

Sunday, March 12, 2017
Second Sunday in Lent

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*GIRL SCOUT LITANY

℣ *O come let us sing to the Lord.*

℟ **Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.**

℣ *For the Lord is a great God and a great king above all.*

℟ **For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture
and the sheep of his hand.**

℣ *Blessed are the Girl Scouts who are taught to see beauty in all
things around them...*

℟ **For their world will be a place of grace and wonder.**

℣ *Blessed are the Girl Scouts who are led with patience and
understanding...*

℟ **For they will learn the strength of endurance and the gift
of tolerance.**

℣ *Blessed are the Girl Scouts who are provided a home where,
as sisters, they dwell in harmony and close communion...*

℟ **For they shall become the peacemakers of the world.**

℣ *Blessed are the Girl Scouts who are taught the value and power
of truth...*

℟ **For they shall search for knowledge and use it with
wisdom and discernment.**

℣ *Blessed are the Girl Scouts who are guided by those with faith in
a loving God...*

℟ **For they will find him early and will walk with him
through life.**

℣ *Blessed are the Girl Scouts who are loved and know that they
are loved...*

℟ **For they shall sow seeds of love in the world and reap joy
for themselves and others.**

*GATHERING SONG

"Lift High the Cross"

ELW 660

Refrain

**Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.**

**Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. *Refrain***

**All newborn servants of the Crucified
bear on their brows the seal of him who died. *Refrain***

**O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee. *Refrain***

**So shall our song of triumph ever be:
praise to the Crucified for victory! *Refrain***

***GREETING**

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

Ⓞ **And also with you**

***KYRIE**

Ⓟ *In peace, let us pray to the Lord.*

Ⓞ **Lord, have mercy.**

Ⓟ *For the peace from above,
and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.*

Ⓞ **Lord, have mercy.**

Ⓟ *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.*

Ⓞ **Lord, have mercy.**

Ⓟ *For this holy house,
and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.*

Ⓞ **Lord, have mercy.**

Ⓟ *Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.*

Ⓞ **Amen.**

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE "Now The Feast And Celebration"**

ELW 167

Refrain

**Now the feast and celebration,
all of creation sings for joy
to the God of life and love and freedom;
praise and glory forevermore!**

**Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,
whose blood has freed and united us
to be one great people of God. *Refrain***

**Power and riches, wisdom and might,
all honor and glory to Christ forever. *Refrain***

**For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us people of God;**

to make all things new. *Refrain*

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

☞ *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!**

ANTHEM

"On My Honor"

Girl Scout Video

FIRST READING

Genesis 12:1-4a

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

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.

Reflection

Who is Abram? (verse 1—for his ancestral line, see Genesis 11:10-32) What is special about him? (This might be a trick question!) For what was Abram chosen by the Lord? (verses 2-3) How did the Lord ask Abram to follow through on God's promise? (verse 1) How did Abram follow through? (verse 4a) For God's original command to be a blessing, see Genesis 1:28. Who is to be a blessing to all of creation? How does Abram fit into this plan of God's? How does Abram come to bless us as being among "all the families of the earth"? How are we called to continue the call of Abram?

PSALM 121

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 heav- | en and earth.**

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

⁴**Behold, the keep- | er of Israel
will neither slum- | ber 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 for- | evermore.**

Reflection

What is the psalmist's question? (verse 1) What is the answer? (verse 2) What is the promise of help from the Lord? (verses 3-8) What does it mean that the Lord is "your keeper"? (verses 3, 4, 5, 7, 8) Notes in the Lutheran Bible indicate that "keep" means "watch over," as a guard protects a city at night. When have you needed God's keeping? When in our lives do we most need God's protection?

SECOND READING

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

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.

Reflection

Paul reflects on Abraham's faith in this section of the letter to the Romans. Is Abraham our ancestor "according to the flesh"? My guess is that he is probably not, as I think perhaps my ancestors back that far did not come from the Middle East,—but I don't know. Yet we claim as Christians that Abraham is our ancestor. How can that be? (verse 13) What is special about Abraham, that he could boast about? (verses 2-4) What does God do through Abraham? (verses 16-17) Abraham is dead and gone, long ago, but here we are still talking about him! What does Paul have to say (2,000 years ago) about Abraham and his descendants? (verses 16-17) How does God bring life to dead Abraham? To our ancestors in the faith who have died? How do we receive life? Is it through obeying the law? I think one of the hardest things about our faith is really believing and accepting that it is not "living a good life" that brings salvation, but the grace of God. What do you think?

