

PRELUDE**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS****CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God. who journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace. **Amen.**

Let us acknowledge before God and one another our need for repentance and God's mercy. Holy God, **we confess to you our faults and failings. Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word; we take for ourselves instead of giving to others; we spoil rather than steward your creation; we cause hurt though you call us to heal; we choose fear over compassion. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, as we seek to follow in your way of life. Amen.**

Hear the good news: God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that all may receive life. This promise is for you! God embraces you with divine mercy, ✚ forgives you in Christ's name, and revives you in the Spirit's power. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound***ELW 779**

1 Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound 1 Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.

2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear. And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed.

3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come.
Tis grace has brought be safe thus far and grace will lead me home.

GREETING**ELW p. 203**

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.

KYRIE**ELW p. 203**

Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.

We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.

Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.

Have mercy on us, Lord, make sin and shame depart.

Renew us with your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!

CANTICLE OF PRAISE**ELW p. 204**

Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.

Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:

we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;

on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.

Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;

Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:

Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.

For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Adult Chimes

CHILDREN'S READING

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ²Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." ⁷But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹²He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." ¹³Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah. The word of the Lord.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out 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 mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 205

We are turning, Lord, to hear you; you are merciful and kind— slow to anger, rich in blessing, and with love to us inclined.

GOSPEL: John 9:1-41

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then 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. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." 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 we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would 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 they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. 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?" ²⁸Then 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, "Here is an astonishing 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 he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness*

ELW 843

1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness with a liberating light;
praise the One who frees the prisoners, turning blindness into sight.
Praise the One who preached the gospel, healing ev'ry dread disease,
calming storms and feeding thousands with the very bread of peace.

2 Praise the One who blessed the children with a strong yet gentle word;
praise the One who drove out demons with a piercing, two-edged sword.
Praise the One who brings cool water to the desert's burning sand;
from this well comes living water quenching thirst in ev'ry land.

3 Praise the one true love incarnate: Christ, who suffered in our place;
Jesus died and rose for many that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness, seeing what our God has done.
Praise the one redeeming glory; praise the One who makes us one.

CREED

NEW MEMBER RECOGNITION AND RECEPTION

PEACE

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

OFFERING *Just As I Am, without One Plea*

ELW 592

1 Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

4 Just as I am; thy love unknown has broken ev'ry barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty of the breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Powerful God, you anoint kings and establish rulers. Guide the work of heads of state and elected officials (*specific leaders may be named*). Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with hunger for justice. Equip the feeding ministries of this congregation and community (*especially*). Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of history, with thanksgiving we remember our ancestors in faith who cared for your people (*especially Joseph, Guardian of Jesus*). We praise you for the ways they formed the faith of others and continue to inspire us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SENDING SONG *Be Thou My Vision* (ELW 793)

1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
thou my best thought both by day and by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

4 Light of my soul, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

POSTLUDE

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