

F O U R T H

# Sunday in Lent



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## **St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran – March 10, 2024** **4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent**

120 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Upper Sandusky, Ohio 43351

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 9am-12pm, 1-5pm

Phone: 419-294-2831, Fax: 419-294-5542

Pastor Barry Halter, Jr.: 419-852-9823

Listen live on WYNT 95.9 FM or watch on Facebook Live

*\*=stand as you are able*

*Assistive listening devices are available. Ask an usher.*

## **Introduction to the day**

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.

OPENING SONG BY THE BAND    *"Great Are You, Lord"*

## **WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

O children of the Living God, what is God's great desire for you this day?

**That we should love our eternal God with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our minds, and with all our strength.**

And how would you show this love?

**By remembering God at all times.**

**By cultivating thankfulness for God's many blessings and trusting God's good providence for the meeting of our needs.**

**By loving all whose lives intersect our own.**

**By choosing to serve rather than to be served, to be wounded rather than to wound, and by bearing patiently with the failings of others, extending the same kindness, mercy, and compassion that God in Christ has so graciously offered us.**

**We would also love God by serving with faithfulness and due passion in our various vocations, by delighting in all things God has created for our benefit and pleasure, and by caring well for all God has given to us to steward.**

O children of the Living God, you would do well to practice your love in these ways today!

Do you now possess the needed strength to perfectly accomplish such holy requirements?

**We do not. We are weak and inconsistent, and often buffeted by fear and pride and selfishness. But being impoverished and ill-equipped as we are, we will look of God and to the sanctifying work of the Spirit to accomplish God's purposes in and through us this day, as we, in grateful response, seek to choose that which pleases God.**

We open our hearts anew to you this day, O God, that the love of God, the life of Christ, and the breath of the Spirit would quicken within us a greater affection for your ways.

**Work your will in and through us, O Christ**

O children of God, casting your cares On God's shoulders, now surrender your own agendas for this day, and instead be led by the workings of the Holy Spirit.

**Open our hearts, O Lord, to your words and truth.**

<p>*SONG: <i>"Here I Am to Worship"</i></p>
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**\*CONFESSION & RECONCILIATION**

Reading: James 5:13-20 (Pastor Barry)

Prayer of confession: **Lord, it is hard to take stock of all the different things I have done against Your will and command. I am so used to hiding my faults and weaknesses from others that I sometimes find it difficult to even remember all my sins. But, on several occasions, I have refused Your grace and made myself unworthy to be called Your child. Let me now, like the Prodigal Son, return from a foreign land, starved and poor, weary from the journey, humbled, truthful, and contrite, asking for your love and grace to restore me to my inheritance of heavenly bliss. Amen.**

**\*SHARING OF THE PEACE**

FRIENDS IN FAITH

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE & DISMISSAL TO JR. CHURCH

PRAYER FOR THE WORD

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9

...Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (on screen)

SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:1-10

...Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

\*GOSPEL: John 3:14-21

SERMON

Pastor Barry Halter, Jr.

RESPONSE SONG: <i>"Be Thou My Vision"</i>
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A CELTIC CREED

**We believe in God above us, maker and sustainer of all life, of sun and moon, of water and earth, of all humankind.**

**We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ, the word made flesh, born of a woman, servant of the poor, tortured and nailed to a tree. A man of sorrows, he died forsaken. He descended into the earth to the place of death. On the third day he rose from the tomb. He ascended into heaven, to be everywhere present, and His kingdom will come on earth.**

**We believe in God within us, the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire, life-giving breath of the Church, Spirit of healing and forgiveness, source of resurrection and of eternal life. Amen**

PRAYERS FOR CREATION

OFFERING

OFFERING MUSIC

OFFERING RESPONSE: "*Doxology*"

Hymn 885

OFFERING PRAYER

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

\*CALL TO SERVICE OF OTHERS

\*BLESSING

*CLOSING SONG: " <i>Better Is One Day</i> "
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\*DISMISSAL

SENDING MUSIC

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS are given by Jim & Dorothy Leslie to the glory of God and in celebration of their 67<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Happy Anniversary to them!!!

TODAY is Mission Sunday! We will be stuffing Easter eggs and prepping for our Finding Jesus outreach project for the eclipse. We'll also have a potluck lunch! Please stay even if you didn't bring anything! There is plenty of food!

OUR CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY is extended to Dave & Janis Eippert on the passing of their son-in-law, Kevin Graham. Please keep the whole family in your prayers during this difficult time.

THE WORDS TO THE SONGS will be printed on the screens this morning. There are song sheets with the music available on the table at the crosswalk.

LENTEN LUNCHEONS continue this week. Each Wednesday at noon, all are invited to St. Paul for a delicious lunch and then listen to an inspirational speaker. The speaker this week will be Jan Stoneburner. The entrée provided by John Stewart's women will be chicken & noodles. A free will offering will be accepted for your meal.

WORD ON WEDNESDAY is taking a break during Lent. If you would like to study the lessons on your own, they are Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 119:9-16, Hebrews 5:5-10, and John 12:20-33.

