

The Fourth Sunday in Lent



March 14, 2021



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

Deck thyself, my soul, with gladness

Hymnal 401

1 Deck thy - self, my soul, with glad - ness, leave the
2 Sun, who all my life dost bright - en; Light, who
3 Je - sus, Bread of Life, I pray thee, let me

gloom - y haunts of sad - ness, come in - to the day - light's
dost my soul en - light - en; Joy, the best that an - y
glad - ly here o - bey thee; nev - er to my hurt in -

splen - dor, there with joy thy prais - es ren - der
know - eth; Fount, whence all my be - ing flow - eth:
vit - ed, be thy love with love re - quit - ed;

un - to him whose grace un - bound - ed hath this
at thy feet I cry, my Ma - ker, let me
from this ban - quet let me mea - sure, Lord, how

won-drous ban-quet found-ed— high o'er all the heavens he
 be a fit par-ta-ker of this bless-ed food from
 vast and deep its trea-sure; through the gifts thou here dost

reign-eth, yet to dwell with thee he deign-eth.
 hea-ven, for our good, thy glo-ry, giv-en.
 give me, as thy guest in heaven re-ceive me.

Words: Johann Franck (1618-1677); tr. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878), alt.
 Music: *Schmücke dich*, melody Johann Cruger (1598-1662); harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

PENITENTIAL ORDER

Officiant Blessed be the God of our salvation:
People **Who bears our burdens and forgives our sins.**

Officiant Jesus said, “The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord your God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.” (*Mark 12:29-31*)

Officiant Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

Silence may be kept.

All **Almighty God, Source of all that is, Giver of every good gift:
 You create all people in your image and call us to love one another as you love us.
 We confess that we have failed to honor you
 in the great diversity of the human family.
 We have desired to live in freedom,
 while building walls between ourselves and others.
 We have longed to be known and accepted for who we are,
 while making judgments of others based on the color of skin,
 or the shape of features, or varieties of human experience.**

**We have tried to love our neighbors individually,
while yet benefitting from systems that hold those same neighbors in oppression.
Forgive us, Holy God.**

Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people.

Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love.

**Restore us in your image, to be beloved community, united in our diversity,
even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit, Holy and undivided Trinity,
now and for ever.**

Amen.

Officiant 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.

All **Amen.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

God of wilderness and water, your Son was baptized and tempted as we are. Guide us
through these holy days, that we may not avoid struggle, but open ourselves to blessing,
through the cleansing depths of repentance and the heaven-rending words of the Spirit;
in the Name of your Son, we pray.

All **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Numbers 21:4-9

Lector A reading from Numbers.

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. 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."

Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD to take the serpents from us."

So Moses prayed for the people. 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."

So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it on a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 107:1-3,17-22, *inclusive language*

- 1 Give thanks to the LORD who is good, *
and whose mercy endures for ever.
- 2 Let all those whom the LORD has redeemed proclaim *
that God has redeemed them from the hand of the foe.
- 3 The LORD gathered them out of the lands; *
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.
- 17 Some were fools and took to rebellious ways; *
they were afflicted because of their sins.
- 18 They abhorred all manner of food *
and drew near to death's door.
- 19 Then they cried to you, O LORD, in their trouble, *
and you delivered them from their distress.
- 20 You sent forth your word and healed them *
and saved them from the grave.
- 21 Let them give thanks to you, O LORD, for your mercy *
and the wonders you do for your children.
- 22 Let them offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and tell of your acts with shouts of joy.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 2:1-10

Lector A reading from Ephesians.

You were dead through the trespasses and sins 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. 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.

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through 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 ages to come 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 the result of works, so that no one may boast. 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.

People **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL

John 3:14-21

Priest The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "Just 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. 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.

"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. 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. 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. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 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.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

HOMILY

CREED

paraphrase of the Nicene Creed by Timothy Dudley-Smith



We be - lieve in God the Fa - ther, God al - migh - ty, by - whose plan
Christ, who on the cross for - sa - ken, like a lamb to slaugh - ter led,
We be - lieve in God the Spi - rit; in one Church, be low, a - bove:



earth and heav - en sprang to be - ing all cre - at - ed things be - gan.
suf - fered un - der Pon - tius Pi - late, he des - cend - ed to the dead.
saints of God in one com - mu - nion, one in ho - li - ness and love.



We be - lieve in Christ the Sa - vior, Son of God in hu - man frame,
We be - lieve in Je - sus ri - sen, hea - ven's king to rule and reign,
So by faith, our sins for - giv - en, Christ our Sa - vior, Lord and friend,



vir - gin born, the child of Ma - ry up - on whom the Spi - rit came.
to the Fa - ther's side as - cend - ed till as judge he comes a - gain.
we shall rise with him in glo - ry to the life that knows no end.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

adapted from Elizabeth and Matthew Myers Boulton

Reader Good Shepherd, as we mark one year of this pandemic, we thank you for walking with us through the valley of the shadow of death: through the suffering, the anxiety, the loneliness, the boredom, the longing for closeness and the longing for personal space, the confusion and fear, the impatience and hope, the good days and bad.

Forgive us for our suspicions of each other, for the ways this ordeal has made us more divided, as a country and a world. Help us bridge our differences and come together, even as we are physically distant.

Lord, in your mercy,

People **Hear our prayer.**

Reader God of love, we thank you for all of the ways, large and small, that these trials have strengthened us as a community: the acts of kindness, the new ways of doing things, the support we've offered and received.

Forgive us for the inequities that this pandemic has exposed. Kindle in our hearts a new commitment to justice as we build and rebuild our community together. Keep us ever mindful of those in need.

We pray especially for those of us who have lost loved ones, lost jobs, lost hope.

Lord, in your mercy,

People **Hear our prayer.**

Reader God of grace, keep watch with those who work, watch, or weep this day. Walk with those whose bodies are holding memories of sickness, trauma, pain, confusion, or isolation. Give your angels charge over those who cannot sleep because of anxiety or grief. Tend the sick and soothe the suffering, especially *Pat Ald, Ed Beverly, Bob Brown, Tim Cook, Daniel, David Dieter, Digory, Trevor Esse, Sean Farley, Debbie Faust, Vincent Faust, Natasha Foreman, Grace, Michael Jenkins, Judith, Lauren Keils, Lucinda Keils, Matthew Klein, Martin, Arnold Matthews, Jane McFeeley, Jonathon Moon, Paul, Kathleen S., Atticus Schoonover, Marilyn Shably, Owen Sprague, Gregg Stewart, Len St. Jean, Glen Swanson, John T., Mimi Van Scoter, Megan White, Bob Wright*, and those we now name. (*People add names silently or aloud.*)

Silence

Lord, in your mercy,

People **Hear our prayer.**

Reader God of life, we pray for those who have died, especially throughout the past year, including those we now name. (*People add names silently or aloud.*)

Silence

Receive them into your eternal embrace, that they may rest in light and peace, to the comfort and consolation of those who mourn.

Lord, in your mercy,

People **Hear our prayer.**

Reader God of hope, lift our spirits as we dare to look ahead and dream about the new world to come. Strengthen our efforts, deepen our wisdom, and keep us aware of your constant presence. For your love's sake, shield the joyous, especially those who celebrate birthdays this week: *Margo Norris, Matthew Rolain, Liam TenBrink, Chris Beck, Marilyn Shabby, Jan Weir*, and those we now name. (*People add names silently or aloud.*)

Silence

Lord, in your mercy,

People **Hear our prayer.**

Officiant God of peace,
let us your people know that at the heart of turbulence
there is an inner calm that comes from faith in you.
Keep us from being content with things as they are,
that from this central peace there may come a creative compassion,
a thirst for justice, and a willingness to give of ourselves in the spirit of Christ,
in whose name we pray.

A New Zealand Prayer Book

People **Amen.**

PEACE

Officiant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The people share with one another signs of Christ's peace.

VESTRY GREETING

OFFERTORY

BCP 377

Officiant Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to the Lord.

