

L.Y.N.

Love Your Neighbor

Wear a mask, Wash your hands, Respect Space

Divine Worship

SMT Parish

February 28, 2021

Lent II

Introduction

The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.



Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,
the keeper of the covenant,

the source of steadfast love,
our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.

God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return
to the one who is full of compassion.

Silence is kept for reflection.

**Fountain of living water,
pour out your mercy over us.
Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free.
Rebuild what we have ruined.
Mend what we have torn.
Wash us in your cleansing flood.
Make us alive in the Spirit,
to follow in the way of Jesus,
as healers and restorers,
of the world you so love.
Amen.**

Beloved, God's word never fails.

The promise rests on grace:

by the saving love of Jesus Christ,

the wisdom and power of God,

your sins are ✝ forgiven, and God remembers them no more.

Journey in the way of Jesus.

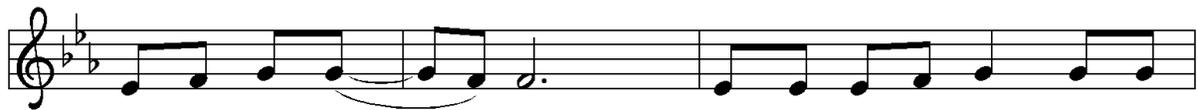
Amen.

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Song



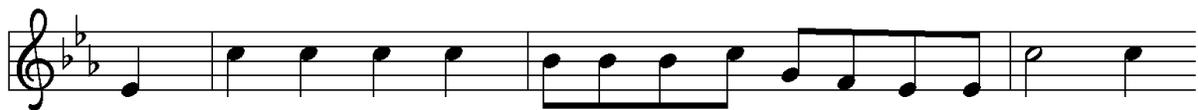
Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right



spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your



pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me.



Re - store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me



with your free Spir - it. Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God,



and re - new a right spir - it with - in me.

Music: *Liturgy of Joy*, James M. Capers, b. 1948
Music © 1993 Augsburg Fortress.

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Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the

sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Readings and Psalm

First Reading: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

A reading from Genesis

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 22:23-31

R/ All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord.

23 You who fear the Lord, give praise! All you of Jacob's | line, give glory.

Stand in awe of the Lord, all you off- | spring of Israel.

24 **For the Lord does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the Lord's face hid- | den from them;**

but when they cry out, | the Lord hears them.

25From you comes my praise in the | great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who | fear the Lord.

26**The poor shall eat | and be satisfied,**

Let those who seek the Lord give praise! May your hearts | live forever! R

27All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn | to the Lord;

all the families of nations shall bow | before God.

28**For dominion belongs | to the Lord,**

who rules o- | ver the nations.

29Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow | down in worship;

all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel be- | fore the Lord.

30**Their descendants shall | serve the Lord,**

whom they shall proclaim to genera- | tions to come.

31They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people | yet unborn,

saying to them, "The | Lord has acted!" **R**

Second Reading: Romans 4:13-25

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.

A reading from Romans.

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. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

