

Sunday, March 15, 2015

Fourth Sunday in Lent



BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO

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Church Secretary: Mary Braun

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

MISSION STATEMENT

We will LIVE and SERVE through FAITH

we will ACT with LOVE and KINDNESS

we will GIVE hope and SUPPORT to all.

Hearing Assistance is available during the service.
Please notify usher if you would like assistance

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INTRODUCTION:

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OPENING HYMN:

“Morning Has Broken”

#556 ELW

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who brings us out of captivity into freedom, out of the wilderness into the promised land, out of death into life.

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.

For self-centered living, and for failing to walk with humility and gentleness:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For longing to have what is not ours, and for hearts that are not at rest with ourselves:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For misuse of human relationships, and for unwillingness to see the image of God in others:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For jealousies that divide families and nations, and for rivalries that create strife and warfare:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For reluctance in sharing the gifts of God, and for carelessness with the fruits of creation:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For hurtful words that condemn, and for angry deeds that harm:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

For idleness in witnessing to Jesus Christ, and for squandering the gifts of love and grace:

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. Through the Holy Spirit God cleanses us and gives us the power to proclaim the mighty acts of the one who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. 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.

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.

FIRST 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 ²in 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. ³All 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. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved — ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God — ⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

PSALM (ELW):

Psalm 107:1–3, 17–22

You deliver your people from their distress. (Ps. 107:19)

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good, for God's mercy endures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**

³gathering them in from the lands; from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

¹⁷**Some were fools and took rebellious paths; through their sins they were afflicted.**

¹⁸They loathed all manner of food and drew near to death's door.

¹⁹**Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD and you delivered them from their distress. R**

²⁰You sent forth your word and healed them and rescued them from the grave.

²¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love and your wonderful works for all people.**

²²Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy. **R**

GOSPEL:

John 3:14–21

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.

¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶For 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.

¹⁷Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those 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. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But 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."

SERMON HYMN: **“The Glory of These Forty Days”** **#320 ELW**

SERMON: **“The Condemning Heart”**

OFFERTORY SONG: **“Come Let Us Eat”** **#491 ELW**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF INTERSESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Led by Christ in our journey of repentance and moved by his compassion, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Loving God, make your church bold proclaimers of the gospel, so that those who do not know the depth of your love in Christ will hear and believe. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Give us hearts filled with love for your creation, so that our words and deeds bear witness to the unending care you have for the whole cosmos. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Encourage nations to work together for the sake of all people. Break down barriers that prejudice has built up, and restore the dignity of every living thing. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Provide respite and healing for all who suffer (*especially*). Hold all people in your expansive love, and restore wholeness of body, mind, and spirit. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Turn our hearts to praise as we are forgiven, healed, and freed from every evil that binds us. Shine your light upon us, so that nothing about our life in you is hidden. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Resurrecting God, we remember those who now worship at your throne (*especially*), and with expectant hearts we await the day when all will behold you in glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

APOSTLE'S 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 Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, 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, 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

The blessing of God Almighty, the wisdom and power of + Christ Jesus, and the light of the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN:

“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”

#547 ELW

Great to have you join us for worship! Please come again.

THOSE SERVING THIS WEEK

Music: Marlys Beaver

Greeters: Wally & Bev Swenson

Ushers: 9:00 am — Ron & Joanie Melhop

Lector: 9:00 am — Laury Nyberg

Hospitality Hosts: Mark Korngable, Alene Lowe, Marge Garbo, Bev Wedig

Thank you for your service!

Response to God’s Word Last Week/Month

Attendance: Wednesday, March 4, 2015: 31

Attendance: Sunday, March 8, 2015: 76

THIS WEEK AT Bethesda March 16 through March 22, 2015

Monday	3/16	7:00 pm	AA/Alanon
Tuesday	3/17	8:30 am 1:00 pm	Pastor's Text Study, Onamia Double Deck Pinochle
Wednesday	3/18	8:30 am 9:30 am 5:30pm 6:30pm 7:00pm	Bible Study Hardanger Pot Luck Worship Praise Team
Thursday	3/19	8:00 am 12:30 pm	ROMEOS Fun Timers
Friday	3/20	10:00 am	Bone Builders
Sunday	3/22	9:00 am	Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Easter Lilies Would you like to honor a loved one this Easter with an Easter Lily? Or Purchase one in memory of a love one? The cost is \$15. Please sign up today.

Attendance Registry Please sign and pass the attendance registry which you will find in the pew. This is a new process we are trying. This will replace the green cards. Information will be gathered for Evangelism.

Wednesday Potluck and Service There will be a potluck every Wednesday during Lent at 5:30pm and Service at 6:30pm

Two Services We will return to two services on Sunday, March 29, 2015 (Palm Sunday). Services will be at 8:30am and 10:00am

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Services will be held at 9:00am on both Thursday, April 2 & Friday, April 3.

Easter Sunday Services will be held at 8:00am & 10:00am with coffee and fellowship in between the services.

Choir Practice Choir will start practice on Saturday, March 21st & Saturday, March 28th at 9:30 am. After that it will be Wednesday nights at 6:00 pm. Anyone interested in singing with the choir can just come to practice. Everyone is welcome.