

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2020

Lent is a season of preparation and renewal. The color purple has become a symbol of the extravagance of God. The music of the season reflects our need to prepare for God's forgiveness and renewal, which draws us into God's forgiving action toward humanity and all of creation.

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Pre- Service Music

Welcome/Worship Instructions

Arise in body or spirit and face the baptismal font

Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us, anoint us, and make us new.

C Amen

A In these forty days, let us be honest, confess our sin, and receive God's promise of mercy.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P God at the margins,

C We have wandered far from your home; again and again, we lose our way. We turn inward, afraid of the world around us. We forget that you have saved your people before and promise to do so again. Do not remember the deeds of our past, but turn our faces toward the future, where your forgiveness is sure, your welcome is clear, and your love overflows. Amen

P Like a hen who gathers her chicks, God embraces you in tender care. Like manna in the desert, God feeds you with surprising mercy. Like a loving parent, God runs to meet you again this day, forgiving your sins for the sake of ☩ Christ, leading you from death into life. Amen

Greeting

☐ The grace and mercy of God, who in Christ bears our burdens and saves us from sin through the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

☑ And also with you.

Kyrie eleison

Refrain



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Last time



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son, ev - 'ry day.



1 For peace in the world, for the
2 That we may live out your im -
3 For peace in our hearts, for
4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you



health of the church, for the u - ni - ty of all;
passioned re - sponse to the hun - gry and the poor;
peace in our homes, for friends and fam - i - ly;
cen - ter our lives in the wa - ter and the word;



for this ho - ly house, for all who wor - ship and praise,
that we may live out . . . truth and jus - tice and grace,
for life and for love, . . . for our work and our play,
that you nour - ish our souls . . . with your bo - dy and blood,

Refrain



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer of the Day

- Ⓐ Let us pray . . . Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us.
- ☒ **By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Sit

First Reading

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the LORD, designating David as the LORD's chosen successor to Saul.

📖 A reading from **1 Samuel**:

¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ²Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

📖 The word of the Lord.

☒ **Thanks be to God.**

Shep-herd me, O God, be-yond my wants, be-yond my fears, from

death in-to life, life,

Leader of All

1 God is my shep-herd, so noth-ing shall I want, I
 2 Gent-ly you raise me and heal my wea-ry soul, you
 3 Though I should wan-der the val-ley of death, I

rest in the mead-ows of faith-ful-ness and love, I
 lead me by path-ways of righ-teous-ness and truth, my
 fear no e-vil, for you are at my side, your

Refrain

walk by the qui-et wa-ters of peace.
 spir-it shall sing the mu-sic of your name.
 rod and your staff, my com-fort and my hope.

Leader or All

4 You have set me a ban-quet of love in the face of

ha-tred, crown-ing me with love be-yond my pow'r to hold.

Leader or All

5 Sure-ly your kind-ness and mer-cy fol-low me all the days of my life;

I will dwell in the house of my God for-ev - er - more.

First of refrain
All

Shep-herd me, O God, be - yond my wants, be -

yond my fears, from death in - to life.

Second Reading

Ephesians 5:8-14

Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our activity is truly pleasing to God.

📖 A reading from **Ephesians**:

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 Thanks be to God.

WE ARE PREPARED TO BE . . .

FSL-5

Gospel Acclamation

Speak, O Lord



that the light of Christ might be seen to-day in our
Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see your ma -
And by grace we'll stand on your prom - is - es, and by

acts of love and our deeds of faith. Speak, O Lord, and ful -
jes - tic love and au - thor - i - ty. Words of power that can
faith we'll walk as you walk with us. Speak, O Lord, till your

fill in us all your pur - pos - es for your
nev - er fail; let their truth pre - vail o - ver
church is built, and the earth is filled with your

glo - ry.
un - be-lief.
glo - ry.

1 Speak, O Lord, as we come to you to re - ceive the food
2 Teach us, Lord, full o - be - di - ence, ho - ly rev - er - ence,
3 Speak, O Lord, and re - new our minds; help us grasp the heights

of your ho - ly Word. Take your truth, plant it
true hu - mil - i - ty. Test our thoughts and our
of your plans for us. Truths un - changed from the

deep in us; shape and fash - ion us in your like - ness—
at - ti - tudes in the ra - di - ance of your pur - i - ty.
dawn of time that will ech - o down through e - ter - ni - ty.

Gospel Reading

John 9:1-41

WE ARE PREPARED TO BE ...

