

**Evangelical Lutheran Worship Sunday, February 21, 2021 – Lent 1**  
**Congregation responses in bold print.**

*We pray for our staff, our musicians, and choir. We pray for all those being affected by the pandemic within our congregation and outside of it. We pray for all businesses who have suffered losses or closures and for all those experiencing changes in their work life.*

**Special Service of the Word**

**WELCOME**

Rev. Althea Albright

Welcome to worship. Today we are doing a spoken Service of the Word.

We are reminded that worship is something we cannot do alone. We are reminded that this Body of Christ, this church cannot function alone. The Body of Christ is made of many parts and many people who have various gifts and talents. Many staff, many people, and many volunteers give of their time and talents to make our ministry happen. Many of you who are unable to help, have been giving monetarily to support what we do. I am thankful for each and every one of you - whichever of those categories apply to you. God is with us and God continues to watch over us and bless us in many ways. Let us prepare our hearts for a quiet service of worship today as we remember all those who cannot be with us.

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

As we come before God this Lent, let us pray together.

Almighty God, you know us from before we are born. You are always with us in our past, present, and future. You know our joys and our flaws. You know our outward successes and our innermost failings. We come before you now wanting to spend time with you and worship you. Forgive us when we stray in our relationship with you. Bring us closer to your Spirit once again. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

God of mercy, **We confess that we have not always stayed close to you, God. We do not always trust in your path for our lives. We do not always follow your call for us. We let worry and fear consume us. We do not always treat our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may return to you again and glorify your holy name in all that we say and do. Amen.**

God is merciful and just. Christ was crucified and died for us and for all our sins.

As a minister of the church of Christ, I declare to you that God forgives all of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. God never leaves us or forsakes us. Return to the Lord your God with a new spirit, ready to accept God's gift of grace. **Amen.**

**\*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.**

## **\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray together.... **Holy God, heavenly Father, in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## **FIRST READING: Genesis 9:8-17**

A reading from Genesis.

*Today's reading is the conclusion to the flood story. Because of human sin, God destroys the earth by flood, saving only Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Yet divine destruction gives way to divine commitment. As in the first creation, God blesses humanity and establishes a covenant with all creatures.*

<sup>8</sup>God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup>“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup>and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. <sup>11</sup>I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” <sup>12</sup>God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: <sup>13</sup>I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. <sup>16</sup>When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” <sup>17</sup>God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”  
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALM: Psalm 25:1-10**

<sup>1</sup>To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

<sup>2</sup>**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

<sup>3</sup>Let none who look to you be put to shame;  
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

<sup>4</sup>**Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

<sup>5</sup>Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

<sup>6</sup>**Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

<sup>7</sup>Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

<sup>8</sup>**You are gracious and upright, O LORD;  
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

<sup>9</sup>You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

<sup>10</sup>**All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness  
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

**SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:18-22**

A Reading from First Peter.

*As God acted through Christ's suffering and death to bring us to God, so God acts through baptism to save us from a sinful existence. This spiritual cleansing marks our new life in Christ.*

<sup>18</sup>Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup>in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup>who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup>And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

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

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

The holy gospel according to St. Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**\*GOSPEL: Mark 1:9-15**

*The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the good news of God's reign.*

<sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

<sup>10</sup>And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven,

“You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

<sup>12</sup>And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

<sup>13</sup>He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

<sup>14</sup>Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup>and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

Rev. Althea Albright

**\*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**

**OFFERING**

*We are thankful for however you are able to continue supporting our ministry at Grace. Offering may be received through the mail, church office, or Simply Giving online.*

*Please call the church office if you need assistance with Simply Giving, or have any questions or concerns.*

## **\*OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray. All-Knowing God, **You are Creator of all that is in heaven and on earth. We rejoice that we are able to give back some of our blessings to you. You have changed our lives forever with your mercy and grace. Give us opportunities to change the lives of others with your Gospel message. Bless our congregation, this community, and everything we give back to you to continue your holy work, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## **\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

In Jesus your realm has come near to us in every place and time. Give your church throughout the world a spirit of humility and repentance; teach us to trust always in the good news of your salvation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You have made a covenant of mercy with every living creature. Protect all the earth's creatures from destruction. Empower the work of biologists, conservationists, and science educators. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

All your paths are steadfast love and faithfulness. Direct the words and actions of leaders in our community and throughout the world, that they may maintain justice for the lowly. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Even in the wilderness you are with us. Walk alongside migrants and refugees crossing dangerous lands. Tend to those whose lives feel desolate. Give healing and strength to all who suffer (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In the covenant of baptism you claim us as beloved children. Nurture us in our baptismal identity and teach us to live within it for the sake of others. Strengthen this congregation's ministries of care and concern (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In baptism you join us to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We praise you for all those who have died trusting in your faithfulness. Bring us with them to the fullness of your reign. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **SENDING PRAYER**

Let us pray. Lord God, we are living in difficult times. As we have worshipped with you this day, you have refreshed us with your Word and given us new hope. Send us into the next week as witnesses of your Gospel message, that we may be light for the world, as we continue through this season of Lent. **Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

May the Almighty God bless you and keep you. May Christ's mercy and forgiveness remind you to go and sin no more. May the Spirit guide you and keep you safe from evil in the world. And finally, may God's love bring you comfort and ✠ give you hope. **Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in the humbleness of the Lenten season and serve God with kindness! **Thanks be to God!**