

Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church - ELCA

Wednesday, March 24th, 2021



Again & Again, We are Created for Community: A Midweek Lenten Series

The invitation to Lent spoken on Ash Wednesday reminds us that we enter this season together "with the whole church." It goes on to state that "we are created for communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation."

Though many common Lenten practices rightly invite us to individual acts of "repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love," Lent is also a time for deepening of community.

During this pandemic, our hearts have yearned for a deeper community that extends beyond the walls of the church and into our homes and hearts. Using readings from Mark's gospel, this series invites the assembly to reflect on what it means to be in community with one another, with the world, with creation, and with God.

Call To Worship

L: Every week is a new week, Another chance to say:

C: “Here I am. Use me.”

L: Every day is a new day, Another chance to say:

C: “Thank you for yesterday. Thank you for tomorrow.”

L: Every hour is a new hour, Another chance to say,

C: “Again and again, make me new.”

L: We do not come to this place to stay the same.

C: We come to this place to be changed.

L: So let us worship holy God, Who created yesterday, will create tomorrow, and even now is creating something new.

C: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Gathering Hymn

In The Cross of Christ I Glory

Verse 1

In the cross of Christ I glory, towering o’er the wrecks of time. All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime.

Prayer of illumination

L: Holy God, **C: Scripture tells us that your word is written on our hearts, But we struggle to hear it. Is it possible that we have covered up your words with our own self-narratives? Is it possible that we have erased your truth to write our own? Is it possible that we have forgotten your words entirely? Take us back to the beginning. Remove the self-talk that distracts. Clear away the cobwebs of doubt. Show us how to look inside ourselves for your truth, And then write on our hearts once more. We are listening. We are hopeful. We are here. Speak now. Amen.**

Scripture:

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband,^[a] says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Mark 10:32-45

³² They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, ³³ saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will

hand him over to the Gentiles; ³⁴ they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again." ³⁵ James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." ³⁶ And he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" ³⁷ And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." ³⁸ But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" ³⁹ They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; ⁴⁰ but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." ⁴¹ When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. ⁴² So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. ⁴³ But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Message

Hymn of The Day

In The Cross of Christ I Glory

Verse 2&3

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.

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.

Affirmation of Faith

We believe that flowers need the rain. We believe that humans need community. We believe that bodies need rest. We believe that hearts need connection. We believe that mornings need sunrise. We believe that seasons need change. We believe that grief needs space. We believe that change needs time. We believe that love needs security. We believe that pain needs art. We believe that joy needs company. We believe that our spirits need God. Again and again, our spirits need God. Fortunately for us, we trust that God is here. God is at work in our lives. God is a lighthouse keeper that never gives up. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Prayers

Offering

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Benediction

As you leave this space, May your mouth speak of God's goodness. May your arms hold those in need. May your feet walk toward justice. May your heart trust its worth. May your soul dance in God's grace. And may this be your rhythm— Again and again and again, Until God's promised day. In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself, Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace. **Amen**

Sending Hymn

In The Cross of Christ I Glory

Verse 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.

Dismissal

Go in peace, joined together in Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

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