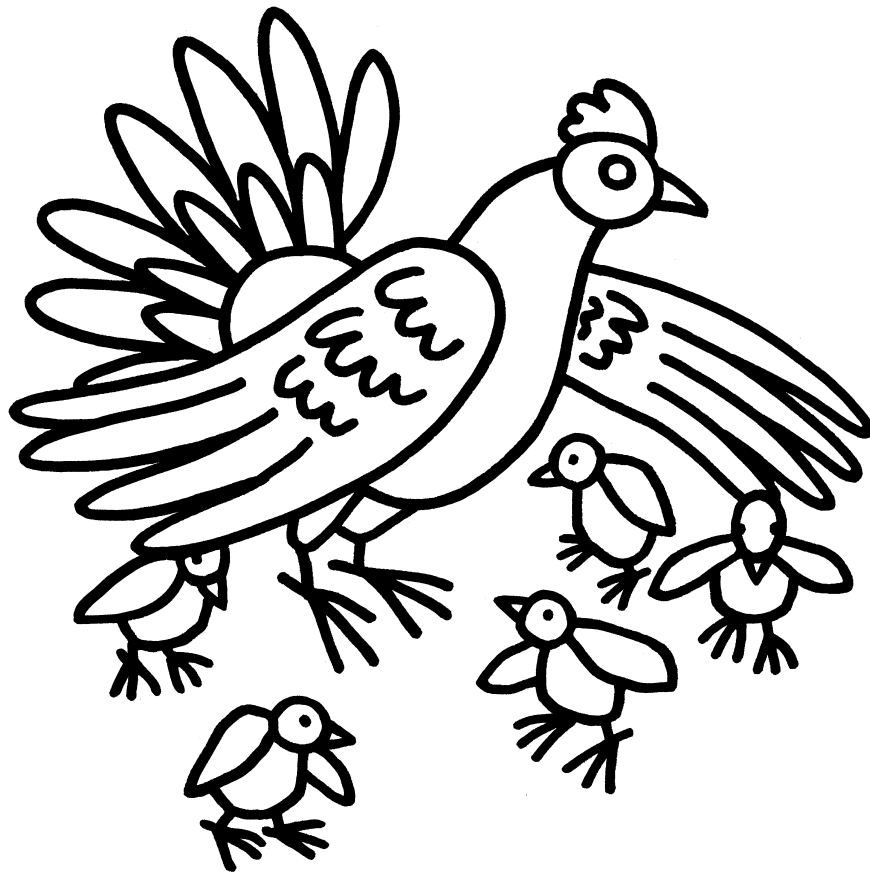


Second Sunday in Lent

March 13, 2022



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! Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek God's face again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."

This is our online version of the bulletin for the 9:45am worship service. After the Offering, this bulletin leads participants through the Thanksgiving of the Word rather than Communion, since our piety does not support virtual Communion at home. However, Communion can be brought to you from the in-person service if you so desire. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader or by following our online service. 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.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

LENTEN PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Worship Leader: In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage.

Congregation: Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Worship Leader: Holy One,

Congregation: we confess that we have wandered far from you: we have not trusted your promises, we have ignored your prophets in our own day, we have squandered our inheritance of grace, we have failed to recognize you in our midst. Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you. Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbor. Amen.

Worship Leader: Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love. God forgives your sins, journeys with you, and teaches you how to live in love.

Congregation: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

God Is Here!

ELW 526 vs. 1, 3 & 4



1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to of - fer
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our life - long
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the Shep - herd's
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an age of



praise and prayer, may we find in full - er mea - sure
 need of grace; here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit;
 flock and fold; here as bread and wine are tak - en,
 change and doubt, keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel;



what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the
 here the cross has cen - tral place. Here in hon - es -
 Christ sus - tains us as of old. Here the ser - vants
 help us work your pur - pose out. Here, in this day's



world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts
 ty of preach - ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,
 of the Ser - vant seek in wor - ship to ex - plore
 ded - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;



wait the com - ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 here, in new - ness and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 we, who can - not live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000

Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH, Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–1991

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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. God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

God promises a childless and doubting Abram that he will have a child, that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and that the land of Canaan will be their inheritance. Abram's trust in God is sealed with a covenant-making ceremony, a sign of God's promise.

