

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
February 28 2021
Second Sunday in Lent



The second covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the one made with Abraham and Sarah: God's promise to make them the ancestors of many, with whom God will remain in everlasting covenant. Paul says this promise comes to all who share Abraham's faith in the God who brings life into being where there was no life. We receive this baptismal promise of resurrection life in faith. Sarah and Abraham receive new names as a sign of the covenant, and we too get new identities in baptism, as we put on Christ.

Gathering

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

Prelude

"Forty Days and Forty Nights" arranged by Craig Penfield

***Confession and 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

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.

***Gathering Hymn**

"Lord Jesus, You Shall be my Song"

Hymn#808, vs 1-3

- 1 Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey;
I'll tell ev'rybody about you wherever I go:
you alone are our life and our peace and our love.
Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.

- 2 Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.
May all of my joy be a faithful reflection of you.
May the earth and the sea and the sky join my song.
Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.

- 3 As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant,
to carry your cross and to share all your burdens and tears.
For you saved me by giving your body and blood.
As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant.

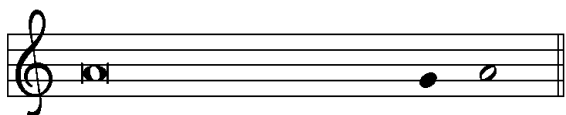
Text: Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus and L'Arche Community; tr. Stephen Somerville, b. 1931
Text © 1987 Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Tr. © 1970 Stephen Somerville, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.
Reprinted under One License #A-735517

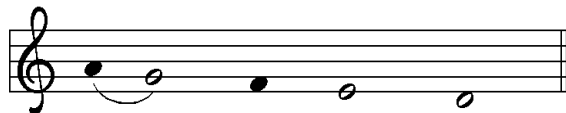
***Apostolic Greeting**

The boundless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, and the light of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

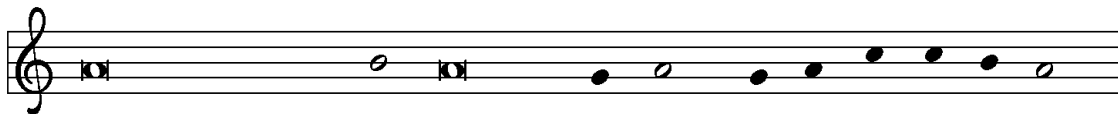
***Kyrie**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



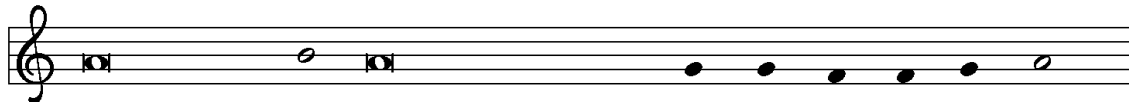
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,

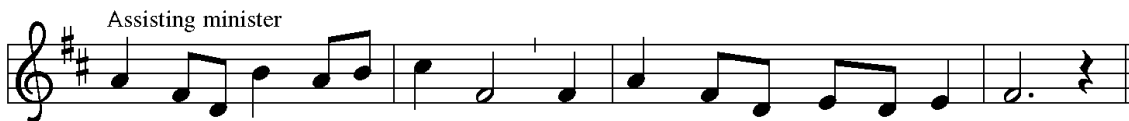


let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - - men.

***Canticle of Praise**



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

***Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, 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.

The First Lesson

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

A reading from the book of Genesis, the 17th chapter.

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

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

Psalm

Psalm 22:23-31

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's | line, give glory.

Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off- | spring of Israel.

²⁴**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the LORD's face hid- | den from them; but when they cry out, | the LORD hears them.**

²⁵From you comes my praise in the | great assembly;

I will perform my vows in the sight of those who | fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat | and be satisfied,**

Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts | live forever!

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn | to the LORD;

all the families of nations shall bow | before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs | to the LORD, who rules o- | ver the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow | down in worship;

all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel be- | fore the LORD.

³⁰**Their descendants shall | serve the LORD,**

whom they shall proclaim to genera- | tions to come.

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people | yet unborn, saying to them, "The | LORD has acted!"

