**fourth sunday in lent- march 27**

**zion lutheran church, philipsburg**

**announcments**

Welcome to worship on this fourth Sunday of Lent, March 27, 2022. It was a cold and rainy this past week, and the unseasonably cold weather continues into the beginning of this week.

I will be away at the Bishop’s Retreat in Niagara Falls until Wednesday afternoon. If any pastoral care issues arrive, please reach out to Pastor Tanya Varner at Trinity Lutheran in New Hamburg.

The Messenger is out. Please look for it in your inbox or mailbox.

**GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**GATHERING SONG*****Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* (ELW 807)**

1 Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,  
tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
call for songs of loudest praise.  
While the hope of endless glory  
fills my heart with joy and love,  
teach me ever to adore thee;  
may I still thy goodness prove.  
  
2 Here I raise my Ebenezer:  
"Hither by thy help I've come";  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,  
safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
wand'ring from the fold of God;  
he, to rescue me from danger,  
interposed his precious blood.  
  
3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor  
daily I'm constrained to be;  
let that grace now like a fetter  
bind my wand'ring heart to thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;  
prone to leave the God I love.  
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it;  
seal it for thy courts above.

**GREETING (ELW p. 213)**

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 (ELW p. 215)**

Let us pray.

God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of 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.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**FIRST READING:****Joshua 5:9-12**

A reading from Joshua.

9The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.  
10While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. 11On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM:****Psalm 32**

1Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!  
 2**Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,** **and in whose spirit there is no guile!**  
 3While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning  all day long.  
 4**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;**  
  **my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**  
 5Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.  
  I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.  
 6**Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;**  
  **when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**  
 7You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;  
  you surround me with shouts of deliverance.  
 8**“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;**  
  **I will guide you with my eye.**  
 9Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;  
  who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”  
 10**Great are the tribulations of the wicked;**  
  **but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.**  
 11Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

**SECOND READING:****2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

16From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. 17So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 19that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 20So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL: Luke** **15:1-3, 11b-32**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

1Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] 2And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”  
 3So he told them this parable: 11b“There was a man who had two sons. 12The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. 13A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. 14When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. 17But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” ’ 20So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 22But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.  
 25“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. 27He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ 28Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. 30But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ 31Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 217)**

*The assembly is seated.*

*Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY*****There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* (ELW 588)**

1 There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in God's justice  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than up in heav'n.  
There is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgment giv'n.  
  
2 There is welcome for the sinner,  
and a promised grace made good;  
there is mercy with the Savior;  
there is healing in his blood.  
There is grace enough for thousands  
of new worlds as great as this;  
there is room for fresh creations  
in that upper home of bliss.  
  
3 For the love of God is broader  
than the measures of our mind;  
and the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
But we make this love too narrow  
by false limits of our own;  
and we magnify its strictness  
with a zeal God will not own.  
  
4 'Tis not all we owe to Jesus;  
it is something more than all:  
greater good because of evil,  
larger mercy through the fall.  
Make our love, O God, more faithful;  
let us take you at your word,  
and our lives will be thanksgiving  
for the goodness of the Lord.

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Our sung response for the prayers of Intercession is hymn number 751, O Lord Hear My Prayer.

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

Jesus formed the disciples in the ways of extravagant mercy and profound welcome. Lead your church to be a community marked by forgiveness, hospitality, and celebration. Send us to transform a world plagued by fear and condemnation. We sing,

You make the land to produce a harvest that sustains your entire creation. Equip farmers and farm workers who till the soil. Nourish the earth with ample rainfall and abundant sunshine. Heal grounds tainted by pollution or misuse. We sing,

Countries are divided and leaders often harbor grudges. Reconcile nations that experience conflict *especially* Ukraine, Congo, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Niger, South Sudan, and all other countries experiencing civil unrest. Act quickly to bring an end to violence and war. Anoint peacemakers trained in the art of diplomacy and foster a spirit of collaboration among political rivals. We sing,

Your people cry for help in times of distress. Resolve disagreements among family members. Save those experiencing financial hardship. Hear our prayers for those who are sick or grieving *especially* Sarah, Tilly, Ruth, Ted, Summer, Chris, Marsha, Anne, Elaine, Glenda, Phyllis, our members in Long Term Care; Esther, Barbara, Robert and Evelyn, all waiting for surgery and diagnosis, and those we name either out loud or in the silence in our hearts. We sing,

Your love comes to us when a table is set and a feast is prepared. Bring an end to hunger in our community and around the world, through our service to community organizations. We sing,

The one who was dead is alive again. We give thanks for those who have died, confident that steadfast love surrounds them. Shelter them in your love until we are gathered at your heavenly banquet. We sing,

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**PEACE (ELW p. 217)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation.

Take and use what we offer here, come among us, feed and nurture us with your compassion and word, in the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD: LENT**

Holy God, our living Water, our faithful Companion, our true Guide,

by your Word you created a world with rivers and seas, wells and springs,

and in mercy you provided water for your people in the wilderness.

For your Word with the water of baptism, we thank you, O God.

We praise you for Christ, who joined us in our desert,

calling us to righteousness, granting forgiveness, and walking with us into newness of life. For Jesus, your gracious Word, we glorify you, O God.

Through these days of Lent we plead for your Spirit,

that strengthened by your Word, we may care for others and for the world you made,

and work for justice and peace for all.

For your Word in our hearts and minds, we praise you, O God.

Receive our thanksgiving, and grant us your blessing, Holy God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 221)**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**BLESSING**

You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey.

Almighty God, motherly, majestic, and mighty, ☩ bless you this day and always.

**Amen.**

**SENDING SONG*****My Life Flows On in Endless Song* (ELW 763)**

1 My life flows on in endless song;  
above earth's lamentation,  
I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn  
that hails a new creation.  
  
Refrain  
No storm can shake my inmost calm  
while to that Rock I'm clinging.  
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth,  
how can I keep from singing?  
  
2 Through all the tumult and the strife,  
I hear that music ringing.  
It finds an echo in my soul.  
How can I keep from singing? Refrain  
  
3 What though my joys and comforts die?  
The Lord my Savior liveth.  
What though the darkness gather round?  
Songs in the night he giveth. Refrain  
  
4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart,  
a fountain ever springing!  
All things are mine since I am his!  
How can I keep from singing? Refrain

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.

**Thanks be to God.**

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