

# ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN "BLUE" CHURCH

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**Fourth Sunday in Lent ✕ March 14, 2021**

PRELUDE – “PRELUDE ON ‘WONDROUS LOVE’” – JOHN BARR

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

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 and self-examination*

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.**

**HYMN #779 “AMAZING GRACE, HOW SWEET THE SOUND”**

### GREETING

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

**And also with you.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and LORD, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**FIRST READING:**

**NUMBERS 21:4-9**

### PSALM 107:1-3, 17-22

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good, for God's mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup>**Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**

<sup>3</sup>gathering them in from the lands;

from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

<sup>17</sup>**Some were fools and took rebellious paths; through their sins they were afflicted.**

<sup>18</sup>They loathed all manner of food and drew near to death's door.

<sup>19</sup>**Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD and you delivered them from their distress.**

<sup>20</sup>You sent forth your word and healed them and rescued them from the grave.

<sup>21</sup>**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love and your wonderful works for all people.**

<sup>22</sup>Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy.

**SECOND READING:**

**EPHESIANS 2:1-10**

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**THE HOLY GOSPEL:**

**JOHN 3:14-21**

The Gospel of the LORD.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### SERMON

**HYMN #598 “FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED”**

## NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one LORD, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the LORD, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen**

## THE PRAYERS

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER** *The pastor offers the prayer.*

### LORD'S PRAYER

**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**

## HOLY COMMUNION

### BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our LORD Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

### PRAYER

Let us pray...God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

### 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.**

### HYMN #593 "DRAWN TO THE LIGHT"

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

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### WELCOME TO ALL IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!

We especially welcome those who are visiting. We invite you to sign our guest register in the narthex. Blank envelopes in the pews are for visitors.

*"God's purpose for St. Paul's Lutheran Blue" Church is to spread the Good News of Christ's love for all people in the Southern Lehigh community and beyond.*" – Blue Church Mission Statement, adopted 2012

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### THIS DAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR.....

**FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.....***The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith, for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.*

**ABOUT THE READINGS...**

**NUMBERS 21:4-9:** Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.

**EPHESIANS 2:1-10:** While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God's grace at work in our lives.

**JOHN 3:14-21:** To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.

**BLUE CHURCH PRAYS FOR...**Cliff Benner, Sandra Denora, Bill Exner, Dr. Roger Fischer, Lillian Frey, Ann Greensweig, Walt Lehr, Jerry Smith, Hattie Smith, Bob Storat, Sue Storat  
**Other concerns:** the family and friends of Charles W. Mohr, Todd and Dottie

*Note: This is a short-term list, for those who are in "acute care" situations—hospitalized or in recovery, dying, facing the recent death of a loved one, or presently facing a severe life crisis. The names of those for whom we pray will be kept on the list for one month. If you wish to have them placed back on the list please contact the church office.*

**LEADING OUR WORSHIP**

**CELEBRANT** The Rev. James Hammond  
**ORGANIST** Dr. Jennifer Dodd  
**ASSISTING MINISTER** Amy Ortwein  
**LECTOR** Amy Ortwein  
**GREETERS** Roger & Edie Knappenberger  
**CHURCH COUNCIL REP** Amy Ortwein

**SPONSOR CHARTS...**There are still many open dates on the charts to sponsor the weekly gifts to the church – Bulletins, Sanctuary Lamp Candle, Wine & Bread, etc. Your sponsorship helps defray the costs of these items. Simply sign the chart and a payment envelope will be sent to you the week of your sponsorship.

If you have an email address, please notify the church office so it can be added to the group list and you can be included when church information is sent out.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

**THURSDAY, MAR. 18 – 6:30 7:30 PM Cub Pack #364 Mtg.**  
**SUNDAY, MAR. 21 – 10:30 AM 5<sup>TH</sup> Sunday in Lent.**

**WEEKLY GIFTS, PRESENTED TO THE GLORY OF GOD:  
SANCTUARY LAMP...**by Bill & Kathy Exner in memory of Loved Ones.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY...**O God, rich in mercy, make us alive in Christ. *(Ephesians 2:4-5)*

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK...**Gracious God, in your love you gave the world your Son. Give us clear vision so that we may see your grace and love alive in this world and its people. Amen.