The Second Lesson

Romans 4:13-25

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.

A reading from St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, the 4th chapter.

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

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

***Gospel Acclamation**

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,
slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

***The Holy Gospel**

Mark 8:31-38

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark, the 8th chapter.

Glory to You o Lord.

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Matthew Best

***Hymn of the Day**

"Take up Your Cross, the Savior Said"

Hymn#667 vs. 1-3

- 1 "Take up your cross," the Savior said,
"if you would my disciple be;
forsake the past, and come this day,
and humbly follow after me."
- 2 Take up your cross; let not its weight
pervade your soul with vain alarm;
his strength shall bear your spirit up,
sustain your heart, and nerve your arm.
- 3 Take up your cross, nor heed the shame,
nor let your foolish heart rebel;
for you the Lord endured the cross
to save your soul from death and hell.

Text: Charles W. Everest, 1814-1877, alt.
Arrangement reprinted under One License #A-735517

***Apostles' Creed**

AM: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us profess our faith, using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**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 the Church**

Congregational response after each petition:

AM: ...Hear us, O God, **C: Your mercy is great.**

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

A brief silence.

Your gift of grace is for all people. Give confident faith to all the baptized, that they may follow you wholeheartedly. Give new believers joy in your promises; give hope and courage to those who suffer for their faith. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

All the ends of the earth worship you. From galaxies to microorganisms, preserve your creation. Teach humanity to wonder at your works and to join you in tending to creation's well-being. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You rule over the nations. Raise up advocates for peace and justice within and between nations. Give life where hope seems dead; call into existence new realities we cannot even imagine. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In Jesus you joined humanity in suffering and death. Reveal to all the depth of your love shown on the cross. Accompany all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit. Restore all who are sick or grieving. Bring vindication for victims of injustice, exploitation, and oppression. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You made Abraham and Sarah the ancestors of a multitude of nations. Bless grandparents, parents, and foster parents, and the children who look to them for care and guidance. Console those who deal with infertility, parents who have entrusted their children to adoption, and children longing to be adopted. Equip ministries and services to families. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We await the day of Christ's coming in glory. Lead us by the example of all the saints whom you have called to take up their cross and follow you, that together we may find our lives in you. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

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

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

***Peace**

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us show a sign of that peace!

Offering

The offering, whether in person or through digital means, is an act of worship. Worship, at its core, is a reverent love and devotion accorded to God. We give because God loves us first, and we are called to love God and neighbor as a result. The offering is one way we show our love of God.

To assist you in this act of worship, there are several ways to make your offering: Go to www.StStephenLC.org and scroll to the bottom of the page, and click **DONATE**.

Text your offering dollar amount to 717-685-6947. Text "help" for options.

Use Engage from your smart phone or Internet connected device at <https://engage.suran.com/sslc/> or QR code below:



Set up regular electronic offerings by contacting Kevin, our office manager, at 717-766- 2168, Monday through Thursday from 9am – 2pm, or by email at office@StStephenLC.org to get set up.

Mail in your check, made payable to St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Our address is
30 W. Main St., PO Box 266, New Kingstown, PA 17072.

The offerings are used to carry out the ministry of the church, to share the Good News, to provide pastoral care, to worship as a community, and to create an environment where Jesus encounters people and their lives are transformed. All of these things continue to take place. Thank you for your generosity.

*Offertory Prayer

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

*The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age. Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was handed over, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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.

