

Unless a grain of *wheat* falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it



bears much fruit.

John 12:24, NRSV

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

21 March 2021

God promises Jeremiah that a “new covenant” will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, Who draws all people to Himself when He is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God’s heart through Christ and draws God’s light and truth into our hearts. We see God’s heart most clearly in the way Jesus shares human suffering, in an agony both the John and Hebrews readings describe.

Today the Church remembers Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, martyr, d. 1556.

+ 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, with steadfast love You draw us to Yourself, and in mercy You receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and renew us that we may follow Your commands and proclaim Your reign of love, that through life and death we may live in Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C. **Amen**

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: **Jeremiah 31:31–34**

The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD.

³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 51:1-13

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness;
in Your great compassion blot out my offenses.

²Wash me through and through from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin.

³For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

⁴Against You only have I sinned
and done what is evil in Your sight.

⁵And so You are justified when You speak
and upright in Your judgment.

⁶Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,
a sinner from my mother’s womb.

⁷For behold, You look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

⁸Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

⁹Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body You have broken may rejoice.

¹⁰Hide Your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

¹¹Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

¹²Cast me not away from Your presence
and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

¹³Give me the joy of Your saving help again
and sustain me with Your bountiful Spirit.

SECOND READING: Hebrews 5:5-10

The Bible often speaks of Jesus as the “Lamb of God” who takes away the sin of the world. Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author of Hebrews explains how Christ, our great High Priest, lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Him the source of our eternal salvation.

So also Christ did not glorify Himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the One who said to Him,

“You are My Son,
today I have begotten You”;
⁶as He says also in another place,
“You are a priest forever,
according to the order of Melchizedek.”

⁷In the days of His flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the One Who was able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverent submission. ⁸Although He was a Son, He learned obedience through what He suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him, ¹⁰having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL: St. John 12:20–33

Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Passover festival. Here Jesus’ words about seeds planted in the ground turn the disaster of His death into the promise of a harvest in which everyone will be gathered.

C. Glory to you, O Lord.

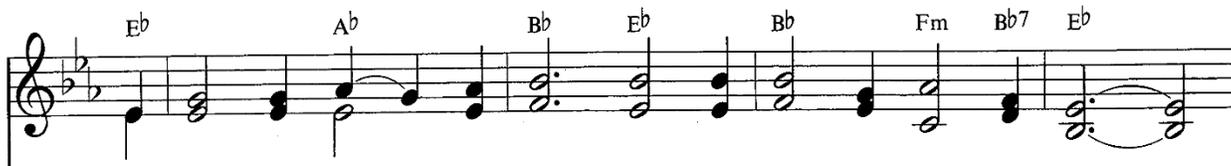
Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” ²²Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶Whoever serves Me must follow Me, and where I am, there will My servant be also. Whoever serves Me, the Father will honor.

²⁷“Now My soul is troubled. And what should I say—’Father, save Me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” ²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.” ³⁰Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for Mine. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself.” ³³He said this to indicate the kind of death He was to die.

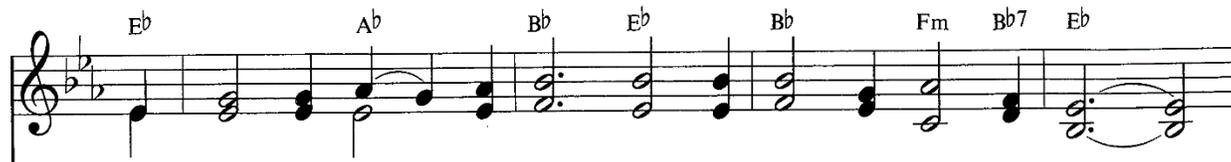
P. The Gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to you, O Christ

SERMON



1. Seed that in ear - th lay dy - ing grows in - to ears of grain.
 2. We were bap - tiz - ed in Jes - us, in - to His death and grave,
 3. Seed that in ear - th is dy - ing ris - es to bear much fruit.



