

## **MARCH 7 2021 - THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT- Worship with Holy Communion**

### **Preparing for worship:**

*We will have Holy Communion together - separately this worship time.  
You will need either wine or grape juice and bread of some kind.  
You may use what cups & plates you have – do not go out & purchase.  
Here is a list: a white cloth, large cup or individual ones, a large  
paten(plate) for bread or small – depending on the size of your family. A  
cross and a candle.*

### **Good morning – welcome to worship,**

Gather everyone in your household together this morning. If you are not alone - assign parts of this beforehand. If you don't have a Bible you can google the scripture readings and print them out too. Perhaps print out copies of this for everyone present. This Liturgy is from the Lutheran Book of Worship and the modified prayers this morning are based on those from Sundays & Seasons Hymns are from the ELW & LBW. Shut off all the distractions in your home. Sit in the quiet for a bit – take some deep breaths. Light the candle.

## **GATHERING TOGETHER**

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.**

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight O God.

**Hymn: ELW 342 WOV 668 - There in God's Garden**

**The Lord be with you – and also with you**

**The 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. Teach us the wisdom that comes only through Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## **THE WORD**

The Old Testament lesson is from **Exodus 20:1-17**

**Psalm 19** found on page 223

The New Testament lesson is from **1 Corinthians 1:18-25**

Please rise for the gospel lesson. ***Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.***

Gospel **John 2:13-22** Sermon- Rev. Norine Gullons

John is telling us something essential about where and how we might find God. We are people of the Incarnation in the truest sense. We are called to look, and see, to break bread and share wine with each other. We are called to see our embodied lives, our physical selves as fully implicated in our lives with God.

So just like so many prophets before Him – JESUS criticized the temple culture. What Jesus calls out when he cleanses the temple is not Judaism or its various forms of worship. There was, in Jesus day, a system of exploitation via tithes that were exorbitant, and taxes that blocked access to the divine. He uses harsh words and even harsher actions. It literally kept the poor people outside the gates of the temple, forcing them into more and endless debt before they could approach and worship God.

Do you remember the story when Mary and Joseph purchased the two turtle doves to “allow” for Mary’s purification rite after birth? Jesus didn’t like the practice of selling sacrificial animals to pilgrims; or exchanging Roman coins- which bore the image of the Emperor - for imageless coins suitable for the temple tax.

In her book “An Altar from the World” Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor, states that *“it is not possible to lean into God’s love for us without simultaneously recognizing that God loves all bodies everywhere. Hungry children, indentured women, sleek athletes, and cigar smoking tycoons! Once we value who we are and value our bodies as God’s temple how can we stand by while other bodies suffer exploitation, poverty, discrimination or abuse?”*

Jesus could not. He interrupted worship for the sake of justice. He moved from compassion to righteous anger to decisive action, because he would not put up with violation of the sanctuary.

Jesus would not tolerate a blocked access to his Father's house. He would not stomach any version of unfairness and cruelty towards the most vulnerable people in his society. . . .We cannot block that access either.

We don't hear much about anger in mainline churches these days. There is something that is NOT pretty about rage . . . something rather unsophisticated! It's not polite to get angry and it's not a good idea to stay angry.

Jesus - who is the temple of God - burned with zeal for his Father's house. He didn't use love and forgiveness and palliatives. He allowed a holy anger to move him to action on behalf of the helpless and the voiceless. There is nothing godly about responding to systemic evil with passive acceptance or complicity.

*"Stop making my Father's house a marketplace," Jn 2: vs 16* Jesus calls into question the act of changing coins in order to obey sacrificial law. Christ's actions played a pivotal role as the "last straw" that angered his opponents. They concluded that the only way to deal with this upstart rabbi, who was threatening the primacy of the Temple and their precarious relationship with Rome - was to do away with him.

This tells us who Jesus is: He is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world **Jn. 1:29**. He is, the embodiment of "grace upon grace" **Jn 1:16**. There is therefore no further need for sacrifice. Jesus' incarnated, embodied grace suffices fully, wholly, entirely, and completely.

Because Jesus' body – his physical incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and gift of the Holy Spirit – was sufficient and is sufficient to mediate God's grace and mercy. Jesus is the one who introduces us to the parental heart of God, the one who makes the unknowable God knowable and approachable. Then...ever since...and still today.

We know that "anywhere" is both geographical and spiritual: In church or out, at work or in school, at a spiritual highpoint or desert, when in the company of loved ones or desperately alone, in times of joy and sadness, when changing diapers or running errands. In all these "places" and more, God is present, working always to comfort, encourage, strengthen, heal, restore, and send. It is a reminder to us all

that the church –that is us - are constantly being reformed by God’s spirit. . . . .  
always according to the Word of God. Amen

**Hymn: ELW 485 / WOV 702 - I Am the Bread of Life**

**OUR RESPONSE**

**The 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 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 THE PEOPLE - MARCH 7**

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need. *A brief silence.*

There is no God before you. Purify the faith of your church, that your people place their trust in nothing beside you. Your name is holy. Guide your church, that in every situation your people’s words and actions honor your name. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The heavens declare your glory. Renew your creation. Provide leaders in the struggle for clean air and water; protect creatures and crops that rely on healthy

ecosystems; give all people the willingness to repent when our way of life pollutes the earth and skies. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your foolishness is wiser than human wisdom. Fill leaders with the foolishness of your peace and mercy. Your law defends the vulnerable. Work through legislators, judicial systems, and systems of law enforcement to protect the wellbeing and freedom of all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your weakness is stronger than human strength. Protect those who are vulnerable and give courage to all who are suffering. Defend victims of crime and bring redemption to those who have harmed others. Give sabbath rest to all who labor. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You call us to proclaim Christ crucified. Give clarity to this congregation and our leaders, so that we might follow Christ beyond our own habits and comfort. Clear out anything in our common life that would obscure the gospel or that serves our own interests. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

The cross of Christ is your power for all who are being saved. Thank you for all the martyrs whose witness reveals the power of the cross. Give us the same trust in life and in death. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**The Peace of Christ be with you always - and also with you.**

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. **Amen.**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Faithful God,

**have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways.**

**We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves.**

**We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ✝ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

## **DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## **PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.  
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Please take time now to have your Communion at home.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **HYMN ELW 723 – Canticle of the Turning**

### **BLESSING**

Mothering God, Father, ✙ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. **Amen.**

**DISMISSAL** Go in peace. Be the light of Christ      **Thanks be to God.**