



For with You is the fountain of life;
in Your light we see light.

+ Psalm 36:9 (NKJV)

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 22, 2020

*Your mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.
Your righteousness is like the great mountains; Your judgments are a great deep;
O Lord, You preserve man and beast.*

*How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!
Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.
They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house,
and You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.
For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.*

*Oh, continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You,
and Your righteousness to the upright in heart.*

+ Psalm 36:5-10 (NKJV)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I'm writing this to you from my desk in the Pastor's Study and it is quiet . . . I miss the sounds of the kids playing outside, the hustle and bustle of the lunch ladies as they prepare snacks and meals for the kids, the chit-chat of the staff as they take short breaks at the table in our church office. Yes, with everyone gone, I can crank up some Britney Spears music and dance around like no one is watching. But I miss the people. I miss the sounds of *life* taking place. I miss things being *normal!*

I'm sure you are feeling the same thing. Things *aren't normal* and that can be really frightening! The temptation is to give in to the fear and the panic – to let our doubts and worries cry out as did the Israelites in the desert, “Is the LORD among us or not? (Exod 17:7)”

Brothers and sisters, hear the promise of our Lord and Savior: “I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matt 28:20)” By the blessing-rich waters of Holy Baptism, you are Christ's and He is yours. In the midst of darkness – in days such as we have now – He is your light. Even more than that, He declares that you are the light of the world (Matt 5:14). Filled with His light, it is our blessed responsibility – our joyful vocation – to be His light-bearers to others, to the ones who yet sit in darkness and the shadow of death (Luke 1:79). Prophetic words from our Lord for days such as these!

“Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead (Eph 8:14)” for Christ indeed shines on us, we who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet 2:9). In this time of discipline as we experience a portion of God's wrath against ungodliness and unrighteousness (Rom 1:18), now is the time for us to “let [our] light shine before others, so that they may see [our] good works and give glory to [our] Father who is in heaven. (Matt 5:16)”

Yours in Christ Jesus, +Pastor Griebenaw

Pastor's phone: (760) 679-3699

Pastor's email: pastor@gracelutheranelcentro.org

✠ Morning Prayer ✠

Opening Hymn: When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

LSB 425



1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross On which the
2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast Save in the
3 See, from His head, His hands, His feet Sor - row and
4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, That were a



Prince of Glo - ry died, My rich - est gain I
death of Christ, my God; All the vain things that
love - flow min - gled down! Did e'er such love and
trib - ute far too small; Love so a - maz - ing,



count but loss And pour con - tempt on all my pride.
charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to His blood.
sor - row meet Or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
so di - vine, De - mands my soul, my life, my all!

Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Versicles

LSB 235



L O Lord, o - pen my lips,



C and my mouth shall de - clare Your praise.



C Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;

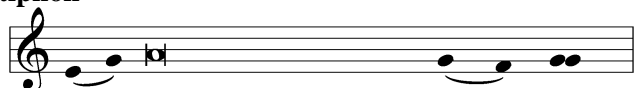


as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.

✠ Psalmody ✠

Antiphon

LSB 237



L The Lord has redeemed His peo - ple.



C O come, let us wor - ship Him.

C O come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joy-ful noise to the rock of our sal-va - tion.

I Let us come in - to His pres - ence with thanks - giv - ing;
let us make a joy - ful noise to Him with songs of praise.

II For the Lord is a great God and a great king a - bove all gods.

I In His hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the moun - tains are His al - so.

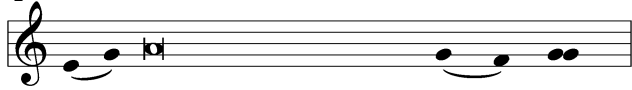
II The sea is His, for He made it;
and His hand formed the dry land.

I O come, let us wor - ship and bow down;
let us kneel be - fore the Lord, our mak - er.

II For He is our God, and we are the peo - ple
of His pas - ture and the sheep of His hand.

C Glo-ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.

Antiphon



Ⓛ The Lord has redeemed His peo - ple.



Ⓞ O come, let us wor - ship Him.

Sit

Office Hymn: God Loved the World So That He Gave

LSB 571



1 God loved the world so that He gave His on - ly
2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, Who was made
3 God would not have the sin - ner die; His Son with
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son For - gives all



Son the lost to save, That all who would in
flesh and suf - fered death; All then who trust in
sav - ing grace is nigh; His Spir - it in the
sins which you have done; And, jus - ti - fied by



Him be - lieve Should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Him a - lone Are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
Word de - clares How we in Christ are heav - en's heirs.
Je - sus' blood, Your Bap - tism grants the high - est good.

- 5 If you are sick, if death is near,
This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death;
That is the firmest ground of faith.

- △ 6 Glory to God the Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To You, O blessèd Trinity,
Be praise now and eternally!

