

*Fourth Sunday
in Lent*

St. Timothy Lutheran Church
Sharing God's Love Together



If you are a visitor with us today, we welcome you in the name of Christ.
We encourage our guests to join us in the communion meal because Jesus welcomes all to his table of grace, uniting and filling us for love and service. Christ is our host and our food, bearing to us God's forgiveness and grace through this harvest of field and vineyard.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 14, 2021

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.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*You may respond with the parts printed in **bold print**.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.

Family of faith, no matter what we do, where we go, or what we tell ourselves—God is love, and God is loving us.

Again and again, we are claimed, held, forgiven, and cared for.

And so we remember and confess our failures and faults with confidence in God.

We trust God forgives us already because it depends on the saving love of Jesus Christ.

Silence for reflection

God of love, we forget the beginning of the story—that we were made from love, to be love, to give love. Instead of rooting our narrative in the goodness refrain of creation, we skip ahead and find our worth at the fall, with Cain and Abel, lost in the wilderness. We forget that first there was you, and you are love. We forget that out of that love you created us. We forget that from the very first day, you loved first. We forget, because a love like that doesn't make sense to us. Forgive our low self-esteem. Forgive our resistance to love ourselves. Forgive our hesitation to trust that even we could be made good. And forgive our tendency to pass that doubt on—from generation to generation. Write a new beginning for us that roots our confidence in your unrelenting love. With hope we pray, again and again. Amen.

Family of faith, hear this again: no matter what we do, where we go, or what we tell ourselves—God is love, and God is loving us.

Again and again, we are claimed, held, forgiven, and cared for.

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.

In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself—thanks be to God. Amen!

GATHERING HYMN *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound* #779 vs. 1-3

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 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. | how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed! |
| 2 | 'Twas grace that taught my heart to
fear,
and grace my fears relieved; | 3 Through many dangers, toils, and
snares
I have already come;
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home. |

GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **All: And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, rich in mercy,

All: 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, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

KYRIE

△ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: ☒ Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord. have mer - cy:

△ Chri - ste e - le - i - son: ☒ Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ. have mer - cy:

△ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: ☒ Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord. have mer - cy:

WORD

CHILDREN'S WORD

Pastor Clark Brown

READING

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.

AM: A reading from Ephesians.

¹You 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 toward 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.

AM: Word of God, word of life. All: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, re - turn to the Lord, your
God, who is grac - ious and mer - ci - ful, slow to
an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL

John 2:13-22

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.

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

Jesus said: ¹⁴“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 judgment, 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.”

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

MESSAGE

Pastor Clark Brown

HYMN OF THE DAY

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

#815

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world.
The star of my life is Jesus.

2 I want to see the brightness of God.
I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of righteousness, shine on my path,
and show me the way to the Father.
Refrain

Refrain

In him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.
I want to be with Jesus.
When we have run with patience the race,
we shall know the joy of Jesus. *Refrain*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe God is love—unconditional, constant love.

We believe this love exists for all, choosing each and every one of us, day after day, again and again and again.

We believe that God's love is like a river. Rivers cannot help but flow toward the sea; God's love cannot help but move toward us. We are swimming in it.

We believe that God loved first. We believe that God breathed life into dust. We believe that God said, "This is good,"

And because we believe that God loved first, we strive to build lives that reflect God's love. May we begin again here. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need, responding to each petition with "**Your mercy is great.**"

You sent your Son to heal and save the world. Inspire the witness of the church in our lives and throughout the world. Empower missionaries, Bible translators, and ministries of service. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

From east to west your steadfast love is shown. Nourish seas and deserts, wilderness areas and cities, farms and forests during this growing season. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Give courage to all who lead in during this time of crisis. Prosper the work of those who give aid to the sick and strive to bring this pandemic to an end. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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. We pray especially for Michael, Ed, Stacey, Grace, Glenda, Sandy, David, Colbie, Dawn, Grant, the families and friends of Shelley Grace, Brenda Putz, and Philip Caniglia, and those that we now name silently or aloud... (pause). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

By grace we have been saved. Fill this congregation 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 with I-HELP, the Gathering for Women, and the Thomas Carman Food Pantry. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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.

