**Grace Lutheran Church**

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[www.graceglenellyn.org](http://www.graceglenellyn.org)

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



***+ Proclaim Christ + Build Community +***

***+ Serve Our Neighbors +***

**Introduction**

*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.*

*Helpful Reminders for House Church:*

* *Mute your mic during hymns.*
* *You may unmute for all group responses. Remember that your host can mute you but cannot unmute you; you must unmute your mic yourself.*
* *If you are joining by phone, move the mouthpiece away from your mouth unless you are speaking, to avoid broadcasting your breathing.*
* *Avoid background conversations when your mic is unmuted.*
* *Congregation responses are in* ***Bold (black).***
* *THANK YOU FOR WORSHIPPING WITH US!*

**Gathering**

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

**Prelude *(Please mute your mic for the prelude)***

**Confession and Forgiveness *(You may unmute your mic)***

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism,*

*as the worship leader 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, our sins are **☩** forgiven, and God remembers them no more.

Together let us journey in the way of Jesus. **Amen.**

**Opening Hymn *(Please mute your mic)*** ELW #779 Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

 sts. 1, 2, 4

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***(You may unmute your mic)***

**Greeting**

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.**

**Prayer of the Day**

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.**

**Word**

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

**First Lesson 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.*

4From Mount Hor [the Israelites] 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.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

**The Psalm** *Read responsively by verse* **Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22**

*You deliver your people from their distress. (Ps. 107:19)*

1Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good, for God’s mercy endures forever.
2**Let the redeemed of the Lord proclaim** **that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**
3gathering them in from the lands; from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.
17**Some were fools and took rebellious paths;** **through their sins they were afflicted.**
18They loathed all manner of food and drew near to death’s door.
19**Then in their trouble they cried to the Lord** **and you delivered them from their distress.**
20You sent forth your word and healed them and rescued them from the grave.
21**Let them give thanks to you, Lord, for your steadfast love** **and your wonderful works for all people.**
22Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy.

**Second Lesson 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.*

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.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**

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

**Gospel *(Please mute your mic)*  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.*

[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.”

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

**Sermon**  The Rev. Melody Eastman

***(You may unmute your mic)***

**Apostles’ Creed**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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**

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

*A brief silence.*

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.**

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.**

You sustained your people in the wilderness. Give courage to all who lead in times of crisis and scarce resources. 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.**

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, especially Ken, Helen, Sigrid, Dorothy, Rich, Anita, Carol, Norma, Dorothy, and those we name before you now. . . 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. Give us patience and courage when the way seems long. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

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 our Lord.

**Amen.**

**The Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

*If there are others in your household you may share the peace with them.*

 *If your House Church is celebrating Communion, refer to that liturgy here.*

**The Lord’s Prayer**

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

**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.**

**Sending**

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

**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.

**Sending Hymn *(Please mute your mic)*** ELW #768 Lead Me, Guide Me

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***(You may unmute your mic)***

**Sent to the World**

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

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**Current Prayer Requests**

**Name Relation to Grace Prayers For**

Helen & Jim Sladek Members 63rd Anniversary 3/22

Helen Sladek Member Healing & Strength

Rich Davison Member Healing & Strength

Sigrid Elliott Member Healing & Strength

Dorothy Tracy Member Healing & Strength

Ruthie Maddock Friend of the Thompsons Healing & Strength

Sally and Eberhard Slenczka Parents of Karin Slenczka Healing & Strength

Chris Danly Son of Mark & Pat Danly Healing & Strength

**Prayers for our homebound Members**

Anita Blakemore, Dolores Nosal, Carol Petersen, Norma Petersen, Dorothy Stein

**Weekly Announcements**

**Sunday, March 14 - Daylight Saving Time Starts:** When local standard time is about to reach **2:00am** clocks are turned **forward** one hour to **3:00am**.

