



Lent 1

February 18, 2024 + 9:00 AM

Welcome to our worship of the Lord Jesus Christ on this First Sunday in Lent! This year, the Sundays in Lent lead us to focus on five covenants God makes in the Hebrew Scriptures and to use them as lenses through which to view Baptism. First Peter connects the way God saved Noah's family in the flood with the way God saves us through the water of Baptism. God makes God's baptismal covenant with us individually, but the new life we're given in Baptism is for the sake of the whole world.

Congregational responses are printed in indented boldface italics.

GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC

GATHERING HYMN: "O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days" *ELW 319*



- 1 O Lord, through-out these for - ty days you prayed and kept the fast;
- 2 You strove with Sa - tan, and you won; your faith - ful - ness en - dured;
- 3 Though parched and hun - gry, yet you prayed and fixed your mind a - bove;
- 4 Be with us through this sea-son, Lord, and all our earth-ly days,



in - spire re - pen - tance for our sin, and free us from our past.
lend us your nerve, your skill and trust in God's e - ter - nal word.
so teach us to de - ny our - selves that we may know God's love.
that when the fi - nal Eas - ter dawns, we join in heav - en's praise.

Text: based on Claudia F. Hernaman, 1838–1898; para. Gilbert E. Doan, b. 1930
Music: CAITHNESS, *Psalter*, Edinburgh, 1635

INVOCATION AND CONFESSION:

Holy Eternal Majesty, Holy ✝ Incarnate Word, Holy Abiding Spirit,
have mercy on us!

We've trusted in our own strength rather than living in Yours;

We've rejected Your word of love and pursued the demands of other lords.

We've been turned in on ourselves, focused on our own needs and desires rather than living as channels of Your abundant grace.

***We've tried to live freely on our own terms,
but have only bound ourselves more tightly in chains of slavery to sin.***

So hear us, O God, as we confess the brokenness of our lives—
the sin that everyone knows and the sins we fear to name:

*Silence is kept for individual reflection and confession.
After the period of silence, we sing (to "Lord Jesus, Think on Me", ELW 599):*

***Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.
We come to hear Your living Word that saves us from despair.***

***Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.
Pour out Your grace and make us whole, that new life may begin.***

***Have mercy on us, Lord; make sin and shame depart.
Renew us with Your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!***

GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY:

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

Then let's pray: Holy God, heavenly Father,
in the waters of the flood You saved Noah and his family,
and in the wilderness of temptation You protected Your Son from sin.
Renew us in the grace of Baptism, that the wicked one may have no power over us.
We trust in You through Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. ***Amen.***

WORD AND PRAYER

FIRST READING:

Genesis 9.8-17

NRSVUE

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“As for Me, I’m establishing My covenant with you and your descendants after you ¹⁰and with every living creature that’s with you— the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I 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.”

¹²God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between Me and you and every living creature that’s with you, for all future generations: ¹³I’ve set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I’ll remember My covenant that’s between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh, and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I’ll see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I’ve established between Me and all flesh that’s on the earth.”

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

Thanks be to God!

SECOND READING:

1 Peter 3:18-22

NRSVUE

For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also He went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight lives, were saved through water. ²¹And Baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you— not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who’s gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to Him.

This is holy wisdom; this is holy word.

Thanks be to God!

Sung to the tune of "In the Cross of Christ I Glory":

***We are turning, Lord, to hear You; You are merciful and kind,
Slow to anger, rich in blessing, and with love to us inclined.***

The Holy Gospel according to St Mark, the first chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord!

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as He was coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove upon Him. ¹¹ And a voice came from the heavens, "You are My Son, the Beloved; with You I'm well pleased!"

¹² And the Spirit immediately drove Him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tested by Satan, and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels waited on Him.

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the Good News of God ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe in the Good News!"

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Bless Now, O God, the Journey" *ELW 326*

1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,
 2 Bless so - journ-ers and pil - grims who share this wind-ing way;
 3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.

The musical score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with some accompaniment in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble clef staff.



the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.
 your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus-tains the day.
 We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,

The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun-tain round,
 We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;
 but wait-ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.

then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.
 to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.
 Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993
 Music: LLANGLOFFAN, Welsh tune, 19th cent.
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WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS/COMMISSIONING OF COUNCIL:

Today we rejoice to officially welcome *Tina Young*, our sister in Christ, into our fellowship in the Gospel, and to commission our 2024 Congregational Council. I ask

them all to come forward as their names are read: *Tina Young, Kelly Shaak, Tracy Hallman, Sara George, Stefanie Bauman, Karen Roehner, Brett Shaw, Rose Sutkins, Bill Shaeffer, Sue Young, and Wendy Gullett.*

Dear friends, in Holy Baptism our Lord Jesus Christ received you and made you members of His Church. In the community of God's people, you've learned from His Word God's loving purpose for you and all creation. You've been nourished at His holy Table and called to be witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now I invite you, and all of us gathered here, to confess our faith together in the words of our baptismal creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.