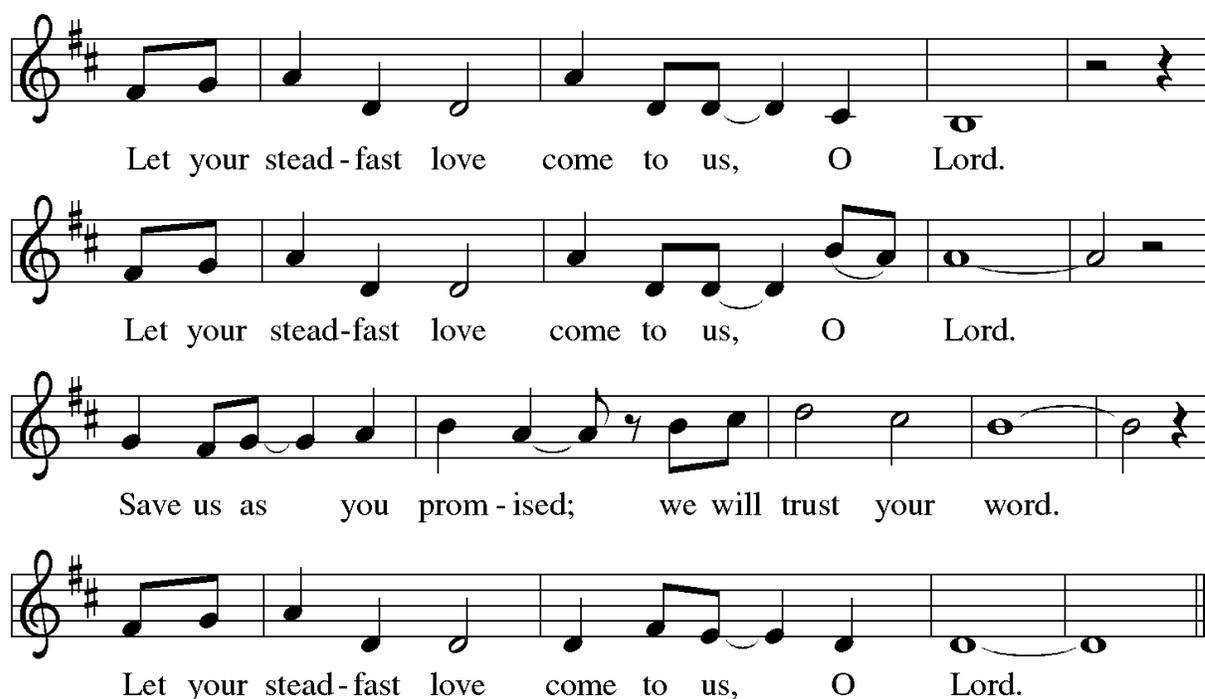
For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in 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. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already

as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Gospel: Mark 8:31-38

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you O Lord.

Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ!

Meditation

Hymn

Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life



1 Come, my way, my truth, my life: such a
2 Come, my light, my feast, my strength: such a
3 Come, my joy, my love, my heart: such a



way as gives us breath; such a truth as ends all
light as shows a feast; such a feast as mends in
joy as none can move; such a love as none can



strife; such a life as kill - eth death.
length; such a strength as makes his guest.
part; such a heart as joys in love.

Text: George Herbert, 1593–1632

Music: THE CALL, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958

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Prayers

Remember in your prayers and with acts of kindness:

- **Guy Schwanse**
- **Jim Saha** (friend of Leslie Neve) who was recently diagnosed with cancer
- The family and friends of **Raymond Kandler** who passed of COVID, as they grieve him and recover from COVID themselves (friends of Leslie Neve)
- The family, friends, and congregation of the **Reverend Bill Weiser** (Rebeka Shleifer's former pastor)

- The family and friends of **John Weakland** (Brian Weakland's father)
- **Ken and Jack Nilsen**, as they recover from their accidents
- **Leslie Handler** (friend of Bernadette Oberndorf)
- **Sheila** (friend of Leslie Neve)
- Humberto, the family, and friends of **Richard Brode**
- **Brian** and family (Courtney's friends)
- **Dena Calabrese** (friend of Irene Murray)
- **Carol** (friend of Leslie Neve)
- **Zoia "Charlie" Foster** (Pastor's niece)
- **Joanne Kraye** (Joel's cousin)

Those in our community lost to COVID-19 and the more than 2,000 in Hudson County, 511,000 deaths in our country, and those who suffer worldwide: Gilberto and Janet Diaz-Granados (friends of pastor), **Francis Ng** (friend of Dan Stoll), **Charles Powers** (friend of the Meusel family), **Rosa Reyes** (funeral by our parish), **Richard Altomare** (friend from our neighborhood), **Barbara Wolfshorndl** (funeral by our parish), **Dawn Ennis** (sister-in-law of Pamela Pater-Ennis), **Arthur Jusu-Davies** (member), **Florence Dombrowsky** (funeral by our parish), **John Lescinsky** (friend of Courtney Kochuba), and **Jaime Pombo** (friend of our parish).

On this second Sunday in Lent, let us pray for the church and for all people in need, responding to each petition with words from today's psalm, "hear us, we pray."

A brief silence.

God of mercy and might, bless your church throughout the world. Uphold those believers who suffer for the sake of your gospel. Strengthen the faith of all the baptized, and make your presence felt by those unable to assemble for worship.

When we cry out, O faithful God,
hear us, we pray.

As this week we commemorate John and Charles Wesley, we ask you to bless the Methodist churches around the globe. Unite them in the promises of baptism, and in due time return us all to the joy of singing the hymns that Charles wrote.

