

“...⁵Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.””

John 3:5-6

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Second Sunday in Lent – March 12, 2017

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*We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church. We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning. Should you have no permanent church-home in this community, why not consider making this one your own? Please sign the guest book as you leave worship today or the attendance card attached to the front of the bulletin. You are most welcome here at St. John! Most elements of our service can be found in the bulletin, everything else is in the hymnal. Page refers to the numbered pages towards the front of the hymnal, hymns are bold and towards the back. Please rise when there is an *, congregational responses are in **bold**, and underlined elements of the service are found in the hymnal.*

HOLY COMMUNION

Second Sunday in Lent– March 12, 2017

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as daughters and sons of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

Today we commemorate Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, who died in 604. Born into wealth and power, Gregory was for a time the chief administrator of the city of Rome. Giving this up for a life in the church, he was elected pope in 590. He influenced public worship through the establishment of a lectionary and prayers to correlate with the readings. Gregorian chant is named in his honor.

PRELUDE: *Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church* – Robert J. Powell

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

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

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father,
and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

During the season of Lent
we are called to return to the Lord with all our heart.
Let us confess our sin and seek reconciliation with God and neighbor.

Silence for reflection.

Merciful God,
you sent Jesus Christ to save the lost.
We confess that we have strayed from you
and turned aside from your way.
We fail in love, neglect justice,
and ignore your truth.
Have mercy on us and wash away our sin.
Create in us clean hearts
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Behold, now is the acceptable time;
now is the day of salvation.
Almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us all our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

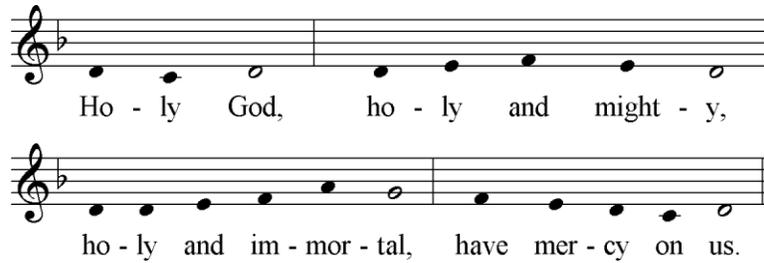
***GATHERING SONG #321:** *Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church*

***GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

***TRISAGION**

The cantor sings the Trisagion, and all repeat it twice.



***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

**O God, our leader and guide,
in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth
to live as your children.
Strengthen our faith in your promises,
that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world
through 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.

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

¹The LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

^{4a}So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 121

*The Psalm is sung in alternation between cantor and congregation;
the congregation sings the **bold** verses.*

¹I lift up my eyes | to the hills;

from where is my | help to come?

²**My help comes | from the LORD,
the maker of heav- | en and earth.**

³The LORD will not let your | foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you | fall asleep.

⁴**Behold, the keep- | er of Israel
will neither slum- | ber nor sleep;**

⁵the LORD watches | over you;
the LORD is your shade at | your right hand;

⁶**the sun will not strike | you by day,
nor the | moon by night.**

⁷The LORD will preserve you | from all evil
and will | keep your life.

⁸The LORD will watch over your going out and your | coming in,
from this time forth for- | evermore.

SECOND READING: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³For the 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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL HYMN: *Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery



1. Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your death we are re - born;
2. We re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed on through act and word;
3. In our call to be a bless - ing, may we be a bless - ing true;



though you die in all of his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn,
ev - 'ry per - son lost and bro - ken wears the bod - y of our Lord,
may we live and die con - fess - ing Christ as Lord of all we do,



still you rise with ev - 'ry morn.
wears the bod - y of our Lord.
Christ as Lord of all we do.

***GOSPEL READING: John 3:1-17**

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glorify to you, O Lord.

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time

into the mother's womb and be born?"⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."⁹ Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

¹¹"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶"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.

¹⁷"Indeed, 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 gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY#323: *God Loved the World

***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 INTERCESSION**

Lifting our voices and turning toward God, let us pray for the church, the earth, and all who are in need.

