

Elim Lutheran Church
Service for the Third Sunday in Lent
March 7, 2020

Announcement

Please join us for drive-through Communion this Wednesday, March 10, at the south driveway of the church. Communion will be served from 5:30 – 6:15 pm.

Please join our live-streamed Midweek Lenten worship on Wednesday, the 10th at 6:30.
There will be no in person worship.

Today we will be celebrating Holy Communion together. If you'd like to participate, have a small cup of wine or juice and a piece of bread or cracker handy. We will commune later in the service.

Greeting

The grace and peace of the Lord, our God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

Gathering Hymn

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

Text: John Bowring

Music: Ithamar ConkeyS

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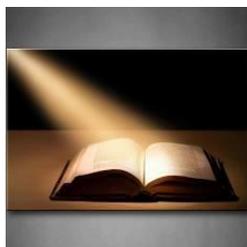
In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

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.

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.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the cross are sanctified;

Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.



The Word

The Old Testament reading for today is from the 20th Chapter of Exodus.

¹God spoke all these words:

²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

¹²Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder.

¹⁴You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵You shall not steal.

¹⁶You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife,

or male or female slave, or ox, or doney, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.
(Exodus 20:1-17)

This ends the Old Testament reading.

Today's Psalm is Psalm 19.

⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and revives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.
⁸The statutes of the LORD are just and rejoice the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light to the eyes.
⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and endures forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.
¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold,
sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.
¹¹By them also is your servant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is great reward.
¹²Who can detect one's own offenses?
Cleanse me from my secret faults.
¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get
dominion over me;
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.
¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your
sight,
O LORD, my strength and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:7-14)

This is the reading from the Book of Psalms.

Today's reading from the New Testament is from the 1st Chapter of 1st Corinthians.

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who
are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,
"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."
²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age?
Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God,
the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of
our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks
desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and

foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. (1 Corinthians 1:18-25)

Here ends the reading from the New Testament.

The Gospel reading for today is from 2nd Chapter of John.

Glory to You, O Lord.

¹³The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." ¹⁸The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" ¹⁹Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. (John 2:13-22)

Word of God. Word of Life.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Message



Ah, the Moneychangers. One of the most famous stories in the Bible. This story takes place in the courts of the sacred Holy Temple in Jerusalem. My vision of this scene

resembles what one sees and hears when walking past the games and booths along the edges of the midway at a carnival. “C’mon, win a prize,” they yell. In Jerusalem, we would more likely hear, “Buy my perfect lamb for your sacrifice. Best prices in the court.” Or to those with less financial stability, “Sacrifice my doves. They are the purest around and the cheapest.” Can’t you hear the cacophony of voices, and animals’ cries, coins dropping on the stone pavement?

All this is located in the Most Holy place for all Jewish people – the residence of God. Although the Temple was the place for animal sacrifice, the outer court was a place of trade and sale of some of life’s necessities. They truly believed God lived in the Temple. What a disgrace to the faith of the Jews!

But we all know what happens when animals are present. To put it nicely, there would be messes in the courtyard. And handling of those messes were truly against Jewish faith – which required ritual cleansing. The first three Gospels, the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, place this event during the time of Passover or just prior to the Passover. At this time, the streets of Jerusalem were crammed with people, coming to the city to celebrate this major event. And since animal sacrifice was common during this time, of course there’d be those who wanted to scam the visitors, providing, at exorbitant prices, the things necessary for such sacrifices.

It’s interesting to see how the Synoptic Gospels – Matthew, Mark, and Luke – place this cleansing of the Temple during the last few days of Jesus’ life. But the Gospel

of John, the fourth Gospel, places what happened here near the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Even scholars are not 100% sure when this actually happened in Jesus' lifetime. But many believe it happened at the end of Jesus' ministry, during the time we now celebrate as Holy Week. The Synoptic Gospels only refer to one entrance to the Holy City in the ministry of Jesus. Also, if there are masses of people in the city at this time, it would make perfect sense that the Roman soldiers would want crowds to see the crucifixion of Jesus as a public display. Maybe they thought the crowds would support the soldiers' efforts. In reality, the trial, crucifixion, and resurrection caused an increased belief of Jesus' teachings - after a time.

As for John's story, some scholars believe this is a more accurate account. If this happened early in Jesus' ministry, this incident would have added to the proof of his humanity, with a full range of emotions. Not Jesus' usual gentleness, peace, and grace, but his anger is definitely an honest part of behavior. No matter the year of the Cleansing of the Temple, we know there is significance.

We've already heard about proof of Jesus' humanity by way of his emotions, because it wasn't challenging for people see he was truly man. He walked, he talked, he slept, and he ate. It might have made more sense to show more proof of his divinity – but that is where faith is needed, not only for Jesus' followers, also for us.

So why is this story so important, so important that is written in all four Gospels? The words, “The Temple will be destroyed and I will build it back in three days.” If we were talking about a tent – maybe. But an enormous, beautiful structure containing jewels and gold and riches, yet also built of stone, not so likely. Once again, I say enormous.

We need to dig a little deeper here. Our bodies are often referred to as temples. Jesus’ body was the Temple where God was made human and the Temple where God resided. The temple being God’s residence was not a stretch for the ancient Jews to understand, but the stretch for them might be Jesus’ body as God’s body.