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

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

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GOSPEL*John 3:1-17**

1-2 There was a man of the Pharisee sect, Nicodemus, a prominent leader among the Jews. Late one night he visited Jesus and said, "Rabbi, we all know you're a teacher straight from God. No one could do all the God-pointing, God-revealing acts you do if God weren't in on it." 3 Jesus said, "You're absolutely right. Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to—to God's kingdom." 4 "How can anyone," said Nicodemus, "be born who has already been born and grown up? You can't re-enter your mother's womb and be born again. What are you saying with this 'born-from-above' talk?" 5-6 Jesus said, "You're not listening. Let me say it again. Unless a person submits to this original creation—the 'wind-hovering-over-the-water' creation, the invisible moving the visible, a baptism into a new life—it's not possible to enter God's kingdom. When you look at a baby, it's just that: a body you can look at and touch. But the person who takes shape within is formed by something you can't see and touch—the Spirit—and becomes a living spirit." 7-8 "So don't be so surprised when I tell you that you have to be 'born from above'—out of this world, so to speak. You know well enough how the wind blows this way and that. You hear it rustling through the trees, but you have no idea where it comes from or where it's headed next. That's the way it is with everyone 'born from above' by the wind of God, the Spirit of God." 9 Nicodemus asked, "What do you mean by this? How does this happen?" 10-12 Jesus said, "You're a respected teacher of Israel and you don't know these basics? Listen carefully. I'm speaking sober truth to you. I speak only of what I know by experience; I give witness only to what I have seen with my own eyes. There is nothing secondhand here, no hearsay. Yet instead of facing the evidence and accepting it, you procrastinate with questions. If I tell you things that are plain as the hand before your face and you don't believe me, what use is there in telling you of things you can't see, the things of God?" 13-15 "No one has ever gone up into the presence of God except the One who came down from that Presence, the Son of Man. In the same way that Moses lifted the serpent in the desert so people could have something to see and then believe, it is necessary for the Son of Man to be lifted up—and everyone who looks up to him, trusting and expectant, will gain a real life, eternal life." 16-18 "This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted; anyone who refuses to trust him has long since been under the death sentence without knowing it. And why? Because of that person's failure to believe in the one-of-a-kind Son of God when introduced to him.

Reflection

Who was Nicodemus? (verse 1) Why did he come to Jesus by night? (verse 2) In John, darkness and light are symbols of unbelief and faith. Do you think Nicodemus believes what he says to Jesus in verse 2? What does Jesus answer him? (verse 3) Nicodemus takes Jesus literally, but Jesus' words are deliberately ambiguous. They could mean "born again." What do you think Jesus means? Have you been "born from above"? (see verse 5) Note that the Greek word for "wind" and "Spirit" is the same as the word for "breath"—pneuma. What is Jesus saying about wind/Spirit/breath in verses 6-8? Nicodemus essentially says "Hunh?" in verse 9. How do you understand these things? How does Jesus

know what he is talking about? (verse 11) Who is Jesus, to understand these things? (verse 13) For the story of the serpent Moses lived up in the wilderness, see Numbers 21:8-9. Why will Jesus be "lifted up"? (verses 15-16) How will Jesus be "lifted up"? (See John 19) What does it mean to you that God did not send Jesus to condemn the world but to save it? How do you believe in Jesus? What does that mean for you?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

"Faith Trumps Law"

Misty Coyle

SONG OF THE DAY

"In Christ Alone"

**In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light my strength my song
This Cornerstone this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love what depths of peace
When fears are stilled when strivings cease
My Comforter my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand**

**In Christ alone who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live**

**There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ**

**No guilt in life no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home**

Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

***APOSTLES' CREED**

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**☩ I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
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.
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!**

***PRAYER SONG "Cares Chorus"**

**I cast all my cares upon you;
I lay all of my burdens
down at your feet.
And anytime that I don't know
what to do,
I will cast all my cares upon you.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

A brief silence.

God of Abraham and Sarah, God of all earth's families, bless your church to be a blessing and bestow your grace to a hurting world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, you love the entire cosmos. Help us to love all of the creatures and life within it. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, our help is in you. Keep the nations, their governments, and their people from all evil. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, you are the strength of the weak and the comfort of sufferers: hear our prayers and grant your healing for those who may be sick or in pain. We *especially pray for Bob, Sheylin, Terry, Stephanie, Dorothy, Linda, Scott, Alva*. We also pray for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (*pause for 10 seconds*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, lead this assembly in its Lenten journey toward faith, works of love, and prayer. Let those gathered here be fed and nourished by your word. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, we give thanks for the faithful departed who have joined your saints in light. Let their lives be guides to our own. 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!

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

☞ The peace of Christ be with you always.

☞ **And also with you!**

OFFERTORY

"Amazing Grace"

arr. Mark Hayes

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

"Oh How He Loves You and Me"

**Oh, how He loves you and me.
Oh, how He loves you and me;
he gave His life,
what more could He give?
Oh, how He loves you;
oh how He loves me;
oh how He loves you and me!**

**Jesus to Calv'ry did go
His love for this world to show;
what He did there
brought hope from despair.
Oh, how He loves you;
oh how He loves me;
oh how He loves you and me!**

***OFFERING PRAYER**

☞ *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. Amen!**

***DIALOGUE**

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 our thanks and praise.**

***PREFACE**

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You call your people to cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P *Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.
Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
to the land of milk and honey.
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.
In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,*

*and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:*

☞ Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

☞ O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast.
Grace our table with your presence.

☞ Come, Holy Spirit.

☞ Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us.
Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

☞ Come, Holy Spirit.

☞ With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.

☞ Amen!

***LORD'S PRAYER**

**☞ Our Father in heaven,
hallowed 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!**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P *Return to God with all your heart.
Receive bread for the journey, drink for the desert.*

COMMUNION

***BLESSING**

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

G **Amen!**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P *Compassionate God,*

G **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**

P *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 \neq peace.*

G **Amen!**

***SENDING SONG** **"To God Be the Glory"**

**To God be the glory, great things he has done;
so loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.**

Refrain

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!
Oh, come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he has done.**

**Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to ev'ry believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender by grace may believe,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receive. Refrain**

Great things he has taught us, great things he has done,

**and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our vict'ry, when Jesus we see. *Refrain***

***DISMISSAL**

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

☑ **Thanks be to God!**