When we cry out, O warm-hearted God,
hear us, we pray.

Bless the earth. Save the animals and their habitats from wild and uncontrolled weather. Teach humanity to live respectful of nature and to join you in tending to creation's well-being. We ask you to smile also on Mars as new exploration continues.

When we cry out, O wondrous God,
hear us, we pray.

Bless the nations of the world. Raise up advocates for peace and justice within and between nations, and give life where hope seems dead. Lead all people around the world to receive the COVID-19 vaccine with gratitude to you. Grant to our Congress the wisdom and the will to improve the lives of all our residents.

When we cry out, O righteous God,
hear us, we pray.

Bless all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit. We beg that you bring an end to the pandemic. Restore medical systems, and comfort all who are sick or dying. Lead us out of the practices of discrimination. Bring vindication for victims of injustice and relief to oppressed minorities. We remember before you

A brief silence.

When we cry out, O benevolent God,
hear us, we pray.

Bless families: those in our community, those waiting at national borders, those whose struggles are known only to you. Keep children safe; sustain expectant parents and those facing infertility; protect women in childbirth. Accompany everyone who lives alone. Equip the ministries and services of church and state that attend to families in their needs.

When we cry out, O loving God,
hear us, we pray.

Fill each one of us with hope, and receive our personal prayers.

A brief silence.

When we cry out, O gracious God,
hear us, we pray.

Praises to you, O God, for centuries of saints whose faithfulness inspires our Lenten journey. Bless those who mourn the half million dead of the virus. Be our way, our truth, our life, and strengthen our faith in the gift of your final salvation.

A brief silence.

When we cry out, O everlasting God,
hear us, we pray.

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer *Matthew 6, Luke 11*

Lord remember us in your glory and make us bold to 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.**

Or

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Announcements

- District Meeting today at 3:00 via Zoom Please join us as we check-in on the other congregations in our area, elect new Synod Council members and prepare for the 2023 Churchwide Assembly.
- We're delighted to share that Pastor Gary will be leading two weekly Bible studies, beginning the first week of March:

Tuesdays at 1pm

[Click here](#) for the Zoom link.

Wednesdays at 7pm

[Click here](#) for the Zoom link.

These studies will take a fresh look at Israel's prophetic movement that undergirds the Christian understanding of Justice.

Note that we will be using the book *The Prophets* by Abraham Josua Heschel, which was first published in 1962 and recognized as a masterpiece of biblical scholarship. While the the book is not necessary for our study, it is recommended for further reading and insight. You can find it for purchase (\$15) on [Amazon](#).

For questions, please email Pastor Gary at pastorgary@stmatthewtrinity.org.

- Virtual Sunday School

Benediction

You are what God made you to be:

created in Christ Jesus for good works,
chosen as holy and beloved,
freed to serve your neighbor.
God bless you ☩ that you may be a blessing,
in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Love your neighbor as yourself.
Thanks be to God.

Serving Today

- The Rev. Gary C. LeCroy, D. Min. Pastor
- Matthew Hummel, Organist
- Mark Singleton & Courtney Kochuba, Cantors
- Mark Singleton, Worship Assistant
- Jennifer Meusel, Lector & Usher

Commemorations

George Herbert, hymn writer, died 1633

Monday, March 1, 2021

An excellent scholar, Herbert served briefly in the English parliament, then became a parish priest. He was known for devoted care of his parishioners, as well as for writing poetry and hymns, including "Come, my way, my truth, my life." He died at age 40.

John Wesley, died 1791; Charles Wesley, died 1788; renewers of the church

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

These brothers led a revival originally intended to remain within the Church of England, one that involved frequent communion and advocacy for the poor. Except for a brief time in America, they worked in England. Charles was also a prolific hymn writer. After their deaths, their work led to the formation of the Methodist Church.

Readings for the Week:

- **Monday** (commemoration of George Herbert, hymnwriter, 1633) Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45.
- **Tuesday** (commemoration of John Wesley, 1791; Charles Wesley, 1788; renewers of the church) Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19.
- **Wednesday** Jeremiah 30:12-22.
- **Thursday** Psalm 19.
- **Friday** Exodus 19:9b-15.
- **Saturday** Exodus 19:16-25.
- **THird Sunday in Lent** (commemoration of Perpetua and Felicity and companions, martyrs at Carthage, 202) Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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