

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 21, 2021

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, FALLS CHURCH, VA

SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER



PRELUDE *Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain* Setting: Donald Rotermund

WELCOME

ENTRANCE HYMN #435 *Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain*

- 1 **Come to Calv'ry's holy mountain,
 Sinners, ruined by the fall;
 Here a pure and healing fountain
 Flows for you, for me, for all,
 In a full, perpetual tide,
 Opened when our Savior died.**

- 2 **Come in poverty and meanness,
 Come defiled, without, within;
 From infection and uncleanness,
 From the leprosy of sin,
 Wash your robes and make them white;
 Ye shall walk with God in light.**

- 3 **Come in sorrow and contrition,
 Wounded, impotent, and blind;
 Here the guilty, free remission,
 Here the troubled, peace may find.
 Health this fountain will restore;
 They that drink shall thirst no more.**

- 4 **They that drink shall live forever;
 'Tis a soul-renewing flood.
 God is faithful; God will never
 Break His covenant of blood,
 Signed when our Redeemer died,
 Sealed when He was glorified.**

INVOCATION

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

Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Jesus said: If any man would come after me,
Let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Christ was wounded for our transgressions;
He was bruised for our iniquities.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another.

(silence for reflection and self-examination)

Gracious God,
have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

KYRIE

O God, Father in heaven, have mercy upon us.

**Your heart, O God, is grieved we know
By every evil, every woe;
Upon your cross-forsaken Son
Our death is laid, and peace is won.**

O Son of God, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us.

**Your arms extend, O Christ, to save
From sting of death and grasp of grave;
Your scars before the Father move
His heart to mercy at such love.**

O God, Holy Spirit, have mercy upon us.

**O lavish giver, come to aid
The feeble child your grace has made.
Now make us grow and help us pray;
Bring joy and comfort; come to stay.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Almighty God, our Redeemer,

in our weakness we have failed to be your messengers of forgiveness and hope in the world. Renew us by your Holy Spirit, that we may follow your commands and proclaim your reign of love; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



FIRST LESSON Jeremiah 31:31-34

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares 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. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 119:9-16

How can a young man keep his way pure?
By guarding it according to your word.
With my whole heart I seek you;
let me not wander from your commandments!
I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you.
Blessèd are you, O LORD;
teach me your statutes!
With my lips I declare
all the just decrees of your mouth.
In the way of your testimonies I delight
as much as in all riches.
I will meditate on your precepts
and fix my eyes on your ways.
I will delight in your statutes;
I will not forget your word.

**Glory be 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.**

SECOND LESSON Hebrews 5:1-2-5

Every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him,

“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”;

as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek.”

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

GOSPEL VERSE #198 from *One and All Rejoice* O Come, Let Us Fix Our Eyes on Jesus

O come, let us fix our eyes on Je - sus, the
found-er and per - fect - er of our faith, who
for the joy that was set be - fore Him en - dured the
cross, de - spis - ing the shame, and is seat - ed at the
right hand of the throne of God.

GOSPEL Mark 10:35-45

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 10th chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to [Jesus] and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” And they said to him, “We are able.” And 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, 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.” And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be

first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON

In the episode just before today’s Gospel, Jesus told His disciples plainly that He was heading to Jerusalem and would be killed there. In Mark’s Gospel this was His 3rd prediction of His death, so it is fair to imagine that the disciples would begin to understand His anguish. But by this incredible display of selfishness and worldly glory seeking, all twelve come off very badly. Imagine Jesus saying to you, **“Now I am turning toward Jerusalem and I will die there,”** and you hasten on, **“Yes, but, I have given up so much for you.....what do I get for all that?”** With these two vignettes, St Mark wants you to see that Jesus’ disciples do not yet grasp that crucifixion and death are moments away.

I spent one life time of ministry among the members of the armed forces, where who outranks who is the stuff of daily life. I once served with a chaplain who could recite the rank order of all of us who were Chaplain Colonels.....more than 100! We live in a rank conscious town. And of course the change in party controls in our town means that the “ins” and the “outs” have swapped places again. But none of that will ever fit into your calling as a child of the Kingdom.

