

Prelude

GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness

In the words of a reformation hymn, let us confess our sin before God.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Out of the depths I cry to you;

O Lord God, hear me calling. Incline your ear to my distress in spite of my rebelling. Do not regard my sinful deeds. Send me the grace my spirit needs. Without it I am nothing. Amen.

In God alone, in God we hope, and not in our own merit. We hope as Israel in the Lord, who sends redemption through the ✠ Word. Praise God for grace and mercy!

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“Lift High the Cross”

Hymn No. 660

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Kyrie

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Prayer of the Day

(Together) **O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

Teaching Moment

Children’s Sermon

First Lesson

Genesis 12:1-4a

¹The LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

^{4a}So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

(After the reading) The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 121 (*Responsively, Lector and People*)

¹I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?

²**My help comes from the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

³The LORD will not let your foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

⁴**Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep;**

⁵the LORD watches over you;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

⁶**the sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

⁷The LORD will preserve you from all evil
and will keep your life.

⁸**The LORD will watch over your going out and
your coming in, from this time forth forevermore.**

Second Lesson**Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. ¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. ¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

(*After the reading*) The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

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**Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love.**

Holy Gospel**John 3:1-17***(Spoken after the announcement)* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” ³Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

(Spoken after the reading) **Praise to you, O Christ.****Sermon**

Pastor Krista Zimmerman

Hymn of the Day

“We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus”

Hymn No. 451

Apostles Creed*(Together)* **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our LORD. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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

Lifting our voices and turning toward God, let us pray for the church, the earth, and all who are in need.

(After each petition) Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast love; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

MEAL

Choir Anthem

“Come, Ye Sinners Poor and Needy”

(8:30 am)

Offering

Great Thanksgiving

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Eucharistic Prayer

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord...

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again ...

...be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

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Traditional – Right hand column

Invitation

Return to God with all your heart. Receive bread for the journey, drink for the desert. All are welcome.

Lamb of God

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Distribution

We invite all baptized Christians and visitors of all denominations, even the youngest, to the table of the Lord. Children who desire a blessing rather than receiving the bread and the wine should stand with folded hands to indicate their preference. Please follow the ushers' directions to one of several communion stations in the sanctuary. If you need to have the sacrament brought to your pew, please inform an usher. Receive the wine or indicate a preference for grape juice by asking the server or pointing to the center of the tray. *Gluten free wafers available upon request.*

Distribution Hymns

(5)
“Blessed Assurance”
“Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth”

Hymn No. 638

Hymn No. 735

Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

(Together) **Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice, our alms, a making of peace, and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts; through Christ our Lord.**

Amen.

Benediction

May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth, and claimed us as children of the light, strengthen you on your journey into life renewed. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you ☩ peace.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

“Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church”

Hymn No. 321

Dismissal

Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude



During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today’s gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as daughters and sons of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God’s love for all the world.



Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, died 604

Born into wealth and power, Gregory was for a time the chief administrator of the city of Rome. Giving this up for a life in the church, he was elected pope in 590. He influenced public worship through the establishment of a lectionary and prayers to correlate with the readings. Gregorian chant is named in his honor.