Grapes that are crushed in the ves - sel turn in - to gold - en wine.
 to res - ur - rec - tion's prom - ise; praise and e - ter - nal life.
 Christ, as we meet at Your ta - ble, give us the bread of life.



God through this mys - t'ry gra - nt us faith in our
 Heav - en's own prais - es be - gin here where You Your-
 Lord, we do thank and a - dore You! Un - ceas - ing



deep - est dark - ness, life in our nig - ht and death.
 self are near us, deep in our nig - ht and death.
 praise of the a - ges ris - es from nig - ht and death.

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.

SHARING THE PEACE

+ PRAYER +

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.

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.

You wash us through and through and remember our sin no more. Make Your Church a community of forgiveness throughout the world. Give Your people courage to forgive; through them show the world new possibilities. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

You fill the world with Your presence. We pray for seeds planted in hope of an abundant harvest and for shepherds and ranchers, farmworkers and seafood harvesters. Grant weather that prepares the soil for seeds, protect all from violent storms, flooding, and wildfires. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

You promise to write Your law on our hearts. Guide citizens throughout the world to shape communities that reflect Your mercy, justice, and peace, and give them creativity to work for the welfare of all. Hear us, O God.

C. Your mercy is great.

You sustain us with Your bountiful Spirit. Restore the joy of all who need to know our presence, those who are lonely or feel unforgiveable, those who need healing of mind or body, especially Emily, Angie, Shirlee, Bill and Karen Pohlen, Bill Ningen, Carol, Sylvia and Jim, Norma, Brad and Chris, those who are dying, and all who grieve, especially the family and friends of Mike Tesch and of those who were killed in the attacks in Georgia. Hear us, O God.
C. Your mercy is great.

Jesus calls us to follow Him in life and death. Empower our congregations in discipleship and give us Your truth and wisdom. Hear us, O God.
C. Your mercy is great.

In the cross of Christ, Your name is glorified. We praise You for those who have given us works to worship You, especially Thomas Cranmer, whom we remember today. With all those who have died in Christ, bring us into life everlasting. 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.

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.

+ 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 *To Christ Belong, in Christ Behold*



1. To Christ be - long, in Christ be - hold God's won - ders still un - fold:
2. The brood - ing Spir - it moves un - seen as liv - ing wa - ters stream
3. Re - joic - ing in God's prom - ise strong, our trea - sure and our song,



the bur - ied grain springs forth a - gain with fruit one hun - dred - fold.
to quench all thirst and bring to birth a new com - mu - ni - ty.
in faith we cling, and glad - ly sing: to Christ we now be - long.



Bap - tized in - to the death of Christ, with Christ from death we rise.
The bind - ing shroud is here re - leased, for robes of joy and peace.
In Christ a - bide, in Christ be - hold the world be - loved and whole.

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: Lou Knutson Reader: Tracy Wentz
Camera: Josh Sumption Projection: James Kamrath/Kendon Knutson
Sound Room: Ken Jeremiason and Jerome Bruns

How to reach us:

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Pastor's email: pastormunter@gmail.com
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Emily Morton, Angie Denelsbeck Anderson
Shirlee Gabbert, Bill and Karen Pohlen
Bill Ningen, Carol Moon, Sylvia & Jim Pridal
Brad Danielson, Norma Dovre, Chris Syltie
And the family and friends of Mike Tesch

March 14, 2021

General: \$11,798.50 (\$854.40 received through eGiving)

Includes: \$80.00 Lent Offering.

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday Worship at 9:00 am & 10:30 am



We will be worshipping at 9:00 am and at 10:30 am next Sunday. The worship at 10:30 am will celebrate with the families of the young people taking their first communion. To facilitate our continuing social distancing COVID 19 priorities, we will have worship with holy communion for the general congregation at 9:00 am to provide the first communion youth adequate space to worship with their families at 10:30 am.

Both worship services will be live streamed.

Flowers needed for Easter Sunday worship.

Contact the church office if they are given to honor someone special .

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, Jeremiah 31:31-34. We will be talking about the promises God made of a new covenant, and what that means for us.

Tune in and join in.