

Lenten Service
March 28, 2012

Sentences of Scripture

(See 2 Cor. 6:2; Ps. 85:4; 80:3; 51:17)

Leader: Behold, now is the acceptable time;

People: now is the day of salvation.

Leader: Turn us again, O God of our salvation,

People: that the light of your face may shine on us.

Leader: May your justice shine like the sun;

People: and may the poor be lifted up.

Leader: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a humble spirit;

People: A broken and contrite heart God will not despise.

Hymn 326

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

Morecambe

Psalm 51:1, 9-12 NRSV

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.... Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Scripture Reading Exodus 7:8-24

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a wonder,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.'" So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the LORD had commanded; Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same by their secret arts. Each one threw down his staff, and they became snakes; but Aaron's staff swallowed up theirs. Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; stand by at the river bank to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that was turned into a snake. Say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, "Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness." But until now you have not listened.' Thus says the LORD, "By this you shall know that I am the LORD." See, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall be turned to blood. The fish in the river shall die, the river itself shall stink, and the Egyptians shall be unable to drink water from the Nile.'" The LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt--over its rivers, its canals, and its ponds, and all its pools of water--so that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the whole land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.'" Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and of his officials he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the river, and all the water in the river was turned into blood, and the fish in the river died. The river stank so that the

Egyptians could not drink its water, and there was blood throughout the whole land of Egypt. But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them; as the LORD had said. Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. And all the Egyptians had to dig along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the river.

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks Be To God

Meditation **Staffs, Serpents, Water and Blood**

Prayer of Confession:

Merciful God, you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you. We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy. We have not loved you with a pure heart, nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have not done justice, loved kindness, or walked humbly with you, our God. Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness. In your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Do not cast us from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.

Hymn 513

Let Us Break Bread Together

Let Us Break Bread

Prayer

God of compassion, through your Son Jesus Christ you reconciled your people to yourself. Following his example of prayer and fasting, may we obey you with willing hearts and serve one another in holy love. And now God of grace, sustain our bodies with the food we are about to receive. Sustain our hearts with true friendship, and our souls with your truth, for Christ's sake.
Amen.

Benediction and Charge:

Leader: May the God of peace
 Make you holy in every way
 And keep your whole being—
 Spirit, soul, and body—
 Free from every fault,
 At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

Leader: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.