

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

March 12, 2017

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

AS WE GATHER.....Today we hear the wonderfully familiar “Gospel in a nutshell” from John 3. The first words of the passage say it well: “God so loved.” God is loving even when we are less than lovable. In the season, we see God’s love at work in the cross of Jesus. Here in worship, we receive God’s wonderful gifts that demonstrate His amazing love.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHOIR ANTHEM “I Will Sing Praise” By Joseph M. Martin

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Forgive us for all that we have thought and said and done that is contrary to Your will and Your ways, and forgive us for times we have trusted in our own righteousness instead of relying on Your grace in Christ Jesus, our Redeemer.

People: Have mercy on us and forgive us, O God.

Pastor: Forgive us for times we have not been good stewards of Your great creation and for times we have been unwilling to help our neighbors as we ought.

People: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your steadfast love. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us.

Pastor: Upon this your confession and by the command of our Lord, I, a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SONG “Lord of the Dance”

I danced in the morning when the world was begun.
I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun.
I came down from heaven, and I danced on the earth.
At Bethlehem I had my birth.
Dance then, wherever you may be.
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!

I danced on Friday when the sky turned black.
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the dance and I still go on!
Dance then, wherever you may be.
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!

They cut me down but I leapt up high.
I am the Life that will never, never die!
I'll live in you if you'll live in Me.
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
Dance then, wherever you may be.
I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: O God, we give You glory because Your mercy does not change. Be gracious to all who have gone astray and turned to their own ways, and bring them again with repentant hearts and steadfast faith to embrace the unchangeable truth of Your Word, Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Old Testament: Genesis 12: 1-9 *The promise of God is made to Abram.*

The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD. And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

Epistle: Romans 4: 1-8, 13-17 *The faith of Abraham, who believed God*

What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring--not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as 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.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Gospel: John 3: 1-17 *Jesus teaches Nicodemus by night on being born again.*

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 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."

SERMON HYMN **Red Book 152** **“Oh, How I Love Jesus”**

Oh, how I love Jesus,
Oh, how I love Jesus.
Oh, how I love Jesus,
Because He first loved me.

To me, He is so wonderful,
To me, He is so wonderful.
To, me, He is so wonderful,
Because He first loved me.

And now, He is my righteousness,
And now, He is my righteousness.
And now, He is my righteousness,
Because He first loved me.

SERMON **“Finding Jesus in the Darkness”**

CREED

**People: 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 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.**

OFFERING.

(We offer our thanksgiving for what God has first given us—ourselves, our time, our possessions)

OFFERTORY

Dedication of new Banner

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Jesus Christ and for all people according to their needs. We pray for all Christians around the world that, as people united in faith, we may witness to the good news that is ours in Jesus. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We pray for all nations of the earth that in all places there may be peace. We pray for people in lands where there has been upset and strife. We pray for our own nation that it may know safety and the people may be joyful in their daily lives. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We pray for all those whose labor serves us, especially those in the military, our police personnel, medical workers, and all those whose efforts support the common good. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We pray for the special concerns on our hearts today, including health and family needs, bringing to You our joys, our sorrows, our hopes, (including.....). Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN Red Book 52 "God is So Good"

God is so good,
God is so good,
God is so good,
He's so good to me!

He cares for me,
He cares for me,
He cares for me,
He's so good to me!

I'll do His will,
I'll do His will,
I'll do His will,
He's so good to me!

He love me so,
He love me so,
He love me so,
He's so good to me!

He answers prayer,
He answers prayer,
He answers prayer,
He's so good to me!

CAMP LUTHERWOOD

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.