God of Abraham and Sarah, God of all earth's families, bless your church to be a blessing and bestow your grace to a hurting world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, you love the entire cosmos. Help us to love all of the creatures and life within it. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

O God, our help is in you. Keep the nations, their governments, and their people from all evil. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

O God, your promises ease our pain and sorrow. Grant comfort, healing, and joy to all who are in need. We pray especially for Denise, Sally, Bill, Raymond, Francis & Grace, Kathryn, Jane, David & Ellen, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, lead this assembly in its Lenten journey toward faith, works of love, and prayer. Let those gathered here be fed and nourished by your word. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

O God, we give thanks for the faithful departed who have joined your saints in light, especially the bishop Gregory the Great. Let their lives be guides to our own. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast love; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING VOLUNTARY: *All Who Believe and Are Baptized* (BWV 638) – J. S. Bach

***OFFERING SONG:** *Create in Me a Clean Heart*

All stand for the Offering Song as the gifts are brought forward.

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.
Merciful God,
receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving
and the offering of our lives,
that following in the way of the cross,
we may know the joy of the resurrection;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

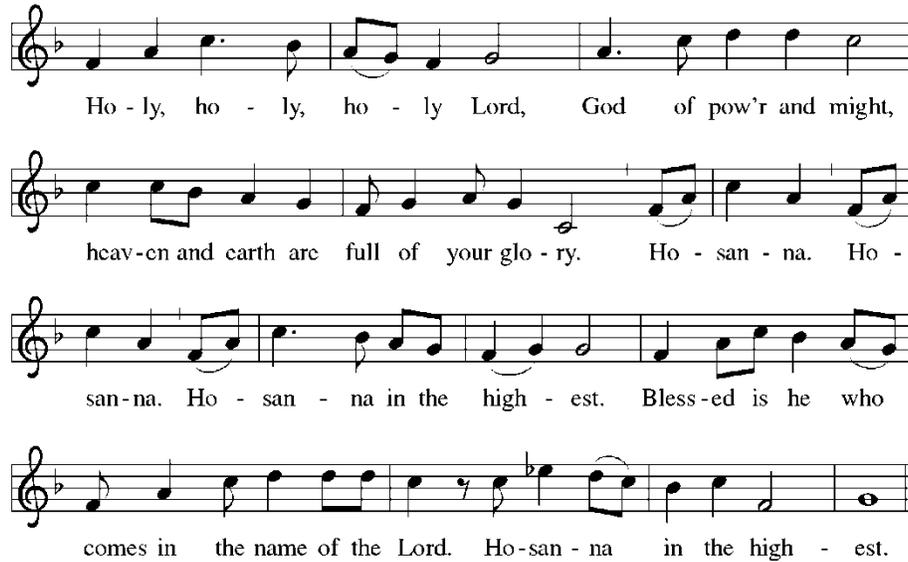
We lift them to the Lord.

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, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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 betrayed,
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 ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

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.



A - men, a - men, a - men.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Return to God with all your heart.
Receive bread for the journey, drink for the desert.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. All are invited forward for communion or a blessing. The area of cups bordered by green tape has grape juice.

COMMUNION SONG: *Lamb of God*

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.

COMMUNION HYMN #759: *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in grace.
Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

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 Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

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

***SENDING OF COMMUNION**

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care:
As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread,
assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament.

In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament,
and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence
through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

***BLESSING**

May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth,
and claimed us as children of the light,
strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor
and give you + peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG #750: *Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart

DISMISSAL

Marked with the cross of Christ,
go forth to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church* – Healey Willan

8:00 am

Assisting Minister: Matt Claus
Communion Assistant:
Acolyte:
Lector:
Usher: Bob Davidson
Attendance Last Week: 64
Weekly Budgeted Expense: \$ 3,185.02
YTD Budgeted Expense \$ 31,850.18
YTD Actual Expense \$ 30,073.20

10:30 am

Assisting Minister: Missy Kramer
Communion Assistant: Jan Leikauf
Acolyte:
Lector:
Usher: Jim Ward
Attendance Last Year: 64
Last Week's General Giving: \$ 5,349.33
Last Week's Designated Giving: \$ 634.02
YTD Receipts: \$34,426.50

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