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY continues with midweek services each Wednesday during Lent. We will focus on the spiritual practice of lament. Our midweek gatherings begin with a light meal at 6:15pm followed by service at 7pm. The meal this week is pulled pork and mac & cheese. All are welcome!!!

DURING OUR LENTEN JOURNEY you will also have the opportunity each Sunday and Wednesday to participate in our Lenten project. A basket with broken tile pieces will be available for you to write a lament or prayer. These will be anonymous and can be brought forward during communion on Sundays and during the reflection time on Wednesdays. The tiles will then be affixed to a cross at the front of the sanctuary. We hope you will join us.

NEEDED: items for our Lenten Luncheon on March 20. A sign-up sheet is at the crosswalk. They would like them to be delivered on March 20 by 10am. Thanks in advance!

WELCA INFO: Circles meet this week and YOU are invited to attend whichever one fits into your schedule! Ruth/Naomi meets on Wednesday at 9:30am in The Gathering Place and Martha meets Thursday evening at 7 in the room beside the kitchen. They would love to see some new faces!!!

CHRISTIAN FOOD CENTER: We are collecting paper towels during March. Please place your donations up front. Thanks!!!

EASTER CHOIR: A rousing group of singers is needed for Easter morning. We will be practicing following worship on March 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. We'll practice Easter music first so joining us does not obligate you to every Sunday, although YOU ARE WELCOME TO STAY! We really would like to be able to sing the Hallelujah Chorus but we need more men in order to do that. Singers PLEASE prayerfully consider this and join us.

EVERYONE IS INVITED to the Free Community Meal that is being served on Saturday from 10am-noon! This is very much like our previous Tuesdays with LIFE meal that we used to serve. The only difference is that many other churches are involved. It's great food and fabulous fellowship so come check it out!

THE SEWING LADIES are in need of items to be used in the middle of the quilts. Things like mattress pads, sheets or flannel sheets, old blankets, drapes, etc. Please keep them in mind when you are decluttering your linen closets!!!

BIRTHDAY BAGS are needed once again! The list of items is available on the crosswalk table. Please put your filled bags under the table. Thank you to all who help with this ministry!

THE MISSION OUTREACH money budgeted for March will go to the Luke Swavel Memorial Scholarship. We encourage you to join us in donating to them directly throughout this month if you feel so moved. Please send directly to: Luke Swavel Memorial Scholarship, c/o Scott Morris, 18270 Twp Hwy 125, Harpster, OH 43323

SAVE THE DATE! June 21 & 22 is set for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Rummage Sale! Slightly used and almost new items are needed. Drop off dates will be June 17-19. More details will be given closer to the event. Please no clothing, shoes or TV's. **And please do not drop items off until June 17-19.** Thank you, WELCA



MY DEAR FRIENDS & FAMILY: Most of you know that I got really sick right before Thanksgiving last year. By the beginning of January I was no better at all. I could not eat, walk or even stand for a few minutes. This culminated in an EMS trip to Riverside in Columbus. Within just a couple of hours of being there I was told I needed emergency surgery because of blockages in my colon. When I woke up from surgery, I was devastated to learn that I had gotten a colostomy and had an ostomy bag attached to my abdomen. I was also informed that this procedure was probably going to be permanent, that they found part of my colon to be already dead, and if I had waited several more days, I could have died. Several days after the surgery I became really depressed. My faith did not waver, however I felt as if I was in a struggle to decide if I wanted to give up and die or fight to live. You see I know that in life Jesus is constantly with me. I also know that in death Jesus will also be with me. So the struggle was real; in life or in death I would be with Jesus. So here comes the part you all played in my conscious decision to fight for my earthly life. I was told by many that they were praying for me daily, that I was indeed loved and that I still had a message about Jesus to share. My work here on earth wasn't finished. Two weeks after I came home from the hospital I developed 2 hematomas, one which burst at home and scared Darlene and I very badly. I ended up back at Riverside where the second hematoma was discovered. I was put on a wound vac system and given IV antibiotics. I stayed in the hospital another week and was sent home with a home version of the wound vac. It was removed a couple of weeks ago. Through all of this I was continually reminded that prayers were continuing. I received calls, texts, flowers, and cards. SO many people reached out to me with messages of love and support. I had calls, visits, and cards from 3 of my closest pastor friends: Pastor Barry Halter, Pastor Shawn Schneider, and Pastor Julie Hutson. I just am so thankful for the phenomenal support with which I was gifted these last 5 months. All of you have made a difference in my life and I still feel confident in the presence of Jesus in my life. Thanks be to God!!! ~Carol Roszman



# Prayers, Concerns and Joys

*(Each prayer request will appear for four weeks)*

Sue Fox ♥♥♥♥

Barbara Stief ♥♥♥

Deb Rife ♥♥♥

Dean & Dixie Baumann ♥♥

The family & friends of Kevin Graham ♥

Maddy Nichols ♥♥♥♥

Emily Swihart ♥♥♥

Shannyn Swinehart ♥♥

Gene & Sheila Roszman ♥

If you would like to have a name added to the prayer list,  
please contact the church office.