Reader: 1After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." 2But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." 4But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." 5He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

7Then he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." 8But he said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" 9He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. 11And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

17When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. 18On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

The reading is concluded:

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Philippians 3:17--4:1

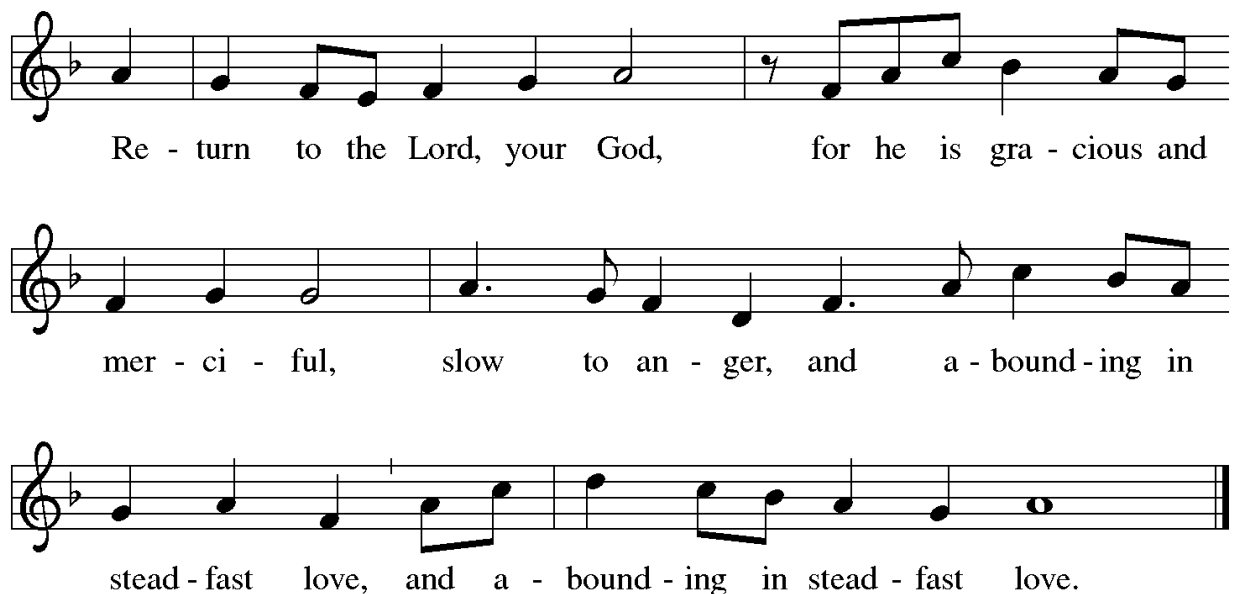
Although Paul's devotion to Christ has caused him to be persecuted, he does not regret the course he has taken. Writing from prison, he expresses confidence in a glorious future and encourages other Christians to follow in his footsteps.

Reader: ¹⁷Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. ^{4:1}Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

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

We stand

LENTEN VERSE



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL

Luke 13:31-35

Neither Herod's plotting nor Jerusalem's resistance to maternal love will deter Jesus from his sacrificial mission.

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Luke in the 13th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: ³¹At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus,] "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." ³²He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me,

‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’

³⁴Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

After the reading...

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

We sit

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

The Hard Way

In Luke’s gospel, Jesus sets a course toward Jerusalem, even though he knows what he will face there. His gospel of forgiveness and inclusion will prove intolerable to the powers of the empire, eventually resulting in his execution. Still, when he is warned, he responds, “I must be on my way” (Luke 13:33), and laments for the city that will kill him. Jesus is not naive about violence and conflict in the world. He heads straight for it anyway, knowing what he is called to do.

