



Sunday, February 28, 2016

Third Sunday in Lent

Keith Lankford, Pastor

Wilma Morse, Organist

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INTRODUCTION

The warnings are plentiful and blunt on the third Sunday in Lent. Lent is a season of repentance. Cut it out or get cut down! The warnings are accompanied by God's invitation to attentiveness: "Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live." The landowner's ultimatum is forestalled by the gardener's readiness to till the ground one more year. That is good news for all of us. Thanks be to God!

GATHERING

PRELUDE

A large print version of today's Hymns is located on
the Usher Stands.

GATHERING HYMN *Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now* ELW 527

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who brings us safely through
the sea, who gives us water from the rock, who leads us into the land of
milk and honey. **Amen.**

Let us come home to God, confessing our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful Father,

**we have sinned against heaven and before you. We do not fully
live as your sons and daughters. We use your gifts to our own
ends. Forgive us and restore us, that we may resist all that draws
us away from you, and be at peace with one another. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and
for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained
minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, 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. **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.

PRAISE HYMN *Holy Spirit, Truth Divine*

ELW 398

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you;

And also with you.

Let us pray. Almighty God,

hear the earnest desires of your humble servants who call upon you, and stretch out your right hand in majesty to defend us against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

GOD'S WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-9

To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to the Lord will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

- ¹Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;
and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
- ²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
- ³Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
- ⁴Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
- ⁵Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know,
and a nation that did not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel,

for he has glorified you.

⁶”Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

⁷let the wicked forsake his way,

and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him,

and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts,

neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.

⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth,

so are my ways higher than your ways

and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The word of the Lord. R: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 63:1-8

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

¹O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;

my soul thirsts for you;

my flesh faints for you,

as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

²**So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,**

beholding your power and glory.

³Because your steadfast love is better than life,

my lips will praise you.

⁴**So I will bless you as long as I live;**

in your name I will lift up my hands.

⁵My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food,

and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,

⁶**when I remember you upon my bed,**

and meditate on you in the watches of the night;

⁷for you have been my help,

and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy.

⁸**My soul clings to you;**

your right hand upholds me.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-14

Paul points to the Old Testament to confirm the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

¹ For I want you to know, brothers [and sisters], that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play."⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, ¹⁰ nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. ¹¹ Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹² Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. ¹⁴ Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

The word of the Lord. R: Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

GOSPEL VERSE

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil

Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

The holy gospel according to St. Luke the 13th Chapter

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Luke 13: 1 - 9

Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.

¹ There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or

those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

⁶ And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.⁷ And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’⁸ And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure.⁹ Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.



SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Chief of Sinners Though I Be*

ELW 609

CONFESSION OF FAITH: NICENE CREED ELW p.126

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the
scriptures; he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE MEAL

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Song

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 to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

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:

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

ELW p. 144

THE LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p. 145

**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**

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

SENDING

BENEDICTION AND THREE FOLD AMEN

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace,

In the name of the Father, and of † the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

SENDING HYMN: *On What Has Now Been Sown*

ELW 550

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Welcome to worship this morning. May the Lord bless you during this time together. If you have special prayer requests, please give them to an usher. All who are baptized and believe that the Lord is present in the bread and wine are welcomed to the table. Juice is available for the asking.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, February 28th

11:00 AM Fellowship

Mon., Weds., Fri.

9:00 AM Exercise

Tuesday, March 1st

9:30 AM Bible Study

Weds. March 2nd

3:30 PM Confirmation

5:30 PM Choir

6:00 PM Soup Supper

7:00 PM Lenten Service

Thursday, March 3rd

9:00 Men's Breakfast @ JoJo's Cafe

Next Sunday, March 6th

9:00 AM Education

10:00 AM Worship w/Holy Communion

11:00 AM Fellowship

The Rose on the Altar this morning is in Honor of Riley Lynn daughter of Katy Ellenson and Kasey Dillon, born Feb. 16th. Siblings Jackson & Jameson.

Please join us on Saturday, March 12, 2016 11:00 A.M. for the Installation of Rev. Keith Lankford as Pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. A potluck meal will follow the ceremony.

Looking for Fruit

Christians have sometimes been referred to jokingly as the “frozen chosen.” This has nothing to do with geography or climate. The expression refers to the tendency many of us have to clam up or freeze when it comes to talking about or doing “good works.”

This may be especially true for those of us who believe the heart of the gospel is the good news that we are justified—reconciled—with God not because of anything we do but because of what God has done through Christ. This doing, God’s doing, is a gift, given by God through faith in Christ, not something we earn or deserve. So references to “works” can fill us with suspicion. Are we somehow thinking that we have some pull, through our own thoughts and behavior, to make ourselves acceptable to God?

Our good works, all the ways in which we demonstrate our love for God and neighbor, do not and cannot put us right with God, no matter how great our effort or how spectacular our success.

That does not mean, however, that we do nothing. The man in Jesus’ parable comes looking for fruit on his fig tree. Elsewhere in the gospels Jesus says that trees are known by their fruit (Luke 6:44, Matt. 12:33). Good works don’t save us, but they *do* come as naturally to Jesus’ followers—to God’s beloved children—as apples grow on the branches of a healthy, well-fed apple tree. To be loved freely is to freely love. To have mercy shown is to show mercy. To rejoice in the sheer grace of God is to reach out to others with and from the same grace.

Are we bearing fruit? Fruit not for ourselves, but for the well-being of the world God loves so much? If we aren’t, we can still give thanks, knowing that God the gardener is fertilizing the soil around our hearts.