

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT
April 3, 2022

PRELUDE

INTRODUCTION

Our God makes all things new. In the first reading God promises it. In the gospel Mary anticipates it, anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume in preparation for the day of his burial. In the second reading Paul recalls his transformation from the persecutor Saul into an apostle. In baptism, God's new person (you!) rises daily from the deadly mire of trespasses and sins.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage. **Amen.**

Holy One, we confess that we have wandered far from you: we have not trusted your promises, we have ignored your prophets in our own day, we have squandered our inheritance of grace, we have failed to recognize you in our midst. Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you. Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbour. Amen.

Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love. In Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven. God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG

EvLW # 324 In the Cross of Christ I Glory

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'ertake 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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Isaiah 43:16-21

The prophet declares that long ago God performed mighty deeds and delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage through the waters of the sea. Now, God is about to do a new thing, bringing the exiles out of Babylon and through the wilderness in a new Exodus.

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

PSALM 126

It seemed like a dream, too good to be true, when God returned Zion's exiles. We laughed, we sang, we couldn't believe our good fortune. We were the talk of the nations - "God was wonderful to them!" God was wonderful to us; we are one happy people.

And now, God, do it again - bring rains to our drought-stricken lives so those who planted their crops in despair will shout "Yes!" at the harvest, so those who went off with heavy hearts will come home laughing, with armloads of blessing.

SECOND READING

Philippians 3:4b-14

Writing to Christians in Philippi, Paul admits that his heritage and reputation could give him more reason than most people to place confidence in his spiritual pedigree. But the overwhelming grace of God in Jesus calls Paul to a new set of values.

[Paul writes:] If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow, I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL

John 12:1-8

Judas willfully misinterprets as waste Mary's extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet with costly perfume. Jesus recognizes that her lavish gift is both an expression of love and an anticipation of his burial.

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

EvLW # 335 Jesus, Keep me Near the Cross

1. Jesus, keep me near the cross, there's a precious fountain;
free to all, a healing stream flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

Refrain

In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;
till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.

2. Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;
there the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me. *Refrain*
3. Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;
help me walk from day to day with its shadow o'er me. *Refrain*
4. Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,
till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river. *Refrain*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Do a new thing in the church. Free us from paradigms that no longer serve the gospel and bring forward leaders who imagine fresh ways of doing ministry. Give us courage in the face of change. Merciful God, receive our prayer.

Do a new thing for creation. Reverse the trajectory of climate change and environmental catastrophe. Revive habitats already impaired by human disregard. Amplify the voices of climate scientists and researchers working to chart a new course. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Do a new thing in our world. Break barriers that prevent political enemies from working together for the well-being of all. Make a way for peace and collaboration among the nations. Merciful God, receive our prayer.

Do a new thing for those who suffer. Reveal a path for any who are unemployed or underemployed, for those experiencing homelessness, and for all who struggle with money. Comfort those who grieve and restore those who are sick especially Lloyd, Josh, Jordon, Ferolyn, Elethia, Daryl, Carol and those we name in our hearts. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Do a new thing within us. Direct us into encounters that broaden our understanding of the human experience. Amplify voices that are ignored or devalued. Deliver us especially from the scourge of racism. Merciful God, receive our prayer.

Do a new thing in our death. Fill us with the knowledge of Christ and the power of his resurrection as we give thanks for all the saints who have attained the prize of their heavenly call. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

BLESSING

You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey. Almighty God, majestic, and mighty, bless you this day and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

EvLW # 733 Great Is Thy Faithfulness

1. Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father; there is no shadow of turning with thee; thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Refrain

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. *Refrain*
3. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide; strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! *Refrain*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon	Apr 04	Exodus 40:1-15	Hebrews 10:19-25	Psalm 20
Tue	Apr 05	Judges 9:7-15	1 John 2:18-28	Psalm 20
Wed	Apr 06	Habakkuk 3:2-15	Luke 18:31-34	Psalm 20
Thu	Apr 07	Isaiah 53:10-12	Hebrews 2:1-9	Psalm 31:9-16
Fri	Apr 08	Isaiah 54:9-10	Hebrews 2:10-18	Psalm 31:9-16
Sat	Apr 09	Leviticus 23:1-8	Luke 22:1-13	Psalm 31:9-16
Sun	Apr 10	Luke 19:28-40	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Psalm 31:9-16 (5)
		Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 22:14-23:56	Luke 23:1-49 {alternate}

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