



# THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
14 March 2021

*The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says He will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to Him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith, for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.*

## ✝ GATHERING ✝

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P. Trusting in God, Who brings us out of death into life, we gather in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C. **Amen.**
- P. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God Who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8-9)

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

- P. Gracious God,
- C. I confess that I am held captive by sin and cannot free myself. I have sinned against You in thought, word and deed, by what I have done and by what I have left undone. I have not loved You with my whole heart, I have not loved my neighbor as myself. I pray for forgiveness I cannot earn and renewal I do not merit, given only through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- P. Almighty God looks upon you with mercy, and through Baptism has joined you to the saving death of Jesus Christ so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, you too might walk in newness of life. I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C. **Amen.**

## GREETING

- P. The endless grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the rich mercy of God and the unity of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
C. **And also with you.**

## THE KYRIE

- P. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.  
C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.  
C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.  
C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.  
C. **Lord, have mercy.**
- P. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.  
C. **Amen.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P. O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of Your Son You lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into Your light, that all our deeds may reflect Your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
C. **Amen**

## + WORD +

### FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4–9

*Throughout the Hebrew scriptures, the time of Israel's wandering in the desert is seen as a period of testing. Though God delivers the people from slavery and provides for all their needs, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.*

From Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. <sup>5</sup>The people spoke against God and

against Moses, “Why have You brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” <sup>6</sup>Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup>The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.”

So Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup>And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” <sup>9</sup>So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The Word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

### PSALM 107:1–3, 17–22

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good,  
and His mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>Let all those whom the LORD has redeemed proclaim  
that He redeemed them from the hand of the foe.

<sup>3</sup>He gathered them out of the lands;  
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

<sup>17</sup>Some were fools and took to rebellious ways;  
they were afflicted because of their sins.

<sup>18</sup>They abhorred all manner of food  
and drew near to death’s door.

<sup>19</sup>Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
and He delivered them from their distress.

<sup>20</sup>He sent forth His word and healed them  
and saved them from the grave.

<sup>21</sup>Let them give thanks to the LORD for His mercy  
and the wonders he does for His children.

<sup>22</sup>Let them offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving  
and tell of his acts with shouts of joy.

### SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:1–10

*While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God’s grace at work in our lives.*

You were dead through the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup>All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of

wrath, like everyone else.

<sup>4</sup>But God, Who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup>and raised us up with him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>so that in the ages to come He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup>not the result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are what He has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL: St. John 3:14–21**

*To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.*

**C. Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] “Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life. <sup>16</sup>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.

<sup>17</sup>”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. <sup>18</sup>Those who believe in Him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup>And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

**P. The Gospel of the Lord.**

**C. Praise to you, O Christ**

**SERMON**

HYMN OF THE DAY

*God Loved the World*



1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly  
 2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, who was made  
 3 If you are ill, if death draws near, this truth your  
 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son for - gives all



Son the lost to save, that all who would in  
 flesh and suf - fered death; all who con - fide in  
 trou - bled heart can cheer: Christ Je - sus res - cues  
 sins that you have done, and jus - ti - fied by



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.  
 Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.  
 us from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.  
 Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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 THE PEOPLE

Renewed in the promises of baptism, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

For the Church throughout the world, that all who are raised up with Christ by the riches of His grace will serve with gladness and embody Your love for all people. Hear us, O God.

**C. Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the world You so deeply love. For wilderness places. For deserts and mountains, fruit trees and gardens. For places devastated by flooding or drought, by wind, fire, or earthquake. Restore damaged habitats and protect fragile environments. Hear us, O God.

**C. Your mercy is great.**

For leaders of nations and all who serve the public good, that their service will bring an end to suffering, violence, and oppression and fill the world with hope and peace. Hear us, O God.

**C. Your mercy is great.**

For all who are distracted and worn down by anxiety and sickness, especially Emily, Angie, Shirlee, Bill and Karen Pohlen, Bill Ningen, Carol, Sylvia and Jim, Chris, Norma. That Your Holy Spirit will raise them up to new and restored life. We pray also for those struggling with the virus and for all those grieving the death of a loved one. Hear us, O God.

**C. Your mercy is great.**

For all who live in service to others, caring for the homeless and feeding the hungry, that through them You will pierce the darkness of poverty and want. Hear us, O God.

**C. Your mercy is great.**

For all preparing to affirm their faith, those preparing for baptism and reception of communion, and for all who hunger for Your grace, that Your abundance would give them joy. Hear us, O God.

**C. Your mercy is great.**

In thanksgiving for the members of our congregations who have died and for the baptized of every time and place whose lives bear witness to the light of Your eternal love.. Hear us, O God.

**C. Your mercy is great.**

Trusting in Your covenant of mercy, O God, we lift our prayers to You, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C. Amen.**

## SHARING THE PEACE

### OFFERING

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

P. Holy God,

C. You provide us with every gift of creation, and You quench our thirst with living water. Receive our offerings and make our lives bread for the hungry and streams in the wilderness, signs of the abundance of Your grace in Jesus Christ. Amen.

+ MEAL +

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

P. Lift up your hearts.

C. We lift them to the Lord.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C. It is right to give God thanks and praise.

### THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P. Blessed are You ... pouring out His life for the world.

C. Amen.

P. In the night in ... and proclaim the mystery of faith.

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

P. Gracious God ... both now and forever.

C. Amen.

### LORD'S PRAYER

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.

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P. The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.  
C. Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P. Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew in us the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
C. Amen.

+ SENDING +

BENEDICTION

P. As you die and rise with Christ in baptism, may you also live and serve like Christ. The blessing of Almighty God, the Father, + the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you now and forever.  
C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN *Amazing Grace*

1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that  
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and  
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I  
4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his  
saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but  
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that  
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me  
word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and  
now am found; was blind, but now I see.  
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!  
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.

DISMISSAL

P. Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit, love and serve the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

Those who Serve:

Ministers: All the People of God Presiding: Pastor Munter

Organist: Terry Dybsetter Reader: Tracy Wente

Camera: Josh Sumption Projection: James Kamrath/Kendon Knutson

Sound Room: Ken Jeremiason and Jerome Bruns

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Emily Morton, Angie Denelsbeck Anderson  
Shirlee Gabbert, Bill and Karen Pohlen  
Bill Ningen, Carol Moon, Sylvia & Jim Pridal  
Norma Dovre, Chris Syltie



Bethel Council Meets on Wed. March 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm.

In an effort to allow everyone to attend, Bethel Council will meet this month on Wed. night at 8:00 pm.

**Wednesday night Lenten Worship**  
**Broadcast live on Facebook at 7:00 pm**  
**No in-person worship**

This year the Lenten worship will be online only based on today's Old Testament reading, Numbers 21:4-9, with additional reflections on the Second Reading, Ephesians 2:1-10. We will be talking about the promise God makes to the people with the bronze serpent and how that connects to the promise God makes to us in Jesus.

**Tune in and join in.**

**March 7, 2021**

General: \$2,261.50 (\$879.50 received through eGiving)

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*There is a "Food Shelf" category in Bethel's online giving that can be used for those who would like to donate online. Thanks.*

**Acknowledgements**

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