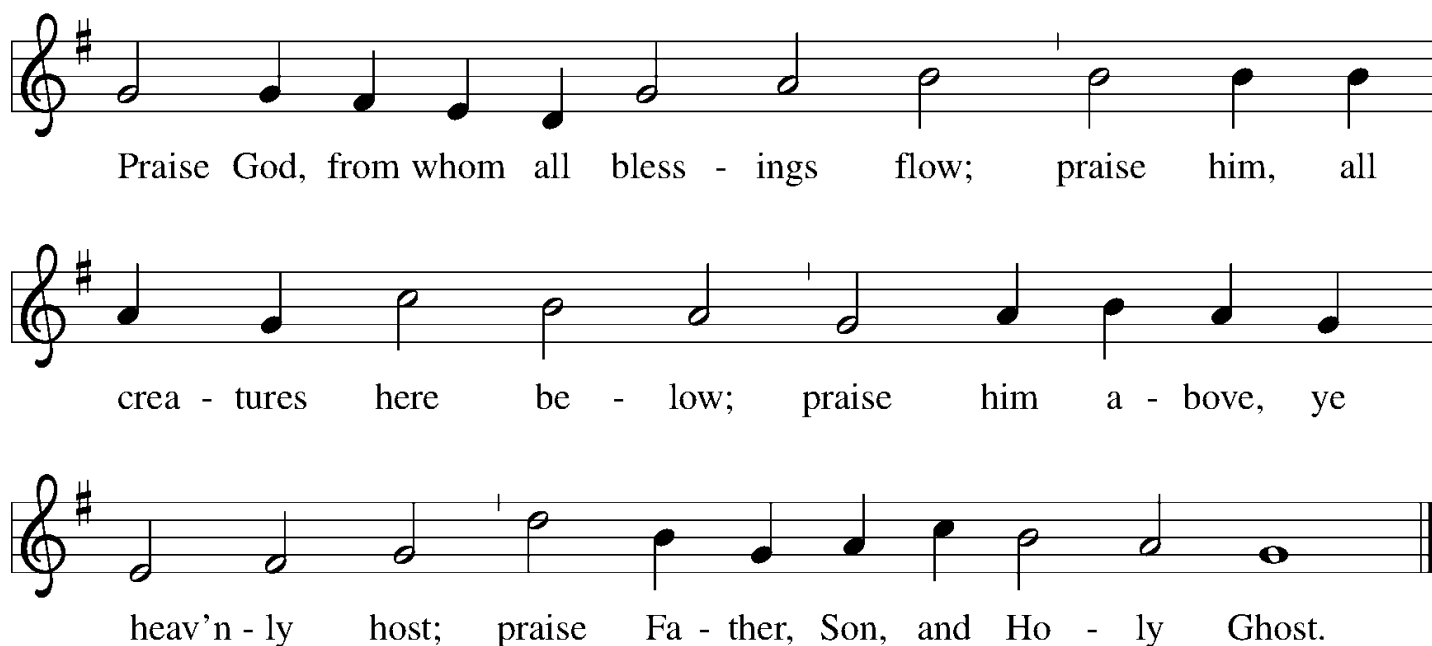
BLESSING

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 as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Serve in love.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

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