

**ST. JOHN
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

**7:45AM &
10:45AM**

**FEBRUARY
28, 2021**



**Making the
Love of
Christ
Known**

Jeffery Gramza
Senior Pastor

Doug Meyer
Pastor Emeritus

Charlie Frekot
Vicar

Prelude

Welcome /Announcements

Threshold

We continue our Lenten “season of recovery” as we focus on health as essential to our spiritual lives.

Holy Vessels

Threshold Song - WDS Lenten Series

MUSIC: Chuck Bell
WORDS: Marcia McFee

The musical notation is written on two staves in G-clef and 8/16 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics: "Ves - sels, hol-y and whole. Bro - ken, need-ing the One". The second staff begins with a measure rest marked with a "5", followed by the melody for the second line of lyrics: "O - pen, bod - y and soul Heal - er, come." The piece concludes with a double bar line and the instruction "Repeat As Needed".

Ves - sels, hol-y and whole. Bro - ken, need-ing the One

5 O - pen, bod - y and soul Heal - er, come. Repeat As Needed

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God gathers us as a Beachcomber gathers and marvels at every precious surviving piece of beach glass she finds. We are never alone, we are never lost to the One who seeks humanity’s wholeness. We affirm our commitment to be the Body of Christ that knows we cannot be personally healed until we see the interconnected community as part of the process of healing. Jesus has the power to re-vision the family of God in which false boundaries are overcome. In a year of devastating loss of livelihood, we consider the economic health that reimagines status quo.

Repeat Refrain



Prayer of Confession

Let us acknowledge our need to restore, repair, renew our Holy Vessels, which include the communities of which we are a part.

Let us pray:

God of All,

You created us for each other. You set in us a yearning for companionship and an empathy that binds us together, protecting each other and delighting in one another.

Yet too often we have broken down our relationships instead of building them up.

We have been set against one another with the lie of scarcity. We have built systems and economies that widen the gap of resources rather than safeguarding equitable practices.

Too many, and growing numbers, are suffering hardship, food insecurity, joblessness.

We cannot fathom the proportions of loss and so we look away, sometimes even from the need in our own community.

Help us, Healer.

Show us our empathy.

Forgive our complacency.

**Move us to move
one step at a time.**

In this silence, we sense and acknowledge our yearning for wholeness.

Silence

Repeat Refrain



Assurance

Know this: This love and security is meant for all people.

No. Matter. What.

We are capable of sharing our light and not running out of “enough.” Christ’s hospitality that broke through false boundaries points the way.

For you, for me, for all.

Take a deep breath in to let this truth fill you...
and breathe out with the relief of assurance.

Peace

I invite you to imagine the warmth that surrounds you extending to those who may be next to you in close proximity. Imagine it extending beyond your walls to

the neighborhood...

the wider community...

the church...

and seeing it spread like the rising sun, let it expand to all the world. Let this be our peace. Amen.

The peace of Christ is with you.

And also with you.



Gathering Hymn

ELW 606

Our Father, We Have Wandered



1 Our Fa - ther, we have wan - dered and hid - den from your face;
2 And now at length dis - cern - ing the e - vil that we do,
3 O Lord of all the liv - ing, both ban - ished and re - stored,



in fool-ish-ness have squan - dered your leg - a - cy of grace.
be - hold us, Lord, re - turn - ing with hope and trust to you.
com - pas-sion-ate, for - giv - ing, and ev - er - car - ing Lord,



But now, in ex - ile dwell - ing, we rise with fear and shame,
In haste you come to meet us and home re - joic - ing bring,
grant now that our trans - gress - ing, our faith - less - ness may cease.



as, dis - tant but com - pel - ling, we hear you call our name.
in glad-ness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.
Stretch out your hand in bless - ing, in par - don, and in peace.

Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929–2006

Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612

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Prayer of the Day

Loving God, you have made covenant with us and with every living creature. We give thanks for the sign of the rainbow, for it reminds you and us of your promise: that the flood of destruction will not be the last word.

We thank you, too, for the waters of baptism, the sign that we are raised as children of the covenant; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And we thank you for the sign of the dove, the promise of your Holy Spirit. Hovering over the dawn of creation, descending upon your beloved Son, your Spirit also hovers over and descends upon us.