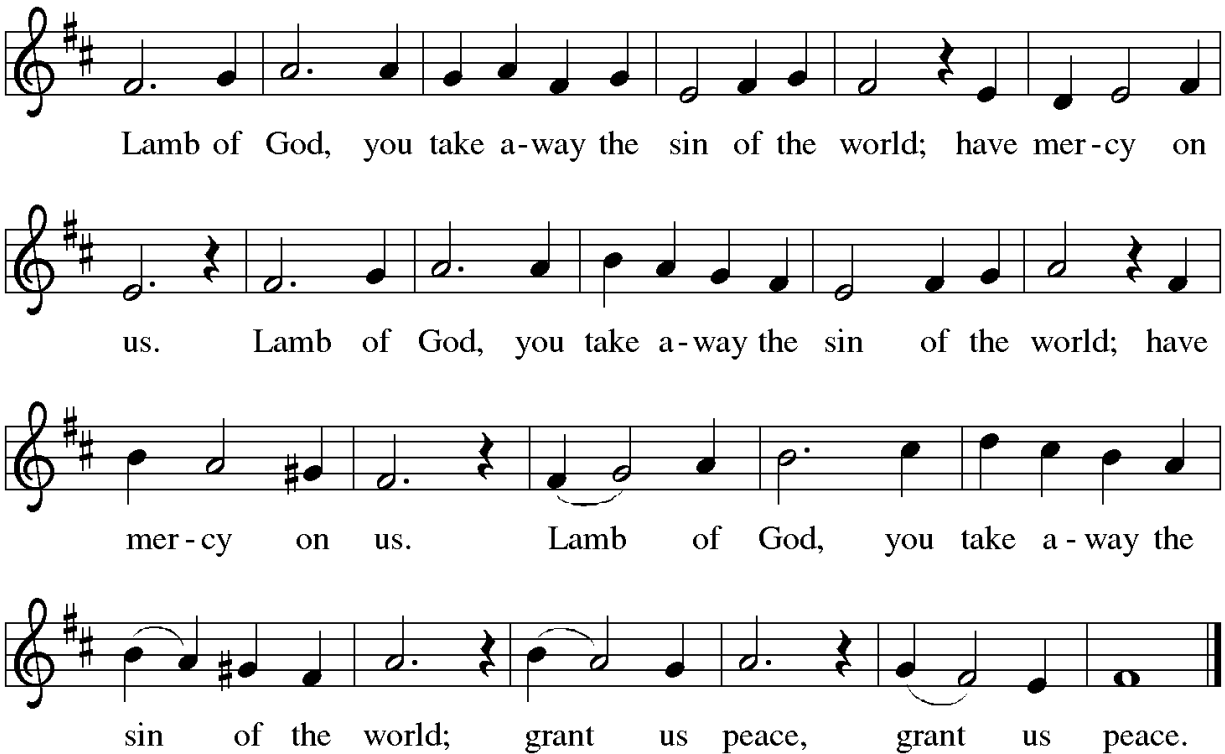
**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**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.**

***Invitation to Communion**

AM. Beloved: here is bread; here is wine. Here is Jesus.
Come and be fed



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

***Post Communion Prayer**

Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Sending

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

***Blessing**

God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter ☩ keep you in peace.

Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

"Let us Ever Walk With Jesus"

Hymn#802

- 1 Let us ever walk with Jesus,
follow his example pure,
through a world that would deceive us
and to sin our spirits lure.

Onward in his footsteps treading,
trav'lers here, our home above,
full of faith and hope and love,
let us do our Savior's bidding.
Faithful Lord, with me abide;
I shall follow where you guide.

- 2 Let us suffer here with Jesus,
and with patience bear our cross.
Joy will follow all our sadness;
where he is there is no loss.
Though today we sow no laughter,
we shall reap celestial joy:
all discomforts that annoy
shall give way to mirth hereafter.
Jesus, here I share your woe;
help me there your joy to know.
- 3 Let us gladly die with Jesus.
Since by death he conquered death,
he will free us from destruction,
give to us immortal breath.
Let us mortify all passion
that would lead us into sin;
and the grave that shuts us in
shall but prove the gate of heaven.
Jesus, here with you I die,
there to live with you on high.
- 4 Let us also live with Jesus.
He has risen from the dead
that to life we may awaken.
Jesus, you are now our head,
we are your own living members;
where you live, there we shall be
in your presence constantly,
living there with you forever.
Jesus, let me faithful be;
life eternal grant to me.

Text: Sigismund von Birken, 1626-1681; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, alt.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.
Reprinted under One License #A-735517

***Dismissal**

AM: Christ is born! Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.

C: Thanks be to God. We Will

Postlude

"Fugue"

by J.K.F. Fischer

St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church is a community of faith inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim boldly the Good News of God's loving and saving presence in the world.

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #43258.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved