

Augustana

Lent 1, 2021 – setting 8 ELW

Welcome to worship. ...

- where Lutherans and Anglicans worship together
- it is our aim as a Christian community to share the unconditional love in Christ for people of all genders, orientations, abilities, ages, races, cultures, ethnicities, and we are committed to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and all who seek shelter in Christian worship and community. This is a work in progress.
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Thanks just like on a Sunday morning when we worship together there are many who make it possible for us to worship together. Look at the end of the video for all those names.

GREETING

As we begin our time of worship we ask that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us.

KYRIE

Kyrie eleison, on our world and on our way

Kyrie eleison, ev'ry day

CHILDREN'S TIME

- Roy G. Biv – have you ever heard of that person?
- That's how I remember the colours of the rainbow. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.
- Rainbows – meaning in Noah's story "I will be with you ... not forget you"
- Rainbows not – also remind us of God's inclusive love.
- (Our churches official welcoming statement) We are a Christ-centered, welcoming community. We commit ourselves to modelling Christ's unconditional love in our worship, learning, fellowship, and service to others. Just as God welcomes and cares for us, so we welcome everyone to participate in all aspects of our community, without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, culture or ethnic background, physical or mental abilities, family or economic status, gender, or age. We pledge to ourselves and all others that we will strive to live as a reconciling people in our life together and in our outreach to the world.

- Are we there yet? No ... but we are on the way.
- Rainbows remind us message from God Reminder for ourselves

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of our salvation, your rainbow in the clouds proclaims your covenant with every living creature. Teach us your paths and lead us in your truth, so that by your Holy Spirit, we may remember our baptismal vows and be keepers of your trust with earth and its inhabitants.
Amen

READING: Genesis 9:8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.' God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.'

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you promised we will trust your word.

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark 1:9-15

Glory to you O Lord

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

The Gospel of our Lord; **Praise to you, O Christ**

MEDITATION

I have always admired artists who can draw or paint a picture with just a few strokes of the paint brush or pen. With just a line here and there you can clearly see what the artist intended.

The writer of our gospel reading today, Mark, has a similar gift with words. A few words that communicate a world of meaning. Both Luke and Matthew speak of Jesus' baptism and temptation in the wilderness, but they are much wordier Many more details. But Mark is one to spare the details and get to the heart of the matter. A concise communicator.

Mark clearly and concisely lays the ground work for all that follows.

- Jesus went to John to be baptized -- he identified himself as human – he got in line with the rest of us
- The heavens opened up and a voice from heaven identified Jesus as divine

- Ever so simply Jesus is identified as both human and divine
- “Immediately” Jesus went into the wilderness: temptation, wild animals and ministering angels: tempted as a human and victorious as divine.

All of this happens in a row ^ ^ ^ . Mark has all his ducks in a row SO THAT HE GET ON WITH THE STORY, the gospel: the heart of the matter Jesus ministry on earth. In other words: this is who he is ... now let’s talk about what he did and said!

Mark did not just throw a few stories together indiscriminately. The gospel of Mark was put together with care.

The baptism of Jesus and the wilderness temptation are important, but we pass over them quickly so as to not lose momentum.

At the risk of doing that I would like to pause and look at these two events a bit closer.

One thing, I already touched on: they clearly tell us that Jesus was both human and divine. This is very important so that we can understand all the rest of the gospel story

- With a quick stroke of the pen both a high point and a low point are acknowledged.
- Jesus’ baptism with the sky opening up, the dove, and God’s endorsement was a high point: “You are my son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” We hear in those words that God is with Jesus ... again: no guess work needed ... it is very clear that God is with Jesus.
- And then immediately the low point →40 days in the wilderness tempted by Satan surrounded by wild animals
- But also attended by God’s messengers/angels. Again God’s blessing is with Jesus
- God was with Jesus in both the high point and the low point. Despite the sparseness of details Mark makes sure we know that God’s hand is in both experiences!

What does this teach us? We like Jesus have both highs and lows in our lives. It is part of human existence that we experience both. Not in quite the same dramatic way that Jesus did

[with skies rent asunder and 40 days tempted in the wilderness]. But as humans we have times of joy and excitement And we also have times when we are tested to our limit, the bad times that seem to go on for an eternity. Do we, like Mark, see God's hand – God's presence -- in both experiences.

In Noah's story of a new beginning there is the rainbow's promise that God will not forget God's people.

In Mark's story of the beginning of Jesus' ministry God's presence is also assured.

