

Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church-E.L.C.A.



The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.

Fourth Sunday In Lent Sunday, March 14th, 2021

Gustaf Adolf Lutheran Church—E.L.C.A.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Sunday, March 14th, 2021

Ministers:

You, All Members of G.A.

Intern Pastor:

Jaime Decker

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Prelude Music

Welcome/Announcements

Gathering

*Confessions and Forgiveness

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

Call To Worship

L: Before we were born, **C: Before we took our first breath,**

L: Before the week started, **C: Before the year started,**

L: Before we said, "I love you," **C: Before we said, "I'm sorry,"**

L: Before we figured out who we really are, **C: Before we figured out who we want to be,**

L: Before it all— **C: God loved us.**

L: Unconditionally and freely, **C: Fully and honestly—**

L: God loved us. **C: Again and again, this is where our story begins.**

L: Let us worship God!

Call To Confession

L: As we prepare to join our voices together in the prayer of confession, I first want to invite you to watch a short video with me. Watch the video. Friends, as Kid President said, we were made from love, to be love, to give love. That's just another way of saying God loved first. Our story starts with love. So join me in the prayer of confession as we strive to commit this truth to memory. Let us pray. . .

Prayer of Confession

L: God of love, **C: We forget the beginning of the story— That we were made from love, to be love, to give love. Instead of rooting our narrative in the goodness refrain of creation, We skip ahead and find our worth at the fall, With Cain and Abel, lost in the wilderness. We forget that first there was you, and you are love. We forget that out of that love you created us. We forget that from the very first day, you loved first. We forget, because a love like that doesn't make sense to us. Forgive our low self-esteem. Forgive our resistance to love ourselves. Forgive our hesitation to trust that even we could be made good. And forgive our tendency to pass that doubt on—from generation to generation. Write a new beginning for us that roots our confidence in your unrelenting love. With hope we pray, again and again. Amen.**

Words of Forgiveness

L: Family of faith, no matter what we do, where we go, or what we tell ourselves— God is love, and God is loving us.

C: Again and again, we are claimed, held, forgiven, and cared for. In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself— thanks be to God. Amen!

Gathering Hymn

Amazing Grace, How Sweet The Sound

Verse 1&2

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.

Tw'as grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved; how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

***Prayer For Illumination**

L: God of the here and now— **C: We have heard the words, “For God so loved the world That he gave his only son,” Time and time again. We have read them on billboards, Heard them in worship, And seen them on signs. And yet we know, There is a difference between Hearing those words In passing And truly, deeply listening. We long to listen, God. We long to hear your truth. We long to know your love. Open our hearts and minds. We are listening. Amen.**

Word

First Reading

Numbers 21:4-9

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The 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 detest this miserable food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

R: The Word of the Lord **C: Thanks be to God**

Psalm

(Please Read Responsively)

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good, for God's mercy endures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,** ³gathering them in from the lands; from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. ¹⁷**Some were fools and took rebellious paths; through their sins they were afflicted.** ¹⁸They loathed all manner of food and drew near to death's door.

¹⁹**Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD and you delivered them from their distress.**

²⁰You sent forth your word and healed them and rescued them from the grave.

²¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love and your wonderful works for all people.** ²²Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy

R: Holy Wisdom. Holy Word.

Second Reading

Ephesians 2:1-10 You were dead

through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been

saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹ not the result of works, so that no one may boast.¹⁰ For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

R: The Word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God**

Gospel Reading

John 3:14-21

P: The Holy

Gospel according to _____

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷ "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹ But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

P: The Gospel of our Lord. C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message

Hymn of the Day

Amazing Grace, How Sweet The Sound

Verse 3&4

Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come; tis grace has brought me safe this far, and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me; his word my hope secures; he will my shield and portion be as long as live endures.

*Affirmation of Faith

We believe God is love—Unconditional, constant love. We believe this love exists for all, Choosing each and every one of us, Day after day, Again and again and again. We believe that God’s love is like a river. Rivers cannot help but flow toward the sea; God’s love cannot help but move toward us. We are swimming in it. We believe that God loved first. We believe that God breathed life into dust. We believe that God said, “This is good,” And because we believe that God loved first, We strive to build lives that reflect God’s love. May we begin again here. Amen.

*Prayers of Intercession **Response: Your Mercy Is Great**

Offering (Offering Plates are in the back of the Sanctuary, please drop offering there)

* Offering Prayer

C: Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

*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

Sending

***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**

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

*Dismissal

P: Go in Peace. Share the good news.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

*Postlude

Bulletin Donated: Happy Birthday Martin!

<p>Mission Statement of Gustaf Lutheran Church</p> <p>(Adopted in 1984)</p> <p>Our congregation wishes to achieve unity of living guided by the word of God and encouraged by rural community spirit.</p> <p>Our goals include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The education of both young and old to carry out the Proclamation of God's Word and for all human kind through worship and witness. 2. Mutual social occasions, loving and caring for all human beings and reaching out to others with justice and peace. 3. Responsible stewardship of human material resources.
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We celebrate weekly Holy Communion. We welcome all who believe in the Risen Christ and who find in the sacrament our Lord's real presence for the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life. If you receive communion in your home congregation, you are invited to receive it here at G.A. Red wine and white grape juice will be offered to you in Christ's name. You may choose your preference. If you are unable to receive wheat bread, or wine, be sure that in a single element you receive the Presence and all the gifts of the sacrament.

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