Text and tune: Public domain

✠ Readings ✠

Reading

Isaiah 42:14–21

- ¹⁴For a long time I have held My peace;
I have kept still and restrained Myself;
now I will cry out like a woman in labor;
I will gasp and pant.
¹⁵I will lay waste mountains and hills,
and dry up all their vegetation;
I will turn the rivers into islands,
and dry up the pools.

¹⁶And I will lead the blind
in a way that they do not know,
in paths that they have not known
I will guide them.
I will turn the darkness before them into light,
the rough places into level ground.
These are the things I do,
and I do not forsake them.
¹⁷They are turned back and utterly put to shame,
who trust in carved idols,
who say to metal images,
“You are our gods.”
¹⁸Hear, you deaf,
and look, you blind, that you may see!
¹⁹Who is blind but My servant,
or deaf as My messenger whom I send?
Who is blind as My dedicated one,
or blind as the servant of the LORD?
²⁰He sees many things, but does not observe them;
his ears are open, but he does not hear.
²¹The LORD was pleased, for His righteousness’ sake,
to magnify His law and make it glorious.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

Reading

Ephesians 5:8–14

⁸For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

Reading

John 9

¹As [Jesus] passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ²And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “**It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.** ⁴**We must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.** ⁵**As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**” ⁶Having said these things, He spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then He anointed the man’s eyes with the mud ⁷and said to him, “**Go, wash in the pool of Siloam**” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” ¹⁰So they said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹He answered, “The Man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘**Go to Siloam and wash.**’ So I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹²They said to him, “Where is He?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This Man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about Him, since He has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²²(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) ²³Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know that this Man is a sinner.” ²⁵He answered, “Whether He is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶They said to him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?” ²⁷He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?” ²⁸And they reviled him, saying, “You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this Man, we do not know where He comes from.” ³⁰The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.” ³⁴They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him He said, “**Do you believe in the Son of Man?**” ³⁶He answered, “And who is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “**You have seen Him, and it is He who is speaking to you.**” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped Him. ³⁹Jesus said, “**For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.**” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near Him heard these things, and said to Him, “Are we also blind?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “**If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.**”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.

C But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.

Sermon

✠ Canticle ✠

Stand

Benedictus

LSB 238

C Bless - ed be the Lord, the God of Is - ra - el;
 He has come to His peo - ple and re - deemed them.
 He has raised up for us a might - y Sav - ior,
 born of the house of His ser - vant Da - vid.



Through His ho - ly proph - ets He prom - ised of old



that He would save us from our en - e - mies, from the hands of all who



hate us. He prom - ised to show mer - cy to our fa - thers



and to re - mem - ber His ho - ly cov - e - nant.



This was the oath He swore to our fa - ther A - bra - ham:



to set us free from the hands of our en - e - mies,



free to wor - ship Him with - out fear, ho - ly and



right - teous in His sight all the days of our life.



L You, my child, shall be called the proph - et of the Most High,



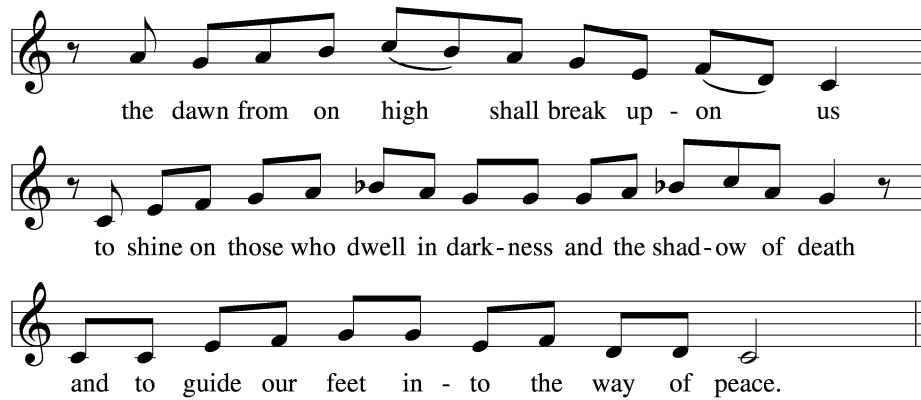
for you will go be - fore the Lord to pre - pare His way,



to give His peo - ple knowl - edge of sal - va - tion by the for - give - ness



of their sins. In the ten - der com - pas - sion of our God,



the dawn from on high shall break up - on us
to shine on those who dwell in dark-ness and the shad-ow of death
and to guide our feet in - to the way of peace.



C Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the
Ho-ly Spir - it; as it was in the be - gin - ning,
is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.

Apostles' Creed

- P** God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.
- C** **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.**

✠ Prayer ✠

Kneel or remain Standing

Collect of the Day

P 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. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Collect

P Almighty and most merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we give You thanks for all Your goodness and tender mercies, especially for the gift of Your dear Son and for the revelation of Your will and grace. Implant Your Word in us that, with good and honest hearts, we may keep it and bring forth the fruits of faith.

