

Online Worship for the
Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2020

Welcome!

P: The Lord be with you;

C: And also with you.

Gathering Prayer

D: Let us pray together:

C: Open our eyes, merciful Lord, that we may see You clearly in Your Word. Heal us of any blindness that may be in us, and help us to walk as children of the light, to leave behind the unfruitful works of darkness, and give You glory by sharing what You have done for us in Jesus Christ our Lord; Amen.

Opening Song

"Open the Eyes of My Heart"

Refrain:

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,

Open the eyes of my heart;

I want to see You, I want to see You. *Repeat*

To see You high and lifted up, shining in the light of Your glory.

Pour out Your pow'r and love as we sing, "holy, holy, holy." *Refrain:*

Holy, holy, holy; Holy, holy, holy; Holy, holy, holy –

I want to see You.

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit;

C: Amen.

Opening Verses

Psalm 27:4–6

P: One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after:

**C: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple.**

P: For He will hide me in His shelter in the day of trouble;

C: He will conceal me under the cover of His tent; He will lift me high up on a rock.

P: I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

**C: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

The Holy Gospel

John 9:1-7

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the ninth chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

As [Jesus] passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that He was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

⁶ Having said these things, He spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then He anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

P: So far, the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Confession

P: Brothers and sisters in Christ, as we have gathered to hear God's Word and receive the light of salvation and wisdom, we must first confess that we too were born spiritually blind, and more than that, we have groped about in our darkness our many sins. And yet, our Lord Jesus Christ wishes to heal us of our blindness so that we may clearly see Him and follow faithfully in His ways.

We keep a time of silence for reflection and personal confession to God.

P: Lord God, even though I have seen Your salvation with my own eyes, I confess that by my sins, I have lived as if I am spiritually blind.

C: In our spiritual blindness, we have staggered about and grasped at false gods.

P: I have placed my love and trust in things that I can see.

C: We have fixed our gaze on the things of this world, and willfully averted our eyes from You.

P: And so we all humbly ask:

C: Have mercy on us, O God, and forgive us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Though we have not seen Him, we love Him, because He has first loved us. Open our eyes that we may find joy in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name; Amen.

Absolution

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Greeting of Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you!

C: And also with you.

Forgiven and freed in Christ, please take a moment to share the Lord's peace with each other.

Song of Response

"Open the Eyes of My Heart"

Refrain:

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord,
Open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see You, I want to see You.** *Repeat*

**To see You high and lifted up, shining in the light of Your glory.
Pour out Your pow'r and love as we sing, "holy, holy, holy."** *Refrain:*

**Holy, holy, holy; Holy, holy, holy; Holy, holy, holy –
I want to see You.**

Prayer of the Day

D: Let us pray together:

**C: Almighty God, Your Son restores sight to the blind, and shines the light of Your love on us.
Bless us that we may always walk as children of light through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our
Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever; Amen.**

The Epistle Reading

Ephesians 5:8–14

⁸For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says:

"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel

John 9:8-34

P: The Holy Gospel continues, according to St. John, the ninth chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

⁸The neighbors and those who had seen [the man born blind] before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about Him, since He has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "Whether He is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did He do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?"

²⁸And they reviled him, saying, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to Him. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." ³⁴They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

P: So far, the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon Hymn

"Amazing Grace"

LSB #744

**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!**

Sermon

"Dark Matters and Light Matters"

John 9 & Ephesians 5

The Holy Gospel

John 9:35-38

P: ³⁵Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and when He found him He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶He answered,

C: "And who is He, sir, that I may believe in Him?"

P: ³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have seen Him, and it is He who is speaking to you." ³⁸He said,

C: "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped Him.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day

"Amazing Grace"

LSB #744

- 2 The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.**
- 3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
His grace has brought me safe thus far,
His grace will lead me home.**
- 4 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail
And mortal life shall cease,
Amazing grace shall then prevail
In heaven's joy and peace.**
- 5 When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.**

Apostles' Creed

**C: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting; Amen**

Prayers

Please continue to send prayer requests to prayer@spalutheran.org

P Let us pray for the whole church of God in Christ Jesus and for everyone in their many needs.

I: Lord of all seasons, in this season of Lent shine Your light upon us as we examine ourselves, see our sins, and know our need for a Savior. As we continue to follow Christ to the cross, draw our hearts and minds to You and the joys that await. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

I: Healing Lord, shine Your light of peace and healing to all who seek relief, for the sick and dying, for those troubled physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally, and for the grieving and the dying, that Your comfort may be known, especially by these dear ones that we remember before You. . . Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

I: Lord of all nations, especially in this time of pandemic, shine Your light on this world. Give a wise courage to all who are called to lead us; give a successful diligence to all who working to stop the spread of the Coronavirus; give the media an appropriate seriousness in sharing the news without causing panic. Protect the elderly and vulnerable populations; keep all from unwittingly spreading this disease; and inspire those who are strong and able to help. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P Lord of the Church, dwell with Your people in love. Even though we are apart from one another at this time, by Your Holy Spirit keep us united in truth, love, faith, and service. Bless us to live as Your witnesses so that those still trapped in darkness may soon rejoice in the light of truth. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

Additional petitions may be added by the Pastor at this time.

P: Lord God, You have called Your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that Your hand is leading us, and Your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P: Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we pray:

C: 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

Offering

Please visit spalutheran.org/give

Closing Hymn

"Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"

LSB #849

- 1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness with a liberating light;
Praise the One who frees the pris'ners, turning blindness into sight.
Praise the One who preached the Gospel, healing ev'ry dread disease,
Calming storms, and feeding thousands with the very Bread of peace.**
- 2 Praise the One who blessed the children with a strong, yet gentle, word;
Praise the One who drove out demons with the piercing, two-edged sword.
Praise the One who brings cool water to the desert's burning sand;
From this Well comes living water, quenching thirst in ev'ry land.**
- 3 Let us praise the Word Incarnate, Christ, who suffered in our place.
Jesus died and rose victorious that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness, seeing what our God has done;
Let us praise the true Redeemer; Praise the One who makes us one.**

Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you;
The Lord look upon you with favor, and give you ☩ peace.

C: Amen.

Farewell

P: We are Gathered by God—

C: To Share the Love of Jesus!

P: Go in peace; Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

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"Amazing Grace"

Text: John Newton

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"Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"

Text: Rusty Edwards

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