**House Church Worship via phone or internet every Sunday morning at 9:30am!** We currently have five “House Churches” of worshipping members (each House Church consisting of 6-8 members/families meeting via Zoom or calling in by phone.) If you are unsure how to sign on, go ahead and register and let us know you need some help; we’ll walk you through it! We would be so blessed to have you join us. Register online for a House Church at [graceglenellyn.org](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fgraceglenellyn.org%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0Hfv_r7Lkk0l-PSfwxo5IuvGdumHQ3QCEP7v4ZvaR0WOJKVA5hbrjxKAE&h=AT1soNxFTUJFeYviMArEGKelFeVj5prKjMKXk0UJTSFn5xaDSLNHlHWl9jolaFvljgE6OlBV9vpq3vIE5HfsX4lEUbwYpfdYpMW57h6Tyc58-9jrGuramUJOJJ1Qd_RvJw&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT2EpYQU1esaMoWfP5JtqUBhBqXEjGx5atvDW6kLdBJviMugmDClI27DYHudyuPviP9Hv6sjAHveGxQGTojgtZKHh3Ar39pGN4cSEtsbiD_E96uHBoM53nY40A4mpgsxH7Ee_La5kZ5CLFMRaCbeBMrb7-BmRa8JDzOlS6vBJ2YxwbmuqBlPHi9nylzaWrSwmlhCSx9Ig0m3keY) (on the main page Announcements) or contact Jon Milleville.

Contributions to **Grace’s Mortgage Reduction Fund** are always welcome! Indicate on the contribution that it is for the Mortgage Reduction Fund. We cannot begin to tell you how thankful we are for your support of this campaign. We aim to have 2021 be one more push towards diminishing the monthly mortgage payment and freeing more of the budget for our Ministries at Grace.

**Eliminate the Comma Mortgage Reduction Campaign:** We are excited to announce that we have been able to eliminate the comma from our mortgage, bringing our total mortgage to under $1,000,000!  We will continue this campaign in 2021 as “**RAMP” (Reduce Another Mortgage Payment)** as we continue to RAMP up to refinance our mortgage with Mission Investment Fund this Fall. If we can raise an additional $100,000 payment prior to our November refinancing it will take us from $925,000 to $825,000.

**Pastor Melody’s days off** are Friday and Saturday. If you wish to contact her for non-emergency reasons, the best days to reach her are Monday-Thursday.

**"Share our Spirits" Food Pantry Fundraiser is Back - Now Featuring Scotch!** Specialty spirits expert, Patrick Brophy, will host a fundraiser to benefit the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry. By popular demand after the January Bourbon/Whiskey event, the focus will be on Scotch. Participants will be guided through a tasting **via Zoom starting at 7pm on Friday, March 26**. Cost is $200 per Zoom and participants can pick up their beverage samples and accoutrements – enough for two participants - in advance at the Pantry. Space is limited to 20 Zooms, so register early to reserve your spot. All proceeds will benefit the Pantry.  **Sign up on the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry Website**

**Join us for Wednesdays in Lent for *Community as Spiritual Discipline:* *Faithful engagement in Public Life within a Democracy:***People have a lot of questions about how much of a role the Church should play in public life, social issues and (heaven save us) politics. When, where and how should the Church involve itself in public issues? Should the Church ever address political leaders? Should the Church ever endorse political leaders? What are the limits set by our constitution? And why is this a *spiritual* issue?

**Wednesday, March 3: What do Luther and the ELCA say?**

**Wednesday, March 10: What does the U.S. Constitution say?**

**​Wednesday, March 17: What does Community Spiritual Discipline look like?**

Join us for Zoom worship using *Holden Evening Prayer,* with scripture and reflection, from 7:00-7:30. Join Zoom Meeting:

[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81452909427?pwd=ekI1bHBGME1ydmxiVklxUjkzUndFQT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81452909427?pwd=ekI1bHBGME1ydmxiVklxUjkzUndFQT09)

Meeting ID: 814 5290 9427

Passcode: 768563

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Dial by your location

 +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 814 5290 9427

Passcode: 768563

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcCDyIdMZ8>

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**Every Member a Minister and Missionary!**

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