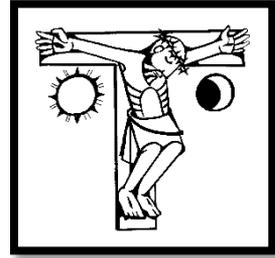


## FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

THURSDAY, 1:30 P.M., MARCH 11, 2021

SUNDAY, 9:00 A.M., MARCH 14, 2021

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*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.*

**Welcome to guests and visitors!** *This pamphlet will guide your worship today. The assembly's parts are indicated by ☩ and bold font. The vertical line in the left margin indicates when the assembly stands as each is able.*

### **About Holy Communion with Saint John Lutheran Church**

“It is taught that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper and are distributed and received there” (Augsburg Confession, Article X). “A person who has faith in these words, ‘given for you’ and ‘shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,’ is really worthy and well prepared.” “Forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament” (The Small Catechism, Part VI). “This church practices Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcomed to Communion” (The Use of the Means of Grace, Principle 50).

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*Thursday music: [Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound \(ELW # 779\)](#).*

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.*

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

☩ Amen.

## **SAINT JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)**

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God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**☩ Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
*The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.*

Most merciful God,

**☩ we confess that we are captive to sin  
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done  
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,  
so that we may delight in your will  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

**☩ Amen.**

### **ENTRANCE PSALM (122)**

<sup>1</sup>I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

**☩ <sup>2</sup>Now our feet are standing  
within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

<sup>3</sup>Jerusalem is built as a city  
that is at unity with itself;

<sup>4</sup>to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,  
the assembly of Israel, to praise the name of the Lord.

<sup>5</sup>For there are the thrones of judgment,  
the thrones of the house of David.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

### GREETING

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

**☪ And also with you.**

### KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**☪ Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation,  
let us pray to the Lord.

**☪ Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of  
God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**☪ Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and  
praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**☪ Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**☪ Amen.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**☩ Amen.**

### FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9

<sup>4</sup>From Mount Hor the Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. <sup>5</sup>The 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." <sup>6</sup>Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup>The 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. <sup>8</sup>And 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." <sup>9</sup>So 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.

The word of the Lord.

**☩ Thanks be to God.**

### PSALMODY: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,  
and his mercy endures forever.

**☩ <sup>2</sup>Let all those whom the Lord has redeemed proclaim  
that he redeemed them from the hand of the foe.**

<sup>3</sup>He gathered them out of the lands;  
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

**☩ <sup>17</sup>Some were fools and took to rebellious ways;  
they were afflicted because of their sins.**

<sup>18</sup>They abhorred all manner of food  
and drew near to death's door.

**☪ <sup>19</sup>Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress.**

<sup>20</sup>He sent forth his word and healed them  
and saved them from the grave.

**☪ <sup>21</sup>Let them give thanks to the Lord for his mercy  
and the wonders he does for his children.**

<sup>22</sup>Let them offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving  
and tell of his acts with shouts of joy.

**☪ <sup>19</sup>Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress.**

### **SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:1-10**

<sup>1</sup>You were dead through the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>in 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. <sup>3</sup>All 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. <sup>4</sup>But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup>and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup>not the result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>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.

The word of the Lord.

**☪ Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!"

**☪ Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."**

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,

**☪ so that everyone who believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**

## GOSPEL: John 3:14-21

The holy gospel according to John.

**☪ Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said: <sup>14</sup>"Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>"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.

<sup>17</sup>"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.

<sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>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. <sup>20</sup>For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. <sup>21</sup>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."

The gospel of the Lord.

**☪ Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

*Silence for reflection may follow the sermon.*

## MUSICAL OFFERING

*Thursday music: [God Loved the World \(ELW # 323\)](#).*

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

☪ **And also with you.**

*The assembly remains in place, as the service continues.*

## APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us God's people through our baptism into Christ.  
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

☪ **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 INTERCESSION

*Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.*

☪ **Your mercy is great.**

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

☪ **Amen.**

## OFFERING PRESENTATION

*Offerings are received at the door as one enters. The offering is presented for the work of Christ's Church, here and throughout the world.*

## OFFERING PRAYER

*At the conclusion, the assembly responds:*

**☞ Amen.**

## OFFERING PSALM (135)

Praise the name of the Lord;

**☞ give praise, you servants of the Lord,**

you who stand in the house of the Lord,

**☞ in the courts of the house of our God.**

For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself

**☞ and Israel for his own possession.**

The Lord does whatever pleases him, in heaven and on earth,

**☞ in the seas and all the deeps.**

He brings up rain clouds from the ends of the earth;

**☞ he sends out lightning with the rain, and brings the winds out of his storehouse.**

O Lord, your name is everlasting;

**☞ your renown, O Lord, endures from age to age.**

For the Lord gives his people justice

**☞ and shows compassion to his servants.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

**☞ as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*The table is set.*

## 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

*The minister continues, concluding: ... and join their unending hymn:*

### HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (SANCTUS)

**☩ Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
Lord God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

### THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ . . .

. . . with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever.

**☩ Amen.**

### LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**☩ 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.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

## COMMUNION SONG (AGNUS DEI)

☞ **Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace.**

## COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

*Please remain seated where you are. The communion elements will be brought to you. The host is received in your open hand. The wine will be taken by you from an individual glass. Carefully place your empty glass on the pew until end of worship.*

## MUSICAL OFFERING

*Thursday music: [My Faith Looks Up to Thee \(ELW # 759\)](#).*

## BLESSING & POST-COMMUNION PSALM (122)

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

☞ **Amen.**

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

☞ **Now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

For there are the thrones of judgment,

☞ **the thrones of the house of David.**

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

☞ **"May they prosper who love you."**

Peace be within your walls

**☞ and quietness within your towers.**

For my brethren and companions' sake, I pray for your prosperity.

**☞ Because of the house of the Lord our God,  
I will seek to do you good."**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

**☞ as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

*At the conclusion, the assembly responds:*

**☞ Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

*Response after the blessing:*

**☞ Amen.**

### **MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Please check web-sites and printed materials for further information.*

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

*At the conclusion, the assembly responds:*

**☞ Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

**☞ Thanks be to God.**

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## Look and Live

The cure for the ancient Israelites, following Moses, is to look directly at what is killing them, rather than avoid or hide from it. Healing occurs in the confrontation.

In today's gospel, Jesus likens his crucifixion to Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness so the Israelites might be saved from the venom of desert snakes. In doing so, Jesus communicates that he came so we might look at what is killing us. He came to shine a light on that which poisons our lives so we might live.

In today's gospel, we catch Jesus in the middle of a conversation with a Pharisee named Nicodemus, who is slinking around in the night to get a word in with Jesus, presumably so he is not seen. In this conversation Jesus gives a judgment that shines a light on Nicodemus: you, Nicodemus, seem to prefer the darkness because there is something you are doing that you want to hide, thus making it easier for you to live in the dark. This sounds an awful lot like the experience of shame. Jesus is naming the way shame has dictated Nicodemus's life, relegating him to shadows where he will not be seen for what he really is. Notice the lack of condemnation. Jesus is simply a light, showing Nicodemus to himself.

Jesus is also a light to us, showing us to ourselves. Looking at Jesus lifted up on the cross, we see the poison that is killing us: power used to protect the status quo; our instinct to blame one in order to save the rest. We see the fruit of our defenses against what the light reveals: the death of an innocent man at the hands of those in power.

Christ has come so that we will see what is poisoning us and that, in seeing, we might turn and live.