**lent 5 b- march 17, 2024. zion lutheran, philipsburg**

**GATHERING**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Welcome to worship on this final Sunday of Lent, March 17, 2024. We had some lovely warm weather this week. I saw lots of folks out cleaning up their yards!

Some announcements for the coming weeks. Next week is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. Come and celebrate Christ’s journey into Jerusalem with the waving of the palms.

Our Maundy Thursday service will begin with a soup and sandwich supper at 5:30. The soup is being provided by the worship committee. Members are asked to bring sandwiches/dessert. The service will be held at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday will be a service of Lament, I am looking for 3 readers to help with a congregational reading of the Passion of Mark.

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (ELW p. 211)**

**Call to Confession**  
God calls us in our lives to be like the grain of wheat which dies, which lets go of one form in order to be transformed into new, and fuller life. And yet we often fear the risk and change which new growth involves. Let us ponder for a moment the places of our lives where we may be resisting God moving in our lives. *(silence)*  
**Litany of Confession**  
**When we resist your call to change our hearts and allow a deepening of relationship: God have mercy.  
When we nurse our wounded hearts and withhold forgiveness which may transform relationship: Christ have mercy.**

**When fear for our own security leads us to close our hearts from those who are in need: God have mercy.**  
**Assurance of Grace**  
The One who makes a covenant on our hearts is faithful, and forgives us our sins and failures. In Christ God offers forgiving grace and welcome into a community of trust, abundance, and hope. Let us give thanks for the mercy of God, and pass the peace of Christ in community among us.

~ taken from *“O God of Our Hearts: Prayers for the Fifth Sunday in Lent,”*written by Rev. Kathryn Matthews Huey and the Rev. Susan A. Blain.  Posted on the United Church of Christ’s [**Worship Ways**](http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/)website.

**GATHERING SONG*Restore in Us, O God* (ELW 328)**

1 Restore in us, O God,  
the splendor of your love;  
renew your image in our hearts,  
and all our sins remove.  
  
2 O Spirit, wake in us  
the wonder of your pow'r;  
from fruitless fear unfurl our lives  
like springtime bud and flow'r.  
  
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share  
the fullness of your joy;  
baptize us in the risen life  
that death cannot destroy.  
  
4 Three-personed God, fulfill  
the promise of your grace,  
that we, when all our searching ends,  
may see you face to face.

**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.**

**KYRIE (ELW p. 213)**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 215)**

Let us pray.O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**WORD**

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

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

A reading from Jeremiah.

*The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.*

31The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 51:1-12**

1Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.  
 2**Wash me through and through from my wickedness,**  
  **and cleanse me from my sin.**  
 3For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.  
 4**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;**  
  **so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**  
 5Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother’s womb.  
 6**Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,** **and would have me know wisdom deep within.**  
 7Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.  
 8**Let me hear joy and gladness;** **that the body you have broken may rejoice.**  
 9Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.  
 10**Create in me a clean heart, O God,** **and renew a right spirit within me.**  
 11Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
 12**Restore to me the joy of your salvation** **and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

**SECOND READING: Hebrews 5:5-10**

A reading from Hebrews.

*Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.*

5Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; 6as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”  
 7In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. 8Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; 9and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, 10having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 216)**

**GOSPEL: John 12:20-33**

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

20Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” 22Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.  
 27“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” 29The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” 30Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. 31Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. 32And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” 33He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON (ELW p. 217)**

**HYMN OF THE DAY*Now the Green Blade Rises* (ELW 379)**

1 Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
love lives again, that with the dead has been;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.  
  
2 In the grave they laid him, love by hatred slain,  
thinking that he would never wake again;  
laid in the earth like grain that sleeps unseen;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.  
  
3 Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,  
he that for three days in the grave had lain;  
raised from the dead, my living Lord is seen;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.  
  
4 When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,  
your touch can call us back to life again,  
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been;  
love is come again like wheat arising green.

**CREED (ELW p. 217)**

**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 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**

Our sung response will be the same as last week, Hymn 180; the Spirit Intercedes for Us.

Trusting in God’s promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need. *A brief silence.*

God of the covenant, through the church you draw us into community. We give thanks for the means of grace around which we gather. Inspire writers, musicians, and artists whose creative gifts adorn our worship. We sing,

God of all that exists, you lavish the earth with extravagant beauty. Preserve the rich and complex diversity of living things. Support local, national, and international efforts to protect the environment for future generations. We sing,

God of the nations, you desire peace and plenty for all people. Defend those who challenge oppression and expose corruption. Support advocates for human rights, social justice, and the welfare of children including CLWR. We sing,

God of good will, you restore what is broken. We pray for any experiencing estrangement, conflict, or abuse in families and intimate relationships. Protect and comfort all who are vulnerable, especially those living in institutions. We sing,

God of every time and place, you are with us. Support ministries of prayer and presence in this congregation. Move us to reach out to any who are homebound, lonely, grieving, in treatment, or ill. We especially remember Vivian, Chris, Elizabeth, Zoli, Felix, Jill, Doug, Teresa, Rick, Lyla our members in long term care, Robert, Bea, Evelyn and Rob and those we name either out loud or in the silence of our hearts*.* We sing,

God of promise, we give thanks for the saints whose faith inspires us. Grant us faith to trust in your everlasting love. We sing,

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

**PEACE (ELW p. 217)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**THANKSGIVING**

**OFFERING (ELW p. 217)- Create in Me- ELW 186**

**THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD (ELW p. 220)**

Gracious God, who has named and claimed us, calling us your beloved children,

you know the secrets of our hearts. When we sin and stray from your paths, you astound us with your saving grace. For this Word of life, we give you thanks.

Loving Jesus, living Word, in you the kingdom of God has come near;

through you all that was lost has been found. Help us to boldly follow wherever you may lead, trusting your promise that we need not fear, for you are with us.

For this Word of life, we give you thanks.

Holy Spirit, the mystery in which we dwell, into our scarcity, your abundance flows.

Enliven all communities with your good news. Guide us to love and serve Jesus,

giving ourselves away for the sake of the world. For this Word of life, we give you thanks.

All glory to you, holy God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER (ELW p. 221)**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray the Lord’s Prayer printed in your bulletin

Dear God our Father, who lives in heaven there is power in your name.

We trust your ways…from your kingdom in heaven all the way down to earth where we live.

Please provide all we need today.

Forgive our mistakes as we forgive those who make mistakes against us.

Help us to make good choices and protect us from all that is evil.

Everything we have and do is all for you so everyone we meet will see you in us.

Forever and ever. A**men.**

**SENDING**

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

**BLESSING**

Beloved, we are God’s own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG*Beneath the Cross of Jesus* (ELW 338)**

1 Beneath the cross of Jesus  
I long to take my stand;  
the shadow of a mighty rock  
within a weary land,  
a home within a wilderness,  
a rest upon the way,  
from the burning of the noontide heat  
and burdens of the day.  
  
2 Upon the cross of Jesus,  
my eye at times can see  
the very dying form of one  
who suffered there for me.  
And from my contrite heart, with tears,  
two wonders I confess:  
the wonder of his glorious love  
and my unworthiness.  
  
3 I take, O cross, your shadow  
for my abiding place;  
I ask no other sunshine than  
the sunshine of his face;  
content to let the world go by,  
to know no gain nor loss,  
my sinful self my only shame,  
my glory all, the cross.

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Repent and share the goodness of God’s love with everyone you meet.

**Thanks be to God.**

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