Jesus underscored all of that in His answer in vs 40: **“....the Son of Man goes to Jerusalem to die for the sins of all mankind. But He does not exercise authority over the order or ranking in the heavenly realms. That belongs to the Father.”**

Jesus very intentionally chose this road to Jerusalem. All that went into the shape of this road was **“for us and for our salvation.”** He chose to set aside His glory and His rights as the Eternal Son to walk among us as our humble brother, even to the shame of the cross.

As disciples, we live all of our kingdom days on this side of that place where James and John imagined seats of honor for themselves. We will live with the complexity of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem and the cross, and our disciple calling to pick up our cross and follow Him, all our earthly days. We will live these days in a world where clearly the one who sits at table gives the orders to the one who serves. But we will live as baptized children of the One Who turned that upside down by His words and His deeds: **“I am among you as the One Who serves.”** And let me be sure to dot this “I” and cross this “t”: Jesus means for James and John, for all of the Twelve, and for all of us, to live that same way, as another of the ones who serve.

Because this is a rank conscious town, there is a very exact code for who sits in the seats of honor. During her tour in the Situation Room, my daughter taught me that there is also a ranking of who speaks first when the President of the United States calls a foreign leader; all depends on who has been in office longer! At a military table, the commander always sits in the most honored place, and all the seats to the right and left, go to people and their partners in an exact sequence of rank. I rarely had enough rank to be at the commander’s table, but because there is always an invocation, and the chaplain always gives it, the last place at that table went to me.

But everyone, regardless of rank, outranks the servers in our world. In former days they worked, quietly, and were ignored. It has become customary to acknowledge them in these days, but you know what? The one who sits at a ranked spot at the table never serves. **But Jesus does.** And because He does, everything changes – even in worldly matters – for all of us who follow Him. In effect, His lowliness and humble service, outranks the traditions and the ranks of all of the world’s different rank conscious cultures. In them all we will be among them as ones who serve.

We could fill up this Lenten season of repentance by reciting and admitting our sins of grasping at rank like James and John. We ought all admit to yearning for the higher places. Our children ought to admit to liking the important kids best, and wanting to be seen with the in-crowd. We could fill up all the spaces in our repentance card just with these.

But we are called to live this radically different life -- serving and loving the other as Jesus served and loved us. Not as an option for when it is easy or convenient. But in all our disciple days. And our Lent ought to be about more than repeating the lists of old sins over and over without change. We must move beyond just drowning the old Adam and his sin, because we are called to be a baptismal people who move ahead by the power of Christ's resurrection.

The unbelievers that Jesus lumps together as **"Gentiles and rulers of the Gentiles,"** have a defined way of exercising power, and it pretty much means **"rank has its privilege,"** and like Napoleon, **"The side with the biggest battalions wins."**

Not so here; not so among you; not ever in this kingdom.

Here grudges aren't kept, because sin is carried away by forgiveness. Here selfishness loses its shine because our heroine gave away her last penny. Here we will not hit back, and we will not keep track of how many times we've had to forgive our neighbor, because we are forever grateful that God does not limit our forgiveness to a certain number. Here we will not cater to the rich and powerful, but we will reach out to the lost and the lonely and the unloved and the least. Here there will always be room for the thief on the cross and those who are late or slow in coming to faith. Here we will love God's commandments and devote ourselves to keeping them, but we will also open our hearts and mercies to those who stumble and fail while trying to keep them. Here you were marked with the cross, and here you will devote your energy to carrying your cross in the world. Here you will be tempted by the glitter of the world, but Jesus has overcome all that and His strength is sufficient for you.

