

First Lutheran Church, Morris MN

Order of Worship for Sunday, March 7, 2021: Third Sunday in Lent

The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law. This gift was given to those God freed from slavery and they begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and around the world.

Gathering

Welcoming & Announcements

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

*God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion. (silence is kept for reflection) Fountain of living water, **pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.***

Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are + forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus. 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.***

Kyrie

*In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*Help, save, comfort and defend us gracious Lord. **Amen.***

Prayer of the Day

*Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.***

Hymn: "In the Cross of Christ I Glory" #324

1. In the cross of Christ I glory,
tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
gathers round its head sublime.
2. When the woes of life o'er take me,
hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
never shall the cross forsake me;
lo, it glows with peace and joy.
3. When the sun of bliss is beaming,
light and love upon my way,
from the cross the radiance streaming
adds more luster to the day.
4. Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
by the cross are sanctified;
peace is there that knows no measure,
joys that through all time abide.

Text: John Bowring, Music: Ithamar Conkey. Public Domain

Word

Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

God spoke all these words:² I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery;³ you shall have no other gods before me. ⁴ You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. ⁷ You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. ⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰ But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it. ¹² Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹³ You shall not murder. ¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵ You shall not steal. ¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. ¹⁷ You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of God, **and the sky proclaims its maker's handiwork.**

One day tells its tale to another, **and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

Although they have no words or language, **and their voices are not heard,**

their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world, **where God has pitched a tent for the sun.**

It comes forth like a bridegroom out of this chamber; **it rejoices like a champion to run its course.**

It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again; **nothing is hidden from its burning heat.**

The teaching of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; **the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.**

The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; **the commandment of the Lord is clean and gives light to the eyes.**

The fear of the Lord is clean and endures forever; **the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.**

More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, **sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.**

By them also is your servant enlightened, **and in keeping them there is great reward.**

Who can detect one's own offenses? **Cleanse me from my secret faults.**

Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; **then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.**

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, **O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.**

Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." ²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

Gospel Acclamation Return to the Lord, your God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

Gospel: John 2:13-22 (*response after announcement of Gospel: **Glory to you, O Lord***)

¹³ The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵ Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." ¹⁸ The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

*(response after reading of Gospel: **Praise to you, O Christ**)*

Message

Hymn: "Canticle of the Turning" #723

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn? **Refrain**

**Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fire of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.**

2. Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. **Refrain**

4. Through the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast;
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around. **Refrain**

3. From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
ev'ry tyrant from this throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. **Refrain**

**Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fire of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.**

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Apostles' 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 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 again 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

Sharing the Peace

Offering/Offertory Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free spirit.

Music: J.A. Freylinghausen. Public Domain.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Communion & Post Communion Prayer

Sending

Hymn: "Send Me, Jesus" #549

1. Send me, Jesus; send me, Jesus;
Send me, Jesus; send me, Lord.
2. I am willing; I am willing;
I am willing, willing, Lord

Text/Music: South African. Public Domain

Benediction

Go in peace, serve the Lord! Thanks be to God!

Thank you to Katie Hassler, Campus Community Coordinator at UMM, who is with us today.

Remember in your prayers

Mick Rose, those affected by COVID-19, those working in our hospitals and care centers, those who serve in the military, families of victims of war, terrorism and violence, those in our nursing homes and those who are homebound. Continue to pray for the overseas missionary we support, Pastor Alex LaChappelle serving as a pastor of Nairobi International Lutheran in Kenya, Africa. Note: you may honor a loved one and support Pastor LaChappelle in Kenya. Contact the church office for information.