

THE THIRD WEDNESDAY IN LENT, March 10, 2021

(P: pastor; C: congregation)

OPENING LITANY AND CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit,

C: Amen.

P: To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

C: Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maidservant to the hand of her mistress,

P: So our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he has mercy upon us.

C: Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us.

P: With humble and repentant hearts, let us confess our sins unto God our Father.

C: O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath. Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled. My soul also is greatly troubled. Turn, O LORD, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love.

P: On the basis of your confession and the Lord's promise, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 61:1-3

The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

P: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

SECOND LESSON: Luke 11:14-28

Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons," while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first." As he said these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you nursed!" But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

P: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

MEDITATION, Amazing Grace for the Free

HYMN: “Our Father, We Have Wandered”, WOV 733

**Our Father, we have wandered and hidden from your face;
In foolishness have squandered your legacy of grace.
But now, in exile dwelling, we rise with fear and shame,
As, distant but compelling, we hear you call our name.**

**And now at length discerning the evil that we do,
Behold us, Lord, returning with hope and trust to you.
In haste you come to meet us and home rejoicing bring,
In gladness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.**

**O Lord of all the living, both banished and restored,
Compassionate, forgiving and ever caring Lord,
Grant now that our transgressing, our faithlessness may cease.
Stretch out your hand in blessing, in pardon, and in peace.**

PRAYER

P: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, our Lord Jesus reached out in mercy to bring healing and hope to the people around him. Help us to reach out as his eyes, his hands and his heart so that we, too, might bring healing and hope to the people we meet. We pray that others will come to know the freedom and peace we have in our Savior.

C: Amen

LORD’S PRAYER

P: Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

C: 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

BLESSING

P: The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: Amen

CLOSING HYMN: “Amazing Grace”, st. 3

**Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
‘Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.**