

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 14th, 2021- 10 am



Faith Lutheran Church
310 Southdale Road East
London, ON N6E 1A1

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AS WE GATHER

Look out! There were snakes biting the Israelites, sent by God as punishment for complaining about the manna, that miraculous food He gave on the way to the Promised Land. But look up! See the bronze serpent Moses put on a pole. Everyone who looked up at the serpent will live. The serpent was a type of Christ, a parallel symbol in the Bible. We, too, have snakes—our discontent with God’s daily blessings and lack of faith in His promises. But as we look up in faith to Jesus, the Christ on the cross, we shall be saved. That faith is a gift of God in His grace. Jesus is the center of the gracious Good News. We are God’s workmanship, and now He holds the door open as we walk through, looking up to Jesus.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN God Loved the World So That He Gave” #571

1 God loved the world so that He gave
His only Son the lost to save,
That all who would in Him believe
Should everlasting life receive.

2 Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,
Who was made flesh and suffered death;
All then who trust in Him alone
Are built on this chief cornerstone.

- 3 God would not have the sinner die;
His Son with saving grace is nigh;
His Spirit in the Word declares
How we in Christ are heaven's heirs.
- 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son
Forgives all sins which you have done;
And, justified by Jesus' blood,
Your Baptism grants the highest good.
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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE *"Measuring God's Love"*

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *1 John 1:8–9; Psalm 107:1–2; Ephesians 2:4–5, 8; John 3:17*

Pastor: Let us now confess our sins to our gracious heavenly Father. (*kneel or sit as you are able*). If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Pastor: God's steadfast love endures forever! Let the redeemed of the LORD say so.

People: Although we are on the way to the heavenly promised land, like the Israelites in the desert, we complain about many things. We are sinful and unclean at heart and often follow the desires of the body and the mind.

Pastor: God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us,

People: made us alive together with Christ.

Pastor: God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,

People: but in order that the world might be saved through Him.

Pastor: By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen. Thanks be to God.

OPENING SENTENCES *Numbers 21:9; Ephesians 2:4–5; John 3:16*

Pastor: Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone,

People: he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

Pastor: But God, . . . even when we were dead in our trespasses,

People: made us alive together with Christ.

Pastor: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son,

People: that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

PSALM *Psalms 107:1–9; antiphon: v. 19*

Pastor: Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,

People: and He delivered them from their distress.

Pastor: Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good,

People: for His steadfast love endures forever!

Pastor: Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,
People: **whom He has redeemed from trouble and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.**

Pastor: Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to a city to dwell in; hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.

People: **Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and He delivered them from their distress.**

Pastor: He led them by a straight way till they reached a city to dwell in.

People: **Let them thank the LORD for His steadfast love, for His wondrous works to the children of men!**

Pastor: For He satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul He fills with good things.

People: **Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and He delivered them from their distress.**

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.

✘ WORD ✘

HYMN “Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing” #737 v. 1-4, 7

1 Rejoice, my heart, be glad and sing,
A cheerful trust maintain;
For God, the source of ev’rything,
Your portion shall remain.

2 He is your treasure, He your joy,
Your life and light and Lord,
Your counselor when doubts annoy,
Your shield and great reward.

- 3 Why spend the day in blank despair,
 In restless thought the night?
 On your Creator cast your care;
 He makes your burdens light.
- 4 Did not His love and truth and pow'r
 Guard ev'ry childhood day?
 And did He not in threat'ning hour
 Turn dreaded ills away?
- 7 Upon your lips, then, lay your hand,
 And trust His guiding love;
 Then like a rock your peace shall stand
 Here and in heav'n above.

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KYRIE

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, who saved us while we
 were still sinners,

People: have mercy on us.

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, once lifted upon the tree
 of the cross,

People: have mercy on us.

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of
 the world,

**People: have mercy on us and grant us Your peace.
 Amen.**

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.
Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul.

People: Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Numbers 21:4-9* (Israelites who look up to the bronze serpent live.)

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. And 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 loathe this worthless food." Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL *Hebrews 12:2*

O come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus,
the founder and perfecter of our faith,
who for the joy that was set before Him endured the
cross, despising the shame,
**and is seated at the right hand of the throne of
God.**

EPISTLE *Ephesians 2:1–10* (We are saved by grace.)

