



Peace Lutheran Church
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
March 14, 2021

AS WE GATHER: Look out! There were snakes biting the Israelites, sent by God as punishment for complaining about the manna, that miraculous food He gave on the way to the Promised Land. But look up! See the bronze serpent Moses put on a pole. Everyone who looked up at the serpent will live. The serpent was a type of Christ, a parallel symbol in the Bible. We, too, have snakes—our discontent with God’s daily blessings and lack of faith in His promises. But as we look up in faith to Jesus, the Christ on the cross, we shall be saved. That faith is a gift of God in His grace. Jesus is the center of the gracious Good News. We are God’s workmanship, and now He holds the door open as we walk through, looking up to Jesus.

RINGING OF THE BELL: Following the ringing of the bell, we take a few moments *in silence* to prepare our hearts and minds for today’s worship.

[WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS](#)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

1 John 1:8-9

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Leader: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleans us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection

Leader: God's steadfast love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

People: Although we are on the way to the heavenly promised land, like the Israelites in the desert, we complain about many things. We are sinful and unclean at heart and often follow the desires of the body and mind.

Leader: God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us,

People: made us alive together with Christ.

Leader: God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,

People: but in order that the world might be saved through Him.

Leader: By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SONG: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" TOSB 33

By: Robert Robinson & Asahel Nettleton © 1971 by William J. Gaither. The Fellowship Publications Phoenix, AZ 85076

Come, thou fount of every 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.

Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

O, to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Leader: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT:

Numbers 21:4-9

Israelites who look up to the bronze serpent live.

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food." Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE:

Ephesians 2:1-10

We are saved by grace.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL:

John 3:14-21

All who look up to Jesus on the cross will be saved.

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

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ!

Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828-1888, Tune: Philip P. Bliss, 1838-1876 © 1978 by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, & Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way;
When sorrows, like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, It is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate
And hath shed his own blood for my soul.

He lives – oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to his cross, and I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

And, Lord, haste the day when our faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
The trumpet shall sound, and the Lord shall descend;
Even so it is well with my soul.

SERMON

CREED

ALL: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, Born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,

The forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Leader: Gracious Father, when the Israelites became impatient, they spoke against God and against Moses. Let us pray for all who are in positions of authority in our nation and others, that God would give them wisdom to seek ways to meet the needs of their citizens, providing for equal justice and stability for everyone within their borders. And let us pray for police and armed forces, that God would protect them as they maintain security and peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: Many people follow the course of this world carrying out their desires. Let us pray for people who influence our culture and society but without faith in our Savior, that God would open their eyes to look up to Jesus on the cross, working faith in their hearts, and making them alive together with Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: When the Israelites were in the wilderness without food and water, God provided manna. Let us pray for all who lack adequate food, clothing, and shelter, that He would provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to channel the resources He provides to where they are most needed. And let us pray that all who manage God's bounty, serving Him so that it moves from mine to tool, from farm to table, from warehouse to storefront, and from street to home. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Leader: Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus, our Lord, in whose name we pray.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Leader: The blessing of God Almighty—the Father, who gave His Son for the life of the world; the Son, who has revealed to us God’s grace, mercy, and love; and the Spirit, by whose fruit we are seen to be children of God—bless you now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: “Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me” LBW 333

Text: Julie von Hausmann, 1825-1901; tr. hymnal version, 1978, Tune: Friedrich Silcher, 1789-1860 © 1978 by Augsburg Publishing house, Minneapolis and Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia.

Lord, take my hand and lead me Upon life’s way;
Direct, protect, and feed me From day to day,
Without your grace and favor I go astray;
So take my hand, O Savior, And lead the way.

Lord, when the tempest rages, I need not fear;
For you, the Rock of Ages, Are always near.
Close by your side abiding, I fear no foe,
For when your hand is guiding, In peace I go.

Lord, when the shadows lengthen And night has come,
I know that you will strengthen My steps toward home,
And nothing can impede me, O blessed Friend!
So, take my hand and lead me Unto the end.

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