*Please give generously at christcd.org/online-giving
or by mailing a check to Christ Church Detroit, 960 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit, 48207.*

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater;
 He sendeth more strength when the labors increase.
 To added affliction He adds His mercy;
 To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

*His love has no limit, His grace has no measure;
 His pow'r has no boundary, never to end.
 For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
 He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.*

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
 When our strength has failed and the day is half done,
 When we reach the end of all our resources,
 Our Father's true giving is only begun.

PRESENTATION HYMN

OLD 100TH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
 Praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

adapted from *This Far By Faith*

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **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 God thanks and praise.

The Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, God Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth: because, though our road has been stony going, you have given us the power to stand firm in the face of wickedness and to rejoice in triumph over death and the grave. And so, with the multitude from east and west, from north and south, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we lift our voices in the unending hymn:

Celebrant and People

**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.**

The Celebrant continues

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way. In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but guided us into the path of love and light. In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity.

The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire. In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted, to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to your command, O Father,

Celebrant and People

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; remembering your truth, and awaiting the day when Jesus shall return to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.

Send your Holy Spirit upon this bread and this wine, that they may be for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And send your Holy Spirit, our Advocate, to fill our hearts with courage to pursue love and justice in all the world.

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever.

Celebrant and People

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

*Celebrant
All*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say
**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Common Worship

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is kept.

Celebrant Let us pray.

All **As the grain once scattered in the fields
and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside
are now reunited on this table in bread and wine,
so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together
from the corners of the earth into your kingdom.
Amen.**

The priest does not receive, but begins the Prayer for Spiritual Communion.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Common Worship

Celebrant Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love,
you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels,
and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life.

All **Although we cannot gather in person as a congregation
and consume these gifts of bread and wine together,
we thank you that we do receive the sacrament of Christ's presence,
the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
may we embody your desire and be renewed for your service,
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

CONCLUDING COLLECT

Celebrant Lord Jesus, stay with us. Assure us and revive us in the truth that in you alone, we are one body. Nourish us with solace and strength to be bread for the world, and bring us at last to that heavenly banquet, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

BLESSING

1. A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound, That
 2. 'Twas grace that taught— my heart to fear, And
 3. The Lord has prom - ised good to me, His
 4. Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 5. When we've been there— ten thou - sand years, Bright

1. saved a wretch like me!— I once was lost, but
 2. grace my fears re - lieved;— How pre - cious did that
 3. word my hope se - cures;— He will my shield and
 4. have al - read - y come;— 'Tis grace that brought me
 5. shin - ing as the sun,— We've no less days to

1. now am found, Was blind, but now— I see.—
 2. grace ap - pear The hour I first— be - lieved!—
 3. por - tion be As long as life— en - dures.—
 4. safe thus far, And grace will lead— me home.—
 5. sing God's praise Than when we'd first— be - gun.—

DISMISSAL

Priest Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

ABOUT THE ART AND MUSIC

On the cover is an icon called *Cloud of Unknowing* by Kelly Latimore, 2010. At first glance, it may appear blank, the texture, if anything, alluding to the bronze figure (serpent) created in today's story from Numbers. Dwelling with the seemingly void icon for a length of time, however, a face begins to emerge: that of Christ.

A year ago this week, the first COVID-19 cases were detected here in Michigan, and every aspect of our collective lives—all of our gatherings, including at church—ceased. Our schedules, our expectations, our hopes, and our senses of normalcy and safety all went blank. We thought the crisis surely would be behind us within weeks, and yet here we are one year later, still dwelling in relative isolation, still out of our beloved building, still enduring grief that is literally untold for we have not been able to express it together, still traversing the formless void, still unknowing, still remembering.

Throughout the emptiness of this year—in our hearts, which now bear irreparable holes—Christ has been and always will be present, steadfastly. Our Shepherd does not abandon us to the grave, but walks with us through the shadows of death, even when our vision is clouded. We will emerge together from this void a new people, with hearts not of stone but of hope, trusting completely on the grace of God.

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