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

MEAL

PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you.

You are welcome to share the peace using the comment section on YouTube or with anyone sheltering in peace with you.

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

Let us remember to offer ourselves—our time, our abilities, our possessions—for the ongoing ministry of St. Timothy and the wider church. You may continue to send in your offering by postal mail or use our online giving option at www.sttim.org.

Create in Me

#188

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 unto me the joy of your
salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

Assisting Minister: Let us pray. Faithful God,

All: you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Before we were born,

All: before we took our first breath,

Pastor: before the week started,

All: before the year started,

Pastor: before it all—

All: God loved us.

Pastor: Unconditionally and freely,

All: again and again, this is where our story begins.

Pastor: Praise to you... ..now and forever.

All: Amen

Pastor: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

or **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;**

**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**

**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**

Pastor: Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed.

*As we share communion in our homes, we remember that we are indeed surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, sharing in communion with the saints of every time and place. We receive the body and blood of Christ and share in the life of God as we accept the bread and wine or grape juice, and hear the words: “**The body of Christ given for you**” and “**the blood of Christ shed for you.**”*

COMMUNION SONG *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* #803 vs. 1 & 4

1	When I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.	4	Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small; love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.
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PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Assisting Minister: 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.

All: Amen.

SENDING

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.

All: Amen

SENDING SONG *What Wondrous Love Is This* #666 vs. 1, 3, & 4

1	What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this	that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?
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3 To God and to the Lamb
I will sing, I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb,
who is the great I AM,
while millions join the theme,
I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will
sing.

4 And when from death I'm free,
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing
on;
and when from death I'm free,
I'll sing God's love for me,
and through eternity
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and through eternity I'll sing on.

DISMISSAL

Assisting Minister:

As you leave this space,
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.
May your arms hold those in need.
May your feet walk toward justice.
May your heart trust its worth.
May your soul dance in God's grace.
And may this be your rhythm—
Again and again and again,
Until God's promised day.
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Presiding Minister—Pastor Clark Brown
Assisting Minister—Matt Schulz
Musician—Desma Johnson
Cantor—Adrian & Bob Johannsen
Altar Care—Susan Smith
Audio—Jim Helgason
Streaming Video—Jody Emerson

Upcoming Commemorations

Patrick, bishop, missionary to Ireland, died 461

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

A native of Britain, Patrick was kidnapped by pirates at age sixteen and sold into slavery in Ireland. After a few years, he escaped, returned home, and entered the ministry. Returning to Ireland, he successfully served as a bishop and missionary there.

Joseph, Guardian of Jesus

Friday, March 19, 2021

Though the Bible tells us little about the husband of Jesus' mother Mary, we know that he was a carpenter or builder by trade. He is also shown as being devoted both to God and to Mary and Jesus. It is assumed that he died before Jesus became an adult.

Gospel Message

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 14, 2021

Look and Live

The cure for the ancient Israelites, following Moses, is to look directly at what is killing them, rather than avoid or hide from it. Healing occurs in the confrontation.

In today's gospel, Jesus likens his crucifixion to Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness so the Israelites might be saved from the venom of desert snakes. In doing so, Jesus communicates that he came so we might look at what is killing us. He came to shine a light on that which poisons our lives so we might live.

In today's gospel, we catch Jesus in the middle of a conversation with a Pharisee named Nicodemus, who is slinking around in the night to get a word in with Jesus, presumably so he is not seen. In this conversation Jesus gives a judgment that shines a light on Nicodemus: you, Nicodemus, seem to prefer the darkness because there is something you are doing that you want to hide, thus making it easier for you to live in the dark. This sounds an awful lot like the experience of shame. Jesus is naming the way shame has dictated Nicodemus's life, relegating him to shadows where he will not be seen for what he really is. Notice the lack of condemnation. Jesus is simply a light, showing Nicodemus to himself.

Jesus is also a light to us, showing us to ourselves. Looking at Jesus lifted up on the cross, we see the poison that is killing us: power used to protect the status quo; our instinct to blame one in order to save the rest. We see the fruit of our defenses against what the light reveals: the death of an innocent man at the hands of those in power.