FSL-6

Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.

▮ The Holy Gospel, according to **John**.

☩ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” ¹⁰But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹²They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does

WE ARE PREPARED TO BE . . .

FSL-7

listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

Children’s Time

All children [including infants] and youth who desire to come forward for the children’s sermon are welcomed and encouraged to do so. Parents/caregivers are welcome to accompany their child during the children’s message. There may be a time of dance and celebration that is offered.

Message

Silence for reflection

Refrain



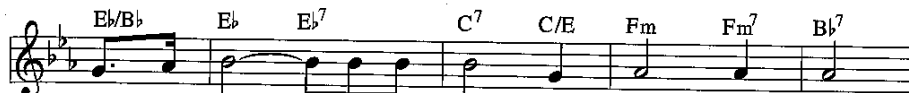
Lead me, guide me, a - long the way; for if you



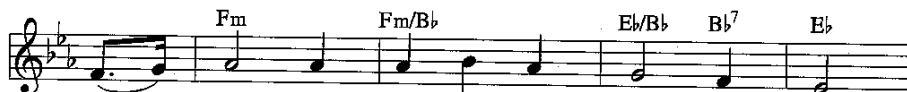
lead me, I can - not stray. Lord, let me



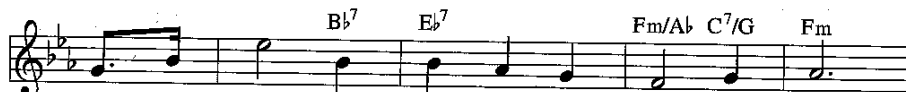
walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.



1 I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r
2 Help me tread in the paths of righ - teous - ness,
3 I am lost if you take your hand from me,



to my help me o - ver my weak - est hour.
be my aid when Sa - tan and sin op - press.
I am blind with - out . . . thy light to see.



Help me through the dark - ness thy face to see.
I am put - ting all . . . my trust in thee.
Lord, just al - ways let me thy ser - vant be.



Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

Refrain

Kneel or sit as able.

Prayers

- Ⓐ Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

- Ⓐ God of insight, open the hearts of the church and the world to all who testify to your deeds of power. Raise up voices in your church that are often silenced or overlooked due to age, gender expression, race, or economic status. Guide the faith of our bishops and congregations and all the servants of your church, including *Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants, David and Roseanne our synod companion churches, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mt. Pleasant; Central United Methodist Church, Lake Odessa; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.*

☞ **(sung) Oh, Draw Me, Lord (x3) And I'll run after You.**

- Ⓐ God of insight, empower us to care for the land and all living things that dwell in it and beneath it. Provide rich soil for crops to grow. Bring rain to lands suffering drought. Protect hills and shorelines from damage caused by erosion.

☞ **(sung) Oh, Draw Me, Lord (x3) And I'll run after You.**

- Ⓐ God of insight, bring peace to all people and nations. Anoint leaders who seek goodness, righteousness, and truth on behalf of all. Frustrate the efforts of those who would seek to cause violence or terror. Protect the lives of those who serve in the military: *Parker Stancil (Freedlunds), Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements), Alexis and Dylan Kelmer, Austin and Aaron Endsley, Carlos Garcia (Burdicks), Brandon and Stevi Kay Miller (McManaway), Brady Rudesill (Hansen), Joel Taggart (Varkulas), Kayla and Lance Champaco (Pohls), and Julia Ehredt (Schrieners, Halsteads)*

☞ **(sung) Oh, Draw Me, Lord (x3) And I'll run after You.**

- Ⓐ God of insight, you care for our needs even before we ask. Accomplish healing through the work of doctors, nurses, physical therapists, nutritionists, and all who tend to human bodies. Come quickly to all who seek prayer this day including *Gary Burdick, Penny Burdick, James Colvin, Kay Corrigan, Irene Corr, Luke Domke, Allison Domke, Sue Eifler, Mike Fruth, Karl Golnek, Roger Greeley, Delmer Hansen, Larry Hansen, Mike Hoppe, Phyllis Hoppe, Lee Hoppe, Richard Meade, Michael Pruitt, Mike Shoemaker, Tim Sullivan, George Ulrich Jr., Jenni Ulrich, Rusty Wilkins, Cameron, Vicky, Nora, Lynnze, and Tristin; safe travel for Zach and Matthias from Europe; prayers for more servers at Grace.*

☞ **(sung) Oh, Draw Me, Lord (x3) And I'll run after You.**

- Ⓐ God of all generations, we praise you and thank you for children of all ages. From those who are days old to our oldest member here at Grace of 100 years old. We ask you to help us be open to your direction as we seek a Youth and Family Committee chair. We thank you for our interim chair.