With the whole creation, we give you all glory and honor. In your triune name we pray.

Amen.



Children's Sermon

Kids Praise (10:45) *At this time children age 3 – grade 4 are now dismissed, at the parent's discretion, to the Octagon.*

First Reading Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

*The reading is concluded:
Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.*

Psalms 22:23-31

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's line, give glory. Stand in awe of the LORD, all you offspring of Israel.

²⁴**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the LORD's face hidden from them; but when they cry out, the LORD hears them.**

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD,
who rules over the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.

³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

Second Reading: Romans 4:13-25

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.



¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ²³Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

The reading is concluded:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Announcement

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 8th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 8: 5-13

When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you according to your faith." And the servant was healed in that hour.

After the reading:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

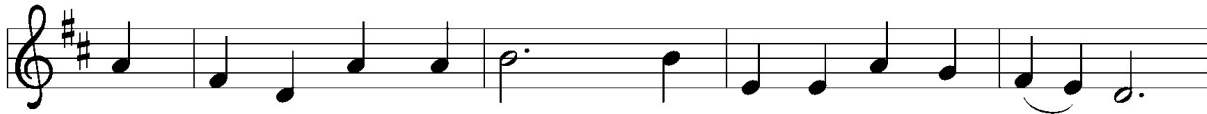
Sermon

Hymn of the Day

ELW 806

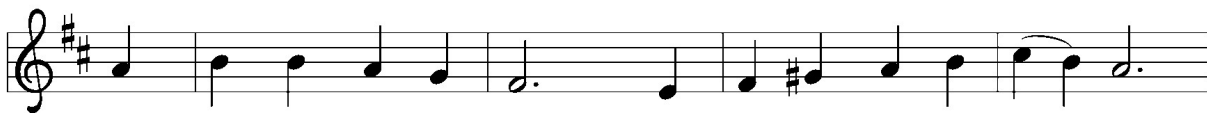
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O God, My Faithful God



1 O God, my faith - ful God, true foun-tain ev - er flow - ing,
2 Give me the strength to do with read - y heart and will - ing

4 When dan-gers gath - er round, oh, keep me calm and fear - less;



with - out whom noth-ing is, all per-fect gifts be - stow - ing:
what - ev - er you com-mand, my call-ing here ful - fill - ing—

help me to bear the cross when life seems dark and cheer-less;



give me a health - y frame, and may I have with - in
to do it when I ought, with all my might—and bless

help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small,



a con-science free from blame, a soul un - stained by sin.
what - ev - er I have wrought, for you must give suc - cess.

and, by your Spir - it's might, to live at peace with all.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: WAS FRAG ICH NACH DER WELT, Ahasuerus Fritsch, 1629–1701



Prayers of Intercession

Offering

Offering Prayer

Merciful God, receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving and the offering of our lives, that following in the way of the cross, we may know the joy of the resurrection; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:
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.

Benediction

Now go with confidence
that the Holy Beachcomber is gathering us all for "Safe Keeping,"
recovering our depth of love for all
and our joy of living in this world.

May the words of Jesus ring in your ears:
"I will come."

And may the Spirit hover, move, and deliver
salve to your soul
and a spring in your step.

Amen.



Sending Hymn

ELW 452

Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death



1 A - wake, O sleep - er, rise from death, and Christ shall give you light;
2 To us on earth he came to bring from sin and fear re - lease,
3 There is one bod - y and one hope, one Spir - it and one call,
4 Then walk in love as Christ has loved, who died that he might save;
5 For us Christ lived, for us he died, and con - quered in the strife.



so learn his love, its length and breadth, its full - ness, depth, and height.
to give the Spir - it's u - ni - ty, the ver - y bond of peace.
one Lord, one faith, and one bap - tism, one God who made us all.
with kind and gen - tle hearts for - give as God in Christ for - gave.
A - wake, a - rise, go forth in faith, and Christ shall give you life.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984

Music: AZMON, Carl G. Gläser, 1784–1829

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Dismissal

Marked with the cross of Christ,
go forth to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