We are often faced with choices in which doing the right thing means some inconvenience or hardship. Spiritual disciplines during Lent offer practice for rising to these challenges, such as giving up single-use plastics in order to limit our impact on the planet. On a deeper level, moving toward racial justice as a country asks people to learn more about the continuing impact of hundreds of years of slavery and segregation, and to make choices and implement policies that address this continuing legacy.

Where do we get the resolve to do the right thing—even when it means taking the hard way?

Perhaps doing the right thing even when it’s hard begins as it did for Jesus in his prayer of lament for Jerusalem: with honesty and an openly broken heart. As a cry of sadness or anger, lament roots us in the communal bonds of shared grief and turns us toward the deeper power and justice of God. Lament is an ancient and enduring form of prayer, well represented in the prayer book of the Hebrew Bible, the Psalms. It is a raw and honest expression of grief and rage without excuses, without explanations. God hears, God sees. God is with us in the sorrow, and in the resolve to be more compassionate and just.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Thy Holy Wings



1 Thy ho - ly wings, O Sav - ior, spread gent-ly o - ver me,
2 Oh, let me nes - tle near thee, with - in thy down-y breast
3 Oh, wash me in the wa - ters of No-ah's cleans-ing flood.



and let me rest se - cure - ly through good and ill in thee.
where I will find sweet com-fort and peace with - in thy nest.
Give me a will - ing spir - it, a heart both clean and good.



Oh, be my strength and por - tion, my rock and hid - ing place,
Oh, close thy wings a - round me and keep me safe - ly there,
Oh, take in - to thy keep - ing thy chil - dren great and small,



and let my ev - 'ry mo - ment be lived with-in thy grace.
for I am but a new - born and need thy ten - der care.
and while we sweet-ly slum - ber, en - fold us one and all.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903, sts. 1, 3; Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, st. 2; tr. composite

Music: BRED DINA VIDA VINGAR, Swedish folk tune

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APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;**

**he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: You gather the church into a community of mercy and grace. Unify Christians around the globe in efforts to proclaim good news even in the face of opposition and to protect those whose lives are imperiled by the gospel. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: You create the entire universe and call it good. Hinder those who would cause further destruction to our planet's fragile ecosystems, and augment the calls of those who advocate for thoughtful stewardship of the earth's resources. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: You raise up leaders committed to love and justice. Nurture in those who govern patience to receive criticism, openness to new ideas, and courage to change course when needed for the sake of the common good. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: You hear us when we cry to you. Attend to those expecting a child, and console those who have experienced miscarriage. Comfort veterans enduring post-traumatic stress. Shield those endangered by domestic violence. Uphold those who are ill or grieving *especially* those on the prayer list of our congregation, all those suffering from violence, terror, or natural disasters (including all those impacted by COVID-19, and the people of Ukraine), and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts.....
Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: You kindle faith that moves us into action. Guide children and adults preparing for baptism or confirmation. Empower Sunday school teachers, confirmation

leaders, and parents who share their faith with younger generations. Give us all a renewed sense of vocation. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Prayer Leader: You welcome us into your heavenly realm. We give thanks for those whose labors on earth are ended and who now rest with you, especially those within our Memorial Garden. On the final day, gather all of us, with them, in your loving arms. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Worship Leader: Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

*Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at 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 an Attendance Form on our website.** If you're new to Grace through our online services, please consider sharing some information about yourself through our Attendance Form.*

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Let us pray. 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: 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 SONG

Blessed Be the God of Israel



1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el who comes to set us free
2 With prom - ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call,
3 My child, as proph - et of the Lord you will pre - pare the way,



and rais - es up new hope for us: a Branch from Da - vid's tree.
the oath once sworn to A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all;
to tell God's peo - ple they are saved from sin's e - ter - nal sway.



So have the proph - ets long de - clared that with a might - y arm
that we might wor - ship with - out fear and of - fer lives of praise,
Then shall God's mer - cy from on high shine forth and nev - er cease



God would turn back our en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.
in ho - li - ness and righ - teous - ness to serve God all our days.
to drive a - way the gloom of death and lead us in - to peace.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944, based on Luke 1:68-79

Music: FOREST GREEN, English folk tune

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DISMISSAL

Assisting Minister: 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!

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