

Fifth Sunday in Lent

April 3, 2022



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

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! Our God makes all things new. In the first reading God promises it. In the gospel Mary anticipates it, anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume in preparation for the day of his burial. In the second reading Paul recalls his transformation from the persecutor Saul into an apostle. In baptism, God's new person (you!) rises daily from the deadly mire of trespasses and sins.

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

THE HOLY BAPTISM OF CORA LYNN ARMSTEAD

Pastor: In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

A sponsor or sponsors present the candidate:

I present Cora Lynn Armstead for baptism.

The presiding minister addresses the parent and/or guardians:

Pastor: Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have your child baptized into Christ?

Response: I do.

Pastor: As you bring your child to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities: to live with her among God's faithful people, bring her to the word of God and the holy supper, teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten

Commandments, place in her hands the holy scriptures, and nurture her in faith and prayer, so that your child may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace. Do you promise to help your child grow in the Christian faith and life?

Response: I do.

The presiding minister addresses the sponsor or sponsors:

Pastor: Sponsor(s), do you promise to nurture this person in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Response: I do.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly:

Pastor: People of God, do you promise to support Cora and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

Congregation: We do.

The presiding minister addresses the parent(s) and sponsor(s). The assembly may join in the responses.

Pastor: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God, the powers of this world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Response: I renounce them.

The presiding minister addresses the candidates and the assembly.

Pastor: Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

Congregation: 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.

Pastor: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

Congregation: 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.

At the font, the presiding minister begins the thanksgiving:

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

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

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

Pastor: Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and mighty, you are the river of life, you are the everlasting wellspring, you are the fire of rebirth. Glory to you for oceans and lakes, for rivers and streams. Honor to you for cloud and rain, for dew and snow. Your waters are below us, around us, above us: our life is born in you. Satisfy all our thirst with your living water, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

The presiding minister baptizes the candidate.

Pastor: Cora Lynn Armstead, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

The presiding minister continues:

Pastor: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life. Sustain Cora Lynn with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

The presiding minister marks the sign of the cross on the forehead of each of the baptized. As the sign of the cross is made, the minister says:

Pastor: Cora Lynn Armstead, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

Congregation: Amen.

A lighted candle is given to the sponsor(s) as a representative of the congregation says:

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

The ministers and the baptismal group face the assembly. A representative of the congregation leads the assembly in the welcome.

Pastor: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

Congregation: We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

GATHERING HYMN

Borning Cry



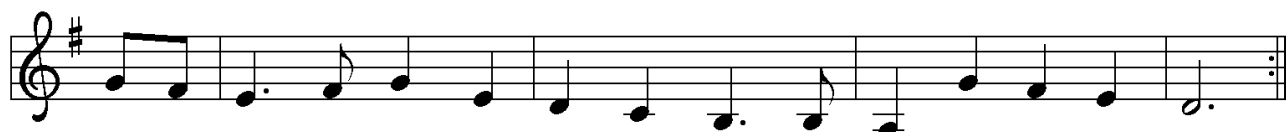
- 1 "I was there to hear your born-ing cry, I'll be there when you are old.
- 2 "When you heard the won - der of the Word I was there to cheer you on;
- 3 "In the mid - dle a - ges of your life, not too old, no lon - ger young,



I re - joiced the day you were bap - tized to see your life un - fold.
you were raised to praise the liv - ing Lord, to whom you now be - long.
I'll be there to guide you through the night, com - plete what I've be - gun.



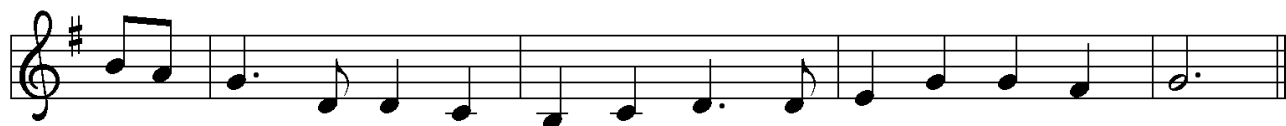
I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;
If you find some - one to share your time and you join your hearts as one,
When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es in and you shut your wea - ry eyes,



in a blaze of light you wan - dered off to find where de - mons dwell."
I'll be there to make your vers - es rhyme from dusk till ris - ing sun."
I'll be there as I have al - ways been, with just one more sur - prise."



- 4 "I was there to hear your born-ing cry, I'll be there when you are old.



I re - joiced the day you were bap - tized to see your life un - fold."

Text: John C. Ylvisaker, b. 1937
Music: WATERLIFE, John C. Ylvisaker
Text and music © 1985 John Ylvisaker.

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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. Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through 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

Isaiah 43:16-21

The prophet declares that long ago God performed mighty deeds and delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage through the waters of the sea. Now, God is about to do a new thing, bringing the exiles out of Babylon and through the wilderness in a new Exodus.

Reader: ¹⁶Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷who brings out chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.
¹⁹I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
²⁰The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.

The reading is concluded:

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Writing to Christians in Philippi, Paul admits that his heritage and reputation could give him more reason than most people to place confidence in his spiritual pedigree. But the overwhelming grace of God in Jesus calls Paul to a new set of values.