In both of these new beginnings there are questions that come to me. Questions that start with WHY? The rainbow and blessing and God's presence seem easier to understand than the Why's

- Why wickedness & evil in the world?.... Why flood and destruction and pandemics?
- Why the wilderness
- Why are there dark times in our lives

Mark does not elaborate on those questions ... not even in his concise manner. Maybe he is in the same boat as me: I don't why ... I have no answer for these why's. But I am thankful that the why's are not glossed over, but are acknowledged as real. But they are More than just acknowledged ... they were experienced by God. Jesus in the wilderness experienced the darkness of being human.

Ups and downs come and go, but we can put our trust in God who has "been there and done that."

Prayer: God of wilderness and water, guide us through this season that we may not avoid struggle, but open ourselves to your blessing and presence in our lives as shown to us through your son Jesus. AMEN.

CONFESSION OF SIN AND ABSOLUTION

Blessed be the 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. 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.**

HYMN # 517 "Lord keep us steadfast in your word

Lord, keep us steadfast in your word;
curb those who by deceit or sword
would wrest the kingdom from your Son
and bring to naught all he has done.

O Comforter of priceless worth,
send peace and unity on earth;
support us in our final strife
and lead us out of death to life.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us join hearts and voices together in prayer. Each short prayer will end with the words "hear us, O God" and you can make the prayer your own by responding "**your mercy is great**".

Please add any prayers that need to be added as appropriate for the week:

In Jesus your realm has come near to us in every place and time. Give your church throughout a world a spirit of humility and repentance; teach us to trust always in the good news of your salvation.

Hear us, O God . . . **Your mercy is great.**

You have made a covenant of mercy with every living creature. Protect all the earth's creatures from destruction (*especially . . .*). Empower the work of biologists, conservationists, and science educators.

Hear us, O God . . . **Your mercy is great.**

All your paths are steadfast love and faithfulness. Direct the words and actions of leaders in our community and throughout the world, that they may maintain justice for the lowly. In particular, we pray for The Most Rev. David Edwards, Archbishop, and the clergy and people of the Diocese of Fredericton and the dean, council, and congregations of the Grand River and Thames Areas of the Eastern Synod

Hear us, O God . . . **Your mercy is great.**

Even in the wilderness you are with us. Walk alongside migrants and refugees crossing dangerous lands. Tend to those whose lives feel desolate. Give healing and strength to all who suffer, *especially* Angie Remus and family as they mourn the death of Gordon and Elsie, Audrey, Orville and Carol, Bruce, Marie, Gloria, Anna Marie, Marcus, Brodie, Karin, Anthony, Robert, Curtis, Linda, Marci, Gayle, Evelyn, Lisa, Danielle, Shelby, Alice, Deanna, Ron, Marlene, Mildred, Minnie, and all those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts(*a pause to offer time to name others*).

Hear us, O God . . . **Your mercy is great.**

In the covenant of baptism you claim us as beloved children. Nurture us in our baptismal identity and teach us to live within it for the sake of others. Strengthen this congregation's ministries of care and concern, *especially* the Alhamad-Wahid family & Iqbal family

Hear us, O God . . . **Your mercy is great.**

In baptism you join us to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We praise you for all those who have died trusting in your faithfulness. Bring us with them to the fullness of your reign.

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

Knowing how God loves us as a Mother and a Father we pray in the words Jesus taught us:

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.

WALK FROM SYRIA

There are over 20 teams participating, including some from other parishes. To date we have walked over 2,200 KM with about 7,580 KMs to go in our 9 week journey. We have 6 weeks left to go so we hopefully will make it.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

You are what God made you to be; created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbour. God bless you that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity. **AMEN**

Go in peace to love and service the Lord.

THANKS BE TO GOD

SENDING SONG #326 Bless now, O God, the Journey

Bless now, O God, the journey that all your people make, the path through noise and silence, the way of give and take. The trail is found in desert and winds the mountain round, then leads beside still waters, the road where faith is found.

Bless sojourners and pilgrims who share this winding way; your hope burns through the terrors, your love sustains the day. We yearn for holy freedom while often we are bound; together we are seeking the road where faith is found.

Divine eternal lover, you meet us on the road. We wait for lands of promise where milk and honey flow, but waiting not for places, you meet us all around. Our covenant is written on roads, as faith is found.

THANKS

Worship Assistant: Margareth Peterson

Musicians: Deborah Buck, Augustana St. Timothy Choir

Technicians: Bryan Tastad & Greg Fowlie-Neufeld

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Intercessory prayers, blessing, dismissal, Confession and Forgiveness adapted from Sundays and Seasons 2021; © Augsburg Fortress

