



Sunday, March 14, 2021

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Introduction

The Old Testament promises provide a baptismal lens that can be applied for Lent, like 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.

Opening Hymns

"I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever"

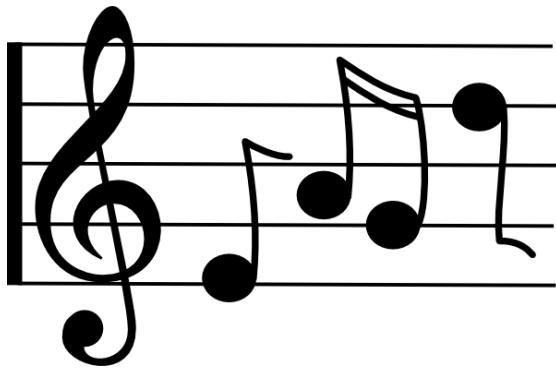
Over the mountains and the sea
Your river runs with love for me
And I will open up my heart
And let the Healer set me free
I'm happy to be in the truth
And I will daily lift my hands
For I will always sing
Of when Your love came down

I could sing of Your love forever
I could sing of Your love forever
I could sing of Your love forever
I could sing of Your love forever

Oh I feel like dancing
It's foolishness I know
But when the world has seen the light
They will dance with joy like we're dancing now

Martin Smith

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"What Wondrous Love Is This"



What wondrous love is this
O my soul O my soul
What wondrous love is this O my soul
What wondrous love is this
That caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse
For my soul for my soul
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul

To God and to the Lamb
I will sing I will sing
To God and to the Lamb I will sing
To God and to the Lamb
Who is the Great I Am
While millions join the theme
I will sing I will sing
While millions join the theme
I will sing

Alexander Means | William Walker
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Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, **✚** one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.

God hears us when we cry and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

Fountain of living water,
pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love.

Amen.

Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are **✚** forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

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.

Amen.

First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9

Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, 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. 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." Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. 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. 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." 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.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

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 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. 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. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. 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.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Gospel: John 3:14-21

The Holy Gospel according to St. John

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

"Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "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. "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. 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. 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. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

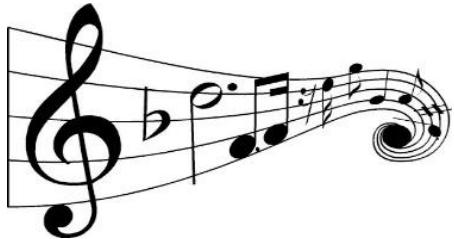
Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Sermon Hymn....."King Of Kings"

In the darkness we were waiting
Without hope without light
Till from Heaven You came running
There was mercy in Your eyes

To fulfil the law and prophets
To a virgin came the Word
From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt



Chorus

Praise the Father
Praise the Son
Praise the Spirit three in one
God of Glory
Majesty
Praise forever to the King of kings

To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross

For even in Your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus for our sake You died

Chorus

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The Apostles' Creed

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 power of 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

Prayers of Intercession

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

A brief silence.

You sent your Son that the world might be saved through him. Inspire the witness of the church throughout the world. Empower missionaries, Bible translators, and ministries of service in your name. Bless our partners in ministry, our ELCA global partner churches, and Young Adults in Global Mission. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

From east to west your steadfast love is shown. Nourish seas and deserts, wilderness areas and cities. Give water to thirsty lands; nurture spring growth that feeds hungry creatures; bless farmers as they prepare for the growing season. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

You sustained your people in the wilderness. Give courage to all who lead in times of crisis and scarce resources. Prosper the work of those who aid victims of famine and drought. Bring peace in places where scarce resources cause violence. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Your mercy endures forever. Deliver all who cry to you, especially those who are hungry or without homes. Give life in places where death seems triumphant; give healing to those who are sick and comfort to those who mourn (*especially Bill, Lisle, Luz, Judi, Don, Barbara, Victoria, Christi, Daniel, David, Kristina, Vicki, Margo, Joy, Michelle, LauraLee, Gloria, Sharon, Iuri, Janis, Kathryn, Michael, JJ, Ellen, Sharon, Cheryl, Ron, John & Christine, Darell, Richard, Ruth, Tori, James, Nancy, David and Lew*). Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

By grace we have been saved. Fill this congregation to overflowing with that grace, that we show mercy to others. Nourish any in our midst who are hungry, especially children, and bless our ministries of feeding and shelter. Give us patience and courage when the way seems long. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Your Son was lifted up that whoever believes might have eternal life. We praise you for all who have died in Christ (*especially Mary*). Bring us with all the saints into the fullness of your promises. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

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

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

Offering Prayer

Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Thanksgiving at the Table

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.

The 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.

Invitation to the Table

Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed.

Distribution

At this time take the elements you have with you saying these words:

The Body of Christ given for you. The Blood of Christ shed for you.

Post Communion Prayer

God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you  that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

Amen.

Sending Hymn.....“I Will Boast”

Verse

Musical notation for the first verse of the hymn. The key signature is G major (one sharp). The time signature is common time (4/4). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics are: "Let not the wise man boast in his wis - dom or the strong man boast in his".

4

Musical notation for the second part of the first verse. The lyrics are: "strength. Let not the rich man boast in his rich - es, but let the hum - ble come and give".

8

Musical notation for the third part of the first verse. The lyrics are: "thanks to the One who made us, the One who saved us".

13 Chorus

Musical notation for the chorus. The lyrics are: "I will boast in the Lord, my God; I will boast in the One who's wor - thy".

17

Musical notation for the second part of the chorus. The lyrics are: "I will boast in the Lord, my God; I will boast in the One who's wor - thy. —".

22

Musical notation for the end of the chorus. The lyrics are: "He's wor - thy. —".

28 Bridge

Musical notation for the first part of the bridge. The lyrics are: "I will make my boast in Christ a - lone. —".

32

Musical notation for the second part of the bridge. The lyrics are: "I will make my boast in Christ a - lone. —".

Paul Baloche

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.