☞ **(sung) Oh, Draw Me, Lord (x3) And I'll run after You.**

- A** God of insight, help this assembly lift up the unique gifts of each person who enters, no matter their physical capacity, cognitive ability, or sensory need. Help us to be creative and brave in making our facilities and our ministries accessible to all. Hear us now as we lift our individual prayers that are spoken aloud or in the silence of our hearts.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

- A** God of insight, you call out to those who are asleep and awaken them to new life with you. We give thanks for your saints. Join us together with them as your children in this world and the next.

C *(sung)* Oh, Draw Me, Lord (x3) And I'll run after You.

- P** According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

Sit

Offering of Gifts and Music

Arise in body or spirit

Offering Song

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres-ence, and
take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store un-to me the
joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Offering Prayer

- Ⓐ Let us pray . . . Generous God, you feed us with the harvest of the land and you provide for our every need.
- ☑ **Receive our gifts of money, imagination, and labor, and transform them into a feast that welcomes all, in Jesus Christ, our host and our guest. Amen**

Sharing the Peace of God

- Ⓟ The peace of Christ be with you.
- ☑ **And also with you.**

Lord's Prayer

- Ⓟ In confidence, let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:
- ☑ **Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

Prayer

- Ⓐ Tender and merciful one, at your feast, you fed us who brought nothing, turning our emptiness into joy.
- ☑ **Filled with your abundant grace, send us now to be ministers of reconciliation, mending broken hearts, working for justice, and striving for peace among all people, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Mission Minutes

Arise in body or spirit

Blessing

- Ⓟ God, who fills the creation with abundance, Christ, who spreads his arms in forgiveness, Holy Spirit, who draws ever near to us, ✠ bless you and bring you to life everlasting.
- ☑ **Amen.**

All children and youth, as well as the young at heart and playful spirits, are invited to come forward to make music and dance during the Sending Hymn. Please choose one instrument to play or one scarf to use for waving and dancing.

1 Peo - ple who walk in dark - ness have sought a light in the
 2 How can we tell a heav - en from hell if ev - 'ry - one
 3 Where is the sun? Oh, there will be none! The Lamb is the
 heart of the dark - est night. Just when we thought all would be
 dwells in the dark of night? Morn - ing dis - pels, gent - ly com -
 one who is shin - ing bright, bids us to come! Life has be -
 lost, we were drawn to the light of God.
 pels, and we're drawn to the light of God.
 gun when we're drawn to the light of God.

Refrain
 Dawn is in sight! Gone is the night, drawn to the
 light and the morn - ing. Glo - rious and bright, oh, what a
 sight to be drawn to the light of God.

Dismissal

- Ⓐ Reconciled to God through Christ, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
 ☑ Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

March 22, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Eyes Opened

Toward the end of today's lengthy gospel reading, religious leaders summon, for a second time, the man who was blind from birth and whose sight Jesus restored one sabbath day. Confounded by Jesus' disregard for the sabbath, they judge him a sinner and ask how a sinner could have worked such healing. They cry to the newly sighted man, "'Give glory to God! We *know* that this man is a sinner.' He answered, '*I do not know* whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see'" (John 9:24-25; emphasis added).

It is such a radically simple answer. But this clear testimony does not align with the preconceived judgment of the religious leaders, who won't rejoice that the man's eyes have been opened. Instead, the blame game initiated by Jesus' disciples rages on in altered form. While the disciples wondered if it was the man's or his family's *fault* that he was blind to begin with, the religious leaders focused on a way to discredit the one who had restored his sight. Neither the disciples nor the religious leaders seem empathetic about the man's blindness, nor joyful about the new possibilities for his life and participation in community now that he can see.

As we listen to the narrative unfold, perhaps we recognize some of the voices blaming, accusing, or (as with the man's parents) seeking to withdraw from the controversy. The story stands in John's gospel as another important sign, identifying Jesus as "light of the world" (John 9:5). But it also serves to remind us of ways we are blinded by our judgments and critiques of others and of ourselves. To what and whom are our eyes closed? What mixture of mud and washing might open us to see differently and, in so doing, restore us in and to community?

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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