We humbly implore You to rule and govern Your Church throughout the world. Bless all those who proclaim Your truth that we may be preserved in the pure doctrine of Your saving Word and that faith in You may be strengthened, love toward others increased, and Your kingdom extended. Send forth laborers into Your harvest, and sustain those whom You have sent that the Word of reconciliation may be proclaimed to all people and the Gospel preached in all the world.

Grant health and prosperity to all who are in authority, especially to the president and congress of the United States, the governor and legislature of this state, and to all those who make, administer, and judge our laws.

Grant them grace to rule according to Your good pleasure for the maintenance of righteousness and the hindrance and punishment of wickedness, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.

According to Your good pleasure, turn the hearts of our enemies and adversaries that they may cease their hostilities and walk with us in meekness and in peace.

Comfort, O God, with Your Holy Spirit all who are in trouble, want, sickness, anguish of labor, peril of death, or any other adversity. Grant courage and steadfastness especially to those who suffer for Your name's sake that they may receive and accept their afflictions in the confidence that You will acknowledge them as Your own.

Although we have deserved Your righteous wrath and punishment, yet, we ask You, O most merciful Father, not to remember the sins of our youth nor our many transgressions. Out of Your unspeakable goodness and mercy defend us from all harm and danger to body and soul. Preserve us from false doctrine, from war and bloodshed, from plague and pestilence, from all calamity by fire and water, from hail and tempest, from failure of harvest and from famine, from anguish of heart and despair of Your mercy, and from an evil death. In every time of trouble, show Yourself a very present help, the Savior of all, especially to those who believe.

Cause all needed fruits of the earth to prosper that we may enjoy them in due season. Give success to the Christian training of the young, to all lawful occupations on land, sea, and air, and to all pure arts and useful knowledge, crowning them with Your blessing.

Receive, O God, our bodies and souls and all our talents, together with the offerings we bring You, for by His blood Your Son has purchased us to be Your own that we may live under Him in His kingdom.

These and whatsoever other things You would have us ask of You, O God, grant us for the sake of Jesus Christ, Your only Son, our Lord and Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Collect for Grace

P O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, You have safely brought us to the beginning of this day. Defend us in the same with Your mighty power and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings, being ordered by Your governance, may be righteous in Your sight; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 241

L Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

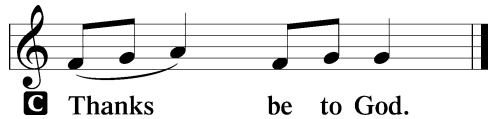
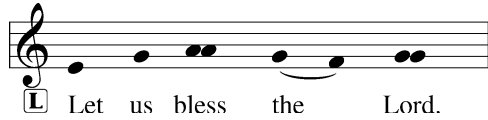
C **Our Father who art in heaven,**
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Stand

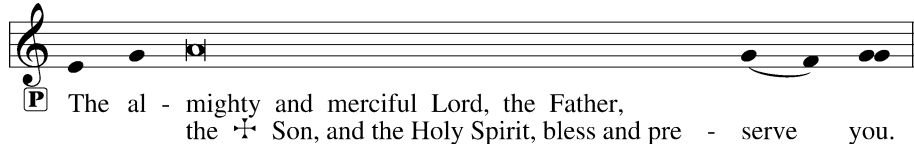
Benedicamus

LSB 241



Benediction

LSB 242



Closing Hymn: O Lord, throughout These Forty Days

LSB 418



1 O Lord, through - out these for - ty days You
2 You strove with Sa - tan, and You won; Your
3 Though parched and hun - gry, yet You prayed And
4 Be with us through this sea - son, Lord, And



prayed and kept the fast; In - spire re - pen - tance
faith - ful - ness en - dured; Lend us Your nerve, Your
fixed Your mind a - bove; So teach us to de -
all our earth - ly days, That when the fi - nal



for our sin, And free us from our past.
skill and trust In God's e - ter - nal Word.
ny our - selves, Since we have known God's love.
Eas - ter dawns, We join in heav - en's praise.

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Acknowledgments

Morning Prayer from Lutheran Service Book

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A PERSONAL NOTE FROM YOUR PASTOR

Brothers and sisters,

I thank you for bearing with me as we navigate this time of separation from each other. I pray that today's streaming service was edifying for you and brought the light of Christ to shine brightly in your homes. I also welcome your feedback – please let me know if you could hear me, if the music was loud enough (or too loud), and so on. I expect that we will be worshipping together in this “virtual space” for a few more weeks (at least) and I will do my very best to make this experience as pleasant and God-pleasing as possible.

While our physical gatherings are suspended, please remember that the work of Christ's church continues. Please consider mailing your tithes and offerings to the church's post office box:

Grace Evangelical-Lutheran Church
PO Box 1530
El Centro, CA 92244-1530.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
+Pastor Griebenaw