Christ has come so that we will see what is poisoning us and that, in seeing, we might turn and live.

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PRAYER CONCERNS

Please remember in your prayers:

The family and friends of Shelley Grace, Barbara Grace's daughter-in-law.
The family and friends of Brenda Putz, the mother of T. J. Racoosin.
Michael Grace, Barbara Grace's son, has ME/CFS pray he regains his strength.
Ed Olson, undergoing cancer treatment .
Stacey Himenes, undergoing cancer treatment.
Grace Cinke, a friend of Lynn Wagner, who has Covid 19.
Glenda Tankersley, Ia Bolter's niece, in a nursing home on dialysis.
The family of Philip Caniglia, father of Steve Solomon's friend Phyllis.
Sandy Hoskin, undergoing cancer treatment again.
David Holland, husband of Dee Holland and brother of Lucille Pires, undergoing chemo therapy for prostate and bone cancer.
Colbie Schueneman, grandniece of Adrian, 17^{1/2} months old diagnosed with a neurodegenerative disease.
Dawn Stallings, daughter of Dolores, who has suffered a stroke.
Grant Hobson, grandnephew of Matt Schulz, being treated for leukemia, and his parents Claire and Luke.
Healthcare workers on the front line of the pandemic and essential workers facing daily risk of disease.
All service members, fire fighters, and police officers (and their families).
For those living in war-torn regions and all refugees.
For the mission of this congregation, the Monterey Bay Conference, and the entire Sierra Pacific Synod, and for our leaders and for the leaders throughout the world.

Please continue to pray for the ongoing concerns of these listed here.

Torie Hamilton
Rodger Marty
Bonnie Bennett
Jim McMullins
Bill Reynolds
Mary Lee Slater
Marjonie Gabriel
Tom Brown
Aaron Grieg

Byron Heppert
Jacqueline Graham
Gloria Llenaresas
Riley Ann Holland
Ronnie Lyons
Irene McCloud
Thomas Ansley
Jackie Rullman
Linda Henderson

Beverly Schneideman
Justice Gaudoin
Peter Kracht
Isabella Silva
Randy Hoch
Don Butler
Mark Northcutt
Helen Leikam

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Sharing God's Love Together

March 14, 2021

Notes and announcements

- **As we are now live-streaming worship**, we can also accommodate a few people in the sanctuary each week. Staying well below the current guidelines of 25% capacity we will have a maximum of 16 worshippers, plus worship leaders. Everyone must wear masks and maintain physical distance, and we will make sure there is adequate air movement in the church. With this limited space, we ask you to call or email the church office (831-375-2042 or office@sttim.org) to let us know which Sundays you would like to attend and how are in your household.
- **Also, we will have outdoor worship services on March 28 (Palm and Passion Sunday) and April 4 (Easter Sunday).** On those Sundays, we will be able to accommodate a much larger in-person presence. We are also planning to live-stream those services. **Again** please notify the office if you plan to attend and how many will be coming from your household.
- **Study, pray, and discuss during the week:** Join Pastors Clark and Tony: Wednesday 2 PM **Bible Study**, **Holden Evening Prayer** on Wednesday at 6:30 PM, and Sunday 11:15 AM **Pastors' Forum** and **Compline with Father Jon**, Sunday at 8 PM. Email Pastor Clark for info: pastorclark@sttim.org.
- **Online Worship:** All Sunday services online on sttim.org.
- **Social Hour:** We have a social hour on Zoom Sunday at 10:45 am. Information for worship and the social hour will be emailed each week. **If you want to be on our email list or have questions**, email/call/text Pastor Clark at pastorclark@sttim.org or 831-521-1818.
- **Preparing for communion.** Our online Sunday worship will include communion. As you feel called, prepare to share in communion by setting aside some bread or crackers, and some wine or juice, as you have them available. If you need any of these items, please contact Ida Barber.
- **Prayer Concerns:** Please call Dorothy Kirk with any new or changed prayer concerns at 375-1043.
- **Offering:** Please remember your offerings to St. Timothy. Offering can be mailed to the church office, sent automatically using your bank, or online by visiting our website www.sttim.org.