

A decorative flourish consisting of a central vertical stem with four dots, from which four curved arms extend outwards, resembling a stylized cross or a floral motif.

Second Sunday
in
Lent

Sunday, March 5, 2023

9:00 am

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME

GATHERING HYMN: 445 – WASH, O GOD, OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Please join me as we confess our sins together.

First, consider:

Where have you gone wrong this week?

How have you harmed your relationship with God,
with your neighbor, and with yourself?

[Silence for reflection.]

Now we confess our sins together.

We know we have harmed each other and damaged our relationship with you. But we fear that admitting our sin will only drive us deeper into isolation. What have we done? Is it too late to receive your forgiveness?

Friends, even when we sin, God does not accuse.

God only asks what we have done so we can set down our guilt.

And God only asks where we have gone because God wants to bring us back. + Jesus died to reveal the limitless depth of God's love.

You can doubt this love. But you can never change the truth of it. God knows all and forgives all. The only question that remains is whether we can accept love so freely given.

Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

Reading from Genesis.

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

¹The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ^{4a}So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

Reading from Romans.

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. ¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.

²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."

³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus

answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶"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. ¹⁷"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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

APOSTLES' CREED

For some, the Apostles' Creed is like liturgical muscle memory: You can say it without thinking about it.

Today we ask you to affirm your faith by answering questions so you might truly consider what you believe. If you feel unable to affirm your faith today, listen to those around you. Borrow some faith from them as we share these ancient words.

Do you believe there is a God who made us?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe this God sent a child named Jesus to save this world?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe the Holy Spirit animates our faith and empowers the church today?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you...through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

MEAL

OFFERING

Please place offering in offering plates as they are passed, utilize our online giving tools (www.hlc.church), or scan the QR code to remain current in your generosity. Checks can be sent to: Hope Lutheran Church, 8070 Rowan Road, Cranberry Twp. PA 16066.



SPECIAL MUSIC: – “HOLY WATER” OFFERED BY HOPE PRAISE BAND

OFFERTORY: WE ARE NOT WORTHY (SING TWICE)

Voice

We are not wor - thy of Christ the King

5 He who was crushed for our i - ni - qui - ties

9 By - His wounds we are free

13 We are not wor - thy We are not wor - thy

17 We are not wor - thy of Christ the King

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray.

God, what will you do with these gifts? We may never know. But we carry a faith passed to us through generations. We set the table with food and drink harvested by many hands. We break the bread of answered prayers. Use the gifts we give today to grow tomorrow's mercy. Amen.

DIALOGUE

Where is our God?

God is here in this place.

Where are your hearts?

We have given them to God.

What shall we do in the presence of our God?

We shall give our thanks and praise.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Even the people who knew Jesus best
carried doubts in their hearts.

They lived under the burden of unanswered questions.
And when Jesus gathered them for one last meal,
uncertainty swirled in their hearts.

So to explain God's love,
and to show it and share it,
Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

When we eat this bread and drink this cup
we never have to question
your love for us, Great God.
Now send the Spirit into this meal and into our hearts.
Blend this food and drink with holiness.
Fuse our searching souls with your perfect friendship,
and we will become people who delight in what you have done
and joyfully wonder what you shall make of us today.

LORD'S PRAYER

Jesus, you asked us to ask you for anything we need.
So we pray:

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

If you wonder whether God really wants you
at this table,
Jesus answers yes.
Bring your unanswered questions with you,
because the Spirit unquestionably beckons you
to taste the truth of God's love.

HOLY COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond: **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

***All are welcome to share in communion.** Proceed forward by way of the center aisle. After receiving your wafer (please let us know if you require gluten-free), commune by **intinction** (dipping the bread into the wine and then eating it) or by **pouring chalice** (please place your cup in the wooden bowl and do not stack it with others). Return to your seat by way of the side aisles. If you do not want to commune, but would like a blessing, please approach with your arms crossed and you will receive a blessing.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Embodied God,
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors
and touch the world with your love.

Amen.

**CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 6TH GRADE ARE DISMISSED FOR SUNDAY
SCHOOL**

HYMN OF THE DAY: 451 – WE ARE BAPTIZED IN CHRIST JESUS

SERMON

SENDING

SENDING HYMN: 660 – LIFT HIGH THE CROSS

BENEDICTION

Go now in the name of our Savior Jesus, who always listens when we pray.

When you leave this place, go and do the work of God in the good daylight. But remember: Jesus also welcomes those whose questions keep them awake long past dark. In your life, who loses sleep over unanswered questions? You do not have to solve their every problem. But will you stay with them late into the night so they might know God's presence?

God, the giver of love,
✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth
bless you in this Lenten journey.
Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve in love.
Thanks be to God.