Here you will always have more questions than answers. But of surpassing worth, here you will always have a Savior Who takes your burdens upon Himself and leads you with His easy yoke. Here you will have much to confess, but the Savior's forgiveness will always be bigger. Here you will learn daily the blessing in Jesus' promise, **"I am among you as the one Who serves,"** for He bent down all the way to death to carry our sin in His body on the tree. Here we will always pray as did our older brother, **"Lord let me never, never, outlive my love for Thee."**

HYMN OF THE DAY #688 "Come, Follow Me," the Savior Spake

- 1 **"Come, follow Me," the Savior spake,
"All in My way abiding;
Deny yourselves, the world forsake,
Obey My call and guiding.
O bear the cross, whate'er betide,
Take My example for your guide.**

- 2 **"I am the light, I light the way,
A godly life displaying;
I bid you walk as in the day;
I keep your feet from straying.
I am the way, and well I show
How you must sojourn here below.**

- 3 **“My heart abounds in lowliness,
My soul with love is glowing;
And gracious words My lips express,
With meekness overflowing.
My heart, My mind, My strength, My all,
To God I yield, on Him I call.**
- 4 **“I teach you how to shun and flee
What harms your soul’s salvation,
Your heart from ev’ry guile to free,
From sin and its temptation.
I am the refuge of the soul
And lead you to your heav’nly goal.”**
- 5 **Then let us follow Christ, our Lord,
And take the cross appointed
And, firmly clinging to His Word,
In suff’ring be undaunted.
For those who bear the battle’s strain
The crown of heav’nly life obtain.**

APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING **“Come, Follow Me,” the Savior Spake** Setting: Paul Bouman

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Heavenly Father, in these Lenten days we ask You to pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us and to write Your Word upon our hearts, that we might know You, with all certainty, as the God who forgives our iniquities and remembers our sins no more. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, bless and sustain your church that it might always be faithful in proclaiming your Word. Watch over our pastors, commissioned ministers and congregational leaders, that they might be upheld in strengthened in their tasks. And as your Son came not to be served but to serve, help us to not lord our authority over one another but humbly serve each other in word and deed. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, bless and sustain our nation. And look in mercy upon all whom You have given earthly authority. Guard them from the temptation to abuse their authority or use it for personal gain, and grant them wisdom and faith in carrying out their tasks. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, You protect and care for us in many ways, including through the service of others. Bless, we pray, the men and women who serve in our military, police forces and emergency services, as well as those who teach, those who heal and those who care for the poor. As you have blessed us all through the laying down of your life, bless also those who sacrifice for the care of others. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, as Your only begotten Son learned obedience through what He suffered, so also we pray that You would bless, sustain and relieve all who suffer in our midst, including _____ . Strengthen them and care for them, that walking the way of the cross they may know the fullness of Christ's eternal salvation. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, through the life, death and resurrection of Your Son You have delivered our souls from death, our eyes from tears and our feet from stumbling. With this truth, comfort all who mourn, that they may not grieve as those who do not have such hope. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, You have baptized us with Christ's Baptism that we might be Your people. Grant us now to faithfully drink from His cup in the blessed Sacrament, that He might sustain our life in Him with His flesh and blood. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. **Amen.**

THE 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

The Lord bless us and keep us.
The Lord make His face shine on us
and be gracious to us.
The Lord look upon us with favor and ✠ give us peace.

- 1 Christ, the life of all the living,
Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Who, Thyself for me once giving
To the darkest depths of woe:
Through Thy suff'rings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 2 Thou, ah! Thou, hast taken on Thee
Bonds and stripes, a cruel rod;
Pain and scorn were heaped upon Thee,
O Thou sinless Son of God!
Thus didst Thou my soul deliver
From the bonds of sin forever.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 3 Thou hast borne the smiting only
That my wounds might all be whole;
Thou hast suffered, sad and lonely,
Rest to give my weary soul;
Yea, the curse of God enduring,
Blessing unto me securing.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 4 Heartless scoffers did surround Thee,
Treating Thee with shameful scorn
And with piercing thorns they crowned Thee.
All disgrace Thou, Lord, hast borne,
That as Thine Thou mightest own me
And with heav'nly glory crown me.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 7 Then, for all that wrought my pardon,
For Thy sorrows deep and sore,
For Thine anguish in the Garden,
I will thank Thee evermore,
Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing,
For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
For that last triumphant cry,
And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE Christ, the Life of All the Living Setting: James L. Brauer

ALTAR FLOWERS: "In thanks for the wonderful church family at St Paul's Lutheran Church" By Ian & Kristin C.

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