**UPDATE ON BETTY LOU'S FOOD PANTRY**

We are still collecting detergent for the Pantry. There is an increased demand and they are requesting 100 bottles for our month, which is September. They can be left at the church (red door) and someone will put them inside. They can also be placed in the Narthex.

In addition, the most needed items at the Pantry right now are:

- Meat helpers (especially tuna helper)
- Toilet Paper
- Canned Pasta
- Deodorant
- Non-sugar cereals
- Tooth Brushes
- Body Wash

You are always welcome to bring these items to church, or if it is more convenient, they can be brought directly to the Pantry on Wednesdays from 9 – 10 AM. Thanks again for being so generous with all your donations and volunteering to help those in need in our community!

We also have a need for someone to organize donations of furniture/appliances. This only involves phone calls/emails – no physical pick up or delivery. We receive calls to donate these things sometimes and there is always someone who needs that item. We just need someone to make the connections of giver to receiver.

**BLUE CHURCH FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

|                          | <b><u>FEB.</u></b> | <b><u>YEAR TO DATE</u></b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>RECEIPTS</b>          | <b>\$23,747.00</b> | <b>\$33,006.85</b>         |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>          | <b>\$14,439.08</b> | <b>\$25,496.59</b>         |
| <b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b> | <b>\$ 9,307.92</b> | <b>\$ 7,510.26</b>         |

**ENDOWMENT FUND WITHDRAWN TO COVER EXPENSES**

|                                       |            |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|
|                                       | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$0</b> |
| <b>EMDOWMENT FUND INTEREST/REFUND</b> |            | <b>\$0</b> |

## **LESSONS**

### **Numbers 21:4-9 – 1 Lesson**

4 From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea,\* to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. 5The people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.' 6Then the LORD sent poisonous\* serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. 7The people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. 8And the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a poisonous\* serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.' 9So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

### **Ephesians 2:1-10 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson**

2You were dead through the trespasses and sins 2in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. 3All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. 4But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us 5even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ\*—by grace you have been

saved— 6and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. 8For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— 9not the result of works, so that no one may boast. 10For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

### **John 3:14-21 - Gospel**

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. 18Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. 20For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 21But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.\*

A: Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need, responding,

**“Your mercy is great.”**

*A brief silence*

A: You sent your Son that the world might be saved through him. Inspire the witness of the church throughout the world. Empower missionaries, Bible translators, and ministries of service in your name. Bless our partners in ministry, our ELCA global partner churches, and Young Adults in Global Mission. Hear us, O God.

**“Your mercy is great.”**

A: From east to west your steadfast love is shown. Nourish seas and deserts, wilderness areas and cities. Give water to thirsty lands; nurture spring growth that feeds hungry creatures; bless farmers as they prepare for the growing season. Hear us, O God.

**“Your mercy is great.”**

A: You sustained your people in the wilderness. Give courage to all who lead in times of crisis and scarce resource. Prosper the work of those who aid victims of famine and drought. Bring peace in places where scarce resources cause violence. Hear us, O God.

**“Your mercy is great.”**

A: Your mercy endures forever. Deliver all who cry to you, especially those who are hungry or without homes. Give life in places where death seems triumphant; give healing to those who are sick and comfort to those who mourn. Today we pray especially for: Clifford, Sandra, Bill, Roger, Lillian, Ann, Walt, Jerry, Hattie, Bob, Sue, Todd, Dottie, the family and friends of Charles W. Mohr,

and everyone who has asked for our prayers or known only to the Lord. Hear us, O God.

**“Your mercy is great.”**

A: By grace we have been saved. Fill Blue Church to overflowing with that grace, that we show mercy to others. Nourish any in our midst who are hungry, especially children, and bless our ministries of feeding and shelter. Give us patience and courage when the way seems long. Hear us, O God.

**“Your mercy is great.”**

A: Your Son was lifted up that whoever believes might have eternal life. We praise you for all who have died in Christ. Bring us with all the saints into the fullness of your promises. Hear us, O God.

**“Your mercy is great.”**

**Pastor: We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**