Reader: [Paul writes:] 4bIf anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: 5circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of

Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

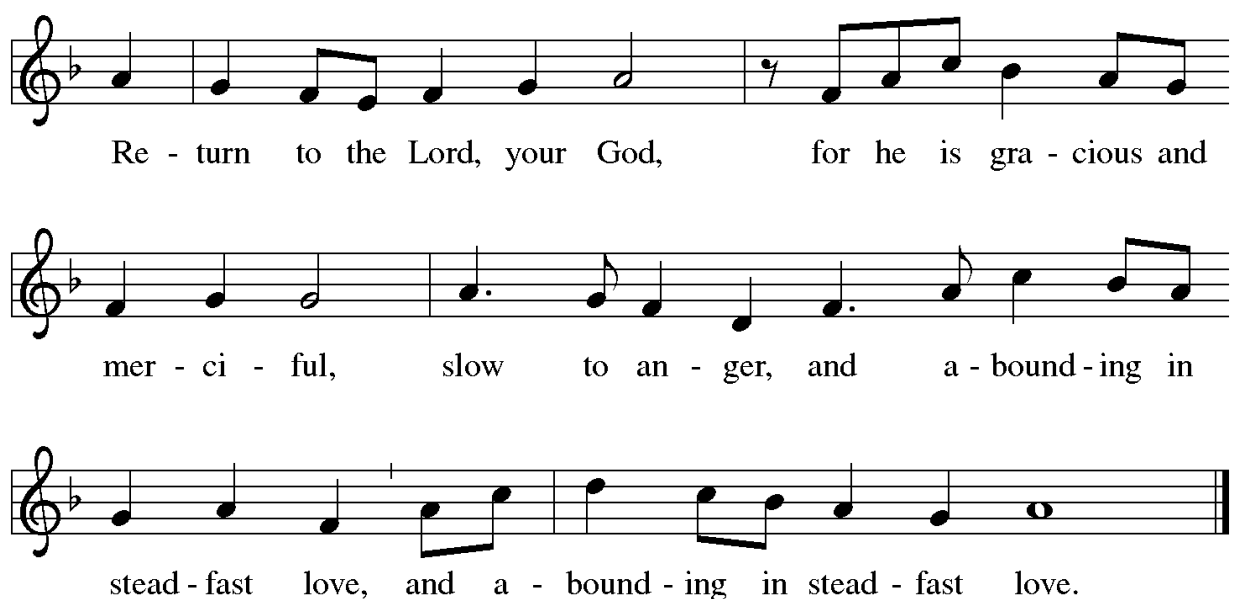
7Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ.

8More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. 10I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, 11if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

12Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

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

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

John 12:1-8

Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to John in the 12th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: ¹Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ²There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, ⁵"Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" ⁶(He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) ⁷Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

After the reading...

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

We sit

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Open Your Hand

"You always have the poor with you," Jesus told the disciple who complained about the extravagance of Mary's anointing (John 12:8). It's not a callous dismissal. In fact, he is likely quoting Deuteronomy 15:11, which continues: "I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.'"

No one has ever lived in a world that has solved the crisis of poverty. It can be disheartening to see the same social problems we have addressed for years continuing to grow.

Throughout Jesus' life and teaching, he repeatedly offered examples of our ongoing responsibility to care for each other. "You will always have the poor with you" may feel deflating when we focus on *always*, but what if we put the emphasis on *with*? How are we *with* people who are poor, in diverse communities of various experiences, incomes, needs, and insights?

We live in a time and place of considerable financial instability without much room for error. One health crisis or job loss can sink us into poverty, so we need each other. Mary's extravagant generosity shows us we are not on our own. As members of the body of Christ, we are in this together. We can let generosity flow through us because God pours life into us, fragrant and overflowing, bursting with possibility.

We pray not for "*my* daily bread" but for "*our* daily bread" (Matthew 6:11), so we must be *with* each other, to share, to give and receive, to love and be loved. We are children of a God who, like Mary with her perfume, does not hold back but lets love flow. This love flows richly through us, through the body of Christ that gathers together and cares for each other and for others. Together we have enough.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

The Glory of These Forty Days



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

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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: Do a new thing in the church. Free us from paradigms that no longer serve the gospel and bring forward leaders who imagine fresh ways of doing ministry. Give us courage in the face of change. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Do a new thing for creation. Reverse the trajectory of climate change and environmental catastrophe. Revive habitats already impaired by human disregard.

Amplify the voices of climate scientists and researchers working to chart a new course.
Lord, in your mercy,
Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Do a new thing in our world. Break barriers that prevent political enemies from working together for the well-being of all. Make a way for peace and collaboration among the nations. Lord, in your mercy,
Congregation: hear our prayer.

Do a new thing for those who suffer. Reveal a path for any who are unemployed or underemployed, for those experiencing homelessness, and for all who struggle with money. Comfort those who grieve and restore those who are sick (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: Do a new thing within us. Direct us into encounters that broaden our understanding of the human experience. Amplify voices that are ignored or devalued (especially). Deliver us especially from the scourge of racism. Lord, in your mercy,
Congregation: hear our prayer.
Here other intercessions may be offered.

Prayer Leader: Do a new thing in our death. Fill us with the knowledge of Christ and the power of his resurrection as we give thanks for those within our Memorial Garden and all the saints who have attained the prize of their heavenly call. 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

My Faith Looks Up to Thee



- 1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
- 2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
- 3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
- 4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, oh, may my
be thou my guide; bid dark-ness turn to day, wipe sor-row's
shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love fear and dis -



guilt a - way, oh, let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
love to thee pure, warm, and change - less be, a liv - ing fire!
tears a - way, nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
trust re - move; oh, bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

Text: Ray Palmer, 1808–1887

Music: OLIVET, Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

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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