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN “By Grace I’m Saved”

#566 v. 1–2

- 1 By grace I'm saved, grace free and
 boundless;
 My soul, believe and doubt it not.
 Why stagger at this word of promise?
 Has Scripture ever falsehood taught?
 No! Then this word must true remain:
 By grace you too will life obtain.
- 2 By grace! None dare lay claim to merit;
 Our works and conduct have no worth.
 God in His love sent our Redeemer,
 Christ Jesus, to this sinful earth;
 His death did for our sins atone,
 And we are saved by grace alone.

VERSE *John 3:16*

Pastor: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only
 Son,

People: **that whoever believes in Him should not perish
 but have eternal life.**

HOLY GOSPEL *John 3:14–21* (All who look up to Jesus on
the cross will be saved.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third
 chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. [Jesus said:] “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not

condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

CREED *Apostles' Creed*

People: **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.**

HYMN OF THE DAY “By Grace I’m Saved” #566 v. 3-6

3 By grace God’s Son, our only Savior,
 Came down to earth to bear our sin.
Was it because of your own merit
 That Jesus died your soul to win?
No, it was grace, and grace alone,
 That brought Him from His heav’nly throne.

4 By grace! This ground of faith is certain;
 As long as God is true, it stands.
What saints have penned by inspiration,
 What in His Word our God commands,
Our faith in what our God has done
 Depends on grace—grace through His Son.

5 By grace to timid hearts that tremble,
 In tribulation’s furnace tried,
By grace, in spite of fear and trouble,
 The Father’s heart is open wide.
Where could I help and strength secure
 If grace were not my anchor sure?

6 By grace! On this I’ll rest when dying;
 In Jesus’ promise I rejoice;
For though I know my heart’s condition,
 I also know my Savior’s voice.
My heart is glad, all grief has flown
 Since I am saved by grace alone.

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SERMON “A Word from Nicodemus” (John 3:14-21)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the Church here and around the
 world and for all people in their various
 circumstances.

When the Israelites became impatient, they spoke against God and against Moses. Let us pray for all who are in positions of authority in our nation and others, that God would give them wisdom to seek ways to meet the needs of their citizens, providing for equal justice and stability for everyone within their borders. And let us pray for police and armed forces, that God would protect them as they maintain security and peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Many people follow the course of this world carrying out their desires, by nature children of wrath. Let us pray for people who influence our culture and society but without faith in our Savior, that God would open their eyes to look up to Christ on the cross, working faith in their hearts, and making them alive together with Christ. And let us pray for lay and clergy leaders of the Church here and around the world, that God would give them strength and opportunity to spread the Gospel with joy. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: When the Israelites were in the wilderness without food and water, God provided manna. Let us pray for all who lack adequate food, clothing, and shelter, that He would provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to channel the resources He provides to where they are most needed. And let us pray that all who manage God's bounty, serving Him so that it moves from mine to tool, from farm to table, from warehouse to storefront, and from street to home. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: The psalmist remembered that when “they cried to the LORD in their trouble, . . . He delivered them from their distress.” Let us pray for all who are troubled in body, mind, or spirit, both those near and dear to us, [*especially . . .*], and those known only to God, that He would bring about healing, relief, comfort, and peace as fits His gracious plans for them. And let us pray for ourselves and all who care for the sick and dying, that we serve our gracious God using the gifts He provides. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

(additional local prayers may be spoken here)

Pastor: Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray.

People: **Amen.**

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

People: **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 *Numbers 6:24–26*

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

People: Amen.

HYMN “Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer” #918

- 1 Guide me, O Thou great Redeemer,
Pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy pow’rful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more;
Feed me till I want no more.
- 2 Open now the crystal fountain
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliv’rer, strong deliv’rer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield;
Be Thou still my strength and shield.
- 3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death and hell’s destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan’s side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises
I will ever give to Thee;
I will ever give to Thee.

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DISMISSAL *Ephesians 2:10*

Pastor: You are God’s workmanship, created in Christ
Jesus for good works, which God prepared

beforehand, that we should walk in them. Therefore,
go in peace as you serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

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