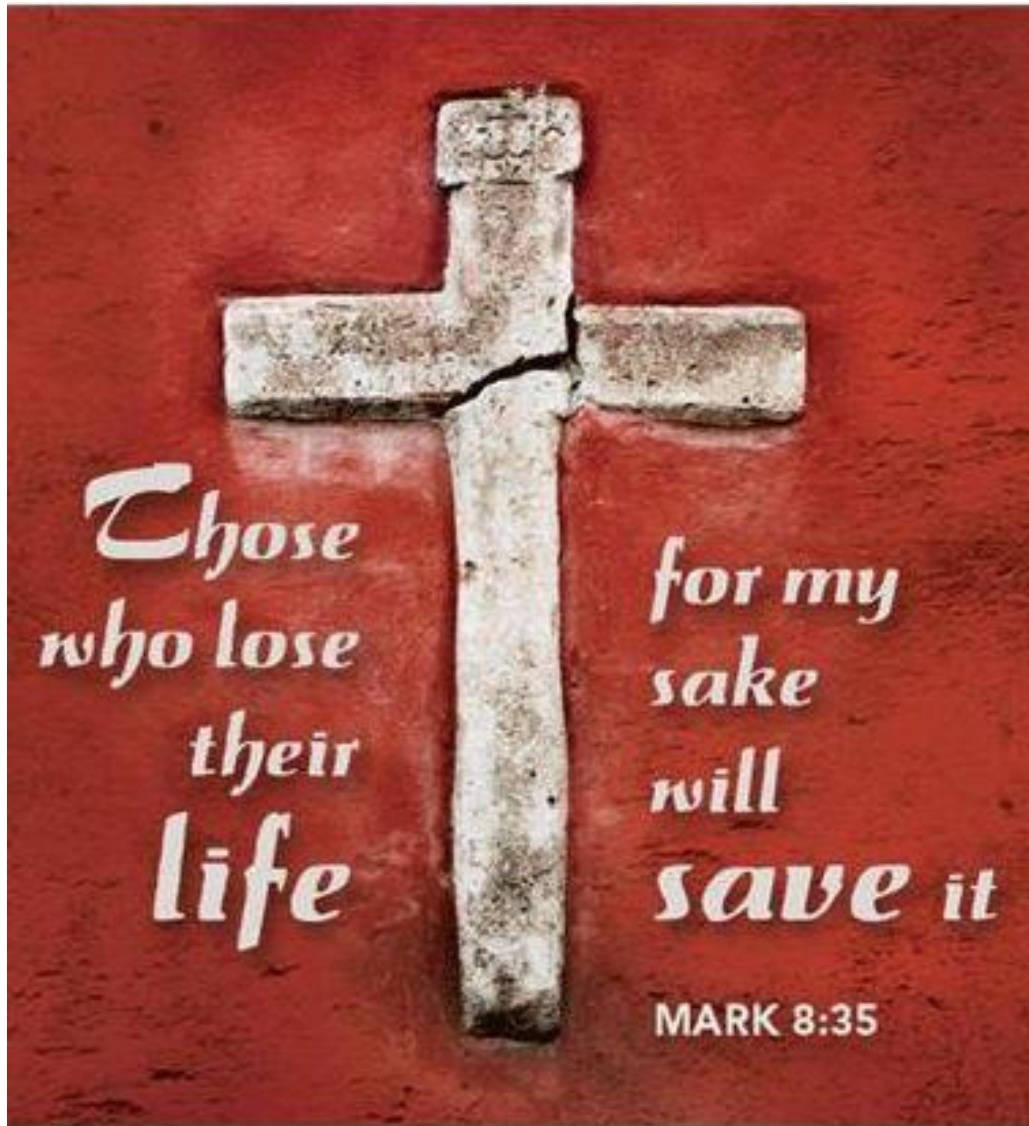


February 28, 2021

Second Sunday in Lent

ELW Service of the Word



Introduction to the day

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.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

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
and 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.**

GREETING

The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**
Christ, have mercy: **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord, have mercy: **Lord, have mercy.**

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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

A reading from Genesis.

¹When 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. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.” ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I 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.”

¹⁵God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I 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.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 22:23-31

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob’s line, give glory.

Stand in awe of the LORD, all you offspring of Israel.

²⁴**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the LORD’s face hidden 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!

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 over 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 before the LORD.

³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,**

whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.

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

saying to them, “The LORD has acted!”

SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25

A reading from Romans.

¹³The 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. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹He 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. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ²³Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Return to the Lord, your God,
return to the Lord, your God,
who is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

GOSPEL: Mark 8:31-38

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹[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. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But 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.”

³⁴He 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. ³⁵For 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. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those 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.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

APOSTLES' CREED

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

**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.**

**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. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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. *A brief silence.*

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. *A brief silence.*

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. *A brief silence.*

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. *A brief silence.*

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. *A brief silence.*

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.**

PEACE

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

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

As forgiven and reconciled people, we offer ourselves and our gifts to god. **Amen**

OFFERING PRAYER

O god, receive our gifts as you receive us:

Like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.

Nourish us anew in your tender care,

And empower us in faithful service

To tend to others with this same love,

Through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. **Amen.**

CANTICLE OF THANKSGIVING

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

**Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.**

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Gracious God, who has named and claimed us,
calling us your beloved children,
you know the secrets of our hearts.
When we sin and stray from your paths,
you astound us with your saving grace.
For this Word of life, **we give you thanks.**

Loving Jesus, living Word,
in you the Kingdom of God has come near;
through you all that was lost has been found.
Help us to boldly follow wherever you may lead,
trusting your promise that we need not fear,
for you are with us.
For this Word of life, **we give you thanks.**

Holy Spirit, the mystery in which we dwell,
into our scarcity, your abundance flows.
Enliven all communities with your good news.
Guide us to love and serve Jesus,
giving ourselves away for the sake of the world.
For this Word of life, **we give you thanks.**

All glory to you, holy God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

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. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

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