Names can be extended for additional weeks as requested.

## MARCH DUTIES:

**Acolytes:** 10 – Caroline Baker & Adrianna Ray

17 – Brody Mays & Robert Roszman

24 – Erica Ruhlen & Adrianna Ray

28 (Maundy Thursday) – Abbi Ault & Drew Leightey

31 (7am) – Caroline Baker & Ian Seal

31 (10am) – Jocelyn Leightey & Brody Mays

**Assisting Ministers:** 10 – Abbi Ault

17 – Ben Ault

24 – Jim Ruhlen

28 (Maundy Thursday) – Matt Schultz

31 (7am) – June Eier

31 (10am) – Robbi Sigler

**Ushers:** Brent Gottfried, Jim Gatchell, Rick Kraus, Gary Ault

**Greeters:** Bruce & Sue Decker (west)

**Readers:** 10 – Lauren Baker

17 – Marcia Geary

24 – Courtney Thiel

28 (Maundy Thursday) – Russ Lee

31 (7am) – Becky Vaughn

31 (10am) – Sally Stansbery

**Communion Assistants:** David & Rosemary Craig

Emily & Erica Ruhlen on the 10<sup>th</sup>

**Bread Baker** – Michelle Halter

**Host in The Gathering Place:** 10 – Bill & Jane Bricely

17 – Kelly Mays

24 – Bill & Jane Bricely

31 (10am) – Michelle Ohler

**Today**

11am – Mission Sunday event & potluck

**Monday, March 11**

8:30am – Pinning & knotting

**Tuesday, March 12**

5:30pm – Cub Scout Den meetings

5:30pm – Staff Meeting

6:30pm – Beginning Bell practice

7pm – Advanced Bell practice

**Wednesday, March 13**

8am-12:45pm – Wyandot Cares classes

9:45am – Ruth/Naomi Circle

12pm – Lenten Luncheon

12-2pm – Christian Food Center accept donations

6:15pm – Lenten Supper

7pm – Lenten Worship in The Family Space

**Thursday, March 14**

1-3pm – Christian Food Center distribute food

7pm – Martha Circle

**Friday, March 15**

12-2:15pm – Wyandot Cares classes

**Saturday, March 16**

10am-noon – Free Community Meal

10a-noon – Christian Food Center distribute food

1pm – Set up for Pinewood Derby

**Sunday, March 17**

9am – Adult Sunday School

9:15am – Choir practice

10am – Worship

11am – Choir practice

12-4pm – Pinewood Derby in Fellowship Hall

# Lifted Up for Us

"So must the Son of Man be lifted up," Jesus says. There is a double meaning to this. Just as God told Moses to raise a bronze serpent on a pole to effect healing for the Israelites (Numbers 21:4-9), Jesus will be lifted on the pole of the cross. The image of Jesus crucified reveals how human power tries to dehumanize those who threaten the status quo or violate the norms decreed by those at the top of society's ladder. It is a horror to consider this happening to anyone, but so much more when the victim is the perfect Holy One, God in the flesh. It confronts us with humanity's rejection of God, in how we treat other human beings and in how we dehumanize ourselves by following our sinful impulses—what Ephesians calls "the passions of our flesh" (2:3).

This, though, is not the only meaning of Jesus being "lifted up," for "God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." The cross is more than the humiliation of Jesus; it is also his glorious exaltation. The crucifixion of Jesus is his coronation as Lord of all, who rules by grace and mercy. By defeating death in the resurrection, he will indeed disrupt the status quo of shame, violence, and greed through the power of love, truth, and peace.

This was prefigured in the story of poisonous serpents. When the people looked on the emblem of their sin, a bronze model of the snakes that poisoned them after they grumbled against the Lord, they were healed. So, too, when we turn to the Crucified One, we do not find condemnation but salvation. Beholding the Savior lifted up on the cross by our sin, we receive mercy and healing. In the death of Jesus, God forgives and embraces us with eternal life. In the proclamation, prayer, song, and sacraments of our assembly, we remember and affirm that the crucified yet exalted Christ extends saving love to us and to the world.

# hear & celebrate

## Famous words

John 3:14-21

Jesus was talking with a religious man named Nicodemus when he spoke some of the most famous words in the Bible. What did Jesus say?

“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.” John 3:16 ♡

Find and circle Jesus' famous words, in order, in the puzzle below.

FORPLKFJOELSGODPLLFKEOW ♡KWO  
QSODKKELSVLOVEDEKEZVMPWQTHE  
WORLDWERUQ ♡PLSDKOWOPQLWKEJQ  
THATLWKZHEDKOWLKEGAVEDKJFKW  
KOHISXOENLIWONLYDKLEISON ♡TT  
LESOTHATEVERYONEWHODKLEIODK  
LSKEBELIEVESWOIEOPINDHIMWOP  
EOROWEMAYNOTOEPWLPERISHDKBU  
LD ♡BUTSLKDLEISLKEKKAMAYD ♡LP  
TYHAVESESLDKWEBETERNALLIFE  
WOE ♡IJOHNTHREESIXTEENYTOPWO