If Jesus has sent an important message regarding the Temple it is this; The Temple is God’s residence in the body of Christ. The Temple is a sacred space and Jesus, the Temple, is the Holy yet human body of God. The reference to the Temple’s destruction could possibly be pointing to the future destruction, which most certainly has happened.

Still, there is one more item we need to look at. The Gentiles were allowed in the outer spaces of the Temple. In Mark, Jesus refers to the Temple “as a house of prayer for all peoples.” You see, this Mark statement is a prediction originally found in Chapter 56 of Isaiah. That means all people - the outcasts, the neglected, the hungry, the widow. There is a message there for us, too. Our doors are open to all. We are to be welcoming

to all. Those welcome are NOT only to be those who simply agree with you and me or those who think just like we do. It is a space for all people.

My dear ones, Christian writer, Mark McGrath says this, "Jesus seems to have envisaged that the temple would be removed to make room for whatever more perfect state of affairs would replace it in the kingdom of God."- the body of God and a place of prayer of all. Amen.

Sermon Hymn

Canticle of the Turning

Text: Rory Cooney

Music: Irish traditional

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My soul cries out with a joyful shout
 That the God of my heart is great
 And my spirit sings of the Wondrous things
 That you bring to the ones who wait
 You fixed your sight on your servant's plight
 And my weakness you did not spurn
 So from east to west shall my name be blest
 Could the world be about to turn?
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring
 Let the fires of your justice burn
 Wipe away all tears
 For the dawn draws near
 And the world is about to turn!

Though I am small, my God, my all,
 You work great things in me
 And your mercy will last
 From the Depths Of the past
 To the end of the age to be
 Your very name puts the proud to shame
 And to those who would for you yearn
 You will show your might
 Put the strong to flight
 For the world is about to turn
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring
 Let the fires of your justice burn
 Wipe away all tears
 For the dawn draws near
 And the world is about to turn!

From the halls of power to the fortress tower
 Not a stone will be left on stone
 Let the king beware for your
 Justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne
 The hungry poor shall weep no more
 For the food they can never ears
 There are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed
 For the world is about to turn
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring
 Let the fires of your justice burn
 Wipe away all tears
 For the dawn draws near
 And the world is about to turn!

Though the nations rage from age to age
 We remember who holds us fast
 God's mercy must deliver us

From the conqueror's crushing grasp
 This saving word that our forebears heard
 Is the promise which holds us bound
 'Til the spear and rod
 Can be crushed by God
 Who is turning the world around
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring
 Let the fires of your justice burn
 Wipe away all tears
 For the dawn draws near
 And the world is about to turn!

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
 the Father, the almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth,
 of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
 the only Son of God,
 eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God,
 Light from Light,
 true God from true God,
 begotten, not made;
 of one being with the Father;
 through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
 he came down from heaven;
 was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
 and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
 he suffered death and was buried.
 On the third day he rose again in

accordance with the Scriptures;
 He ascended to heaven
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again with glory
 to judge the living and the dead.
 and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the Lord, the giver of life,
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
 who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.
 who had spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
 We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 We look for the resurrection of the dead,
 And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

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 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 especially children separated from their families at national borders. 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.**

In Jesus you joined humanity in suffering and death. Reveal to all the depth of your love shown on the cross. Accompany all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit. Restore all who are sick especially the family of LouAnn Dutt, her son, Paul Dutt III, and her 2 sons-in-law, Mike Block and Corey Weiss, Linda Ness – Karen Lind’s sister, Liz Anderson – Ron Anderson’s sister-in-law, Clifford Berkhus - LaVonne Black’s cousin, Gayle Lee – friend of Connie Rawls, Tom Phillips - family of Scott and Pastor Caroline Strand, Marilyn Dolezal, Jeanne Roen, Edna Mae Lewis, Judy - Curt Meyer’s sister, Rose – Lenora Scheer’s niece, Greg Turner, Fern Softing, all who are suffering with COVID, and those we name in our hearts before you; 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, that we will live though we die. 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.**



Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us gift thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Lenten Preface

It is indeed 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. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(spoken together)

**Holy, holy, holy 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.

Hosanna in the highest.

Words of Institution

On the night our Lord was betrayed, he took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

After supper, our Lord took the cup gave thanks and blessed it and said to his disciples, "This cup is the new promise in my blood which is shed for you and for ALL people for

the forgiveness of sins. When you drink from this cup, remember me, for I will not drink from it until I return.”

The Lord's Prayer

As we have been gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray together the pray we have been taught.

Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed by 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. Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed.

We eat and drink together

The body of our Lord given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you.

Prayer after Communion

God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

Change My Heart, O God

Text and music: Eddie Espinosa

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Change my heart, O God;
make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God;
May I be like You.

You are the potter;
I am the clay.
Mold me and shape me;
This is what I pray.

Change my heart, O God;
make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God;
May I be like You.

Sending

Blessing

You have been called to live faithfully and act courageously. We are to be steadfast trusting God's covenant of grace. You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you ✝ that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the Good News. **Thanks be to God.**



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