You stand among us as living gifts of God, called to stir us up and renew us in Christian faith, life, and ministry through service on our Congregation Council. Will you assume this ministry in the confidence that it comes from God?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you carry out this ministry in accordance with the teaching and practice of the Lutheran Church?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be diligent in your study of the Holy Scriptures and faithful in your use of the means of grace and in prayer?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you trust in God's care, seek to grow in love for those you serve, strive for excellence in your skills, and adorn the Gospel of God with a holy life?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

And you, people of God, will you support these fellow servants of Jesus Christ? Will you pray for them, help and honor them for their work's sake, and in all things strive to live in peace and unity in Christ?

We will, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Then let's pray: Merciful God, we thank You for these sisters and brothers whom You've brought to our family in faith here at St. Paul's. You've called them to Yourself in Holy Baptism, enlightened them with the gifts of Your Spirit, and nourished them in the community of faith. As we share Your love together in joyful service, uphold us all in the gifts and promises of our Baptism, bind us together in love, and use us together to touch the world around us with Your saving love through Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord. ***Amen.***

*We welcome Tina and all the members of our 2024 Council with applause.
The service then continues with the Prayers and Sharing of the Peace.*

PRAYERS FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS:

As we journey through this season of repentance and renewal, let's turn to God who mercifully gives us new life:

Holy God, we give You thanks that in Baptism You unite us with Christ Jesus and refresh us with Your promise of belonging. Unite Your people here and throughout the world in proclaiming that in Your family, all are welcome, all are loved, and all are made whole. Merciful God, ***receive our prayer.***

Bless our ministers, musicians, teachers, visionaries, council members, ministry teams, and all who strive to lead our congregation faithfully into the future. Ground our work in Scripture and prayer, and fuel it with Your own great imagination. Merciful God, ***receive our prayer.***

Even with all its oceans, the earth itself thirsts for Your life-giving water. We pray for desert places where there's little to no rain, for cities and villages running out of clean water, and for restoration of polluted rivers, oceans, and water supplies. Grant us wisdom in our stewardship of this precious resource, that Your whole creation may flourish. Merciful God, ***receive our prayer.***

Flood our world so steeped in violence with a desire for peace that won't rest quietly with the status quo. Where people are oppressed, bring Your justice; where there's terror, bring safety; where leaders trade in fear and ignorance and all the "rule of law" they can buy, give courage and wisdom to Your people to confront unjust systems with Your death-defying Word of compassion and grace. Stir up Your compassion among

our leaders and citizens alike, so that everyone may be treated with dignity, kindness, and love. Merciful God, *receive our prayer.*

Your heart aches with those who are in pain. Walk alongside migrants and refugees crossing dangerous lands; tend to those whose lives feel desolate; have mercy on those who are hungry, lonely, or lost; tend the sick and those who struggle with the daunting challenges of recovery; give rest to the weary; bless the dying, and comfort those who grieve. We especially seek Your healing and peace for our brothers and sisters... Hear their cries, O God, and spur us to respond to them as Your hands and heart in the world, that they may hear Your voice of love and rise in the strength of Your promise to the joy of life renewed. Merciful God, *receive our prayer.*

Remember Your covenant with us, O God, and keep us faithful to You until we join all Your saints and angels around Your heavenly throne. Merciful God, *receive our prayer.*

For into Your hands, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

The peace of the Lord is with you always. *And also with you.*

Reconciled to God and to one another, we share a sign of Christ's peace.

MEAL

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES, WITH ANTHEM:

“Lord, Be with Us on This Day”

-- Words and Music by Jay Althouse

OFFERTORY CANTICLE:

(sung three times through)

ELW 814



Giver of all good gifts, receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service for the sake of Your Gospel.
Prepare our hearts to receive You in this meal as you pour out Your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. *Amen.*

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER:

Blest are You, holy, mighty, and merciful Lord—
heaven and earth are full of Your glory!
In Your great love, You created the universe and made us for Yourself;
and even when we brought on chaos, cruelty, and despair, You didn't give up on us.
You called a people to Yourself, as a light to the nations;
You set them free from slavery and led them to the land of Your promise.
Through leaders and prophets, through exile and return,
You renewed Your covenant with Your people.
You so loved our broken world that, in the fullness of time,
You gave us Jesus Your only Son.
Embracing our humanity, Jesus showed us the way of salvation;
loving us to the end, He poured out His life for us;
dying for His own, He set us free from our slavery to sin and death;
rising from death, He poured out the Holy Spirit upon us,
that we might be His Body alive in the world.
Now send Your Holy Spirit into our hearts,
that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as He comes to us in His holy Supper.
Empower us by that same Spirit to love and forgive,
that our lives may anticipate that day when You'll make all things new.

In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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."

And so, remembering all that our Lord's done for us,
believing the witness of His resurrection, awaiting His final appearing in glory,
we share this foretaste of the feast to come, praying as Christ Himself has 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.***

Sung to the tune of "When All Your Mercies, O My God" LBW 264

***O Lamb of God, You bear the sin of all the world away;
You suffered death our lives to save: have mercy now, we pray.***

***O Lamb of God, You bear the sin of all the world away;
You set us free from guilt and grave: have mercy now, we pray.***

***O Lamb of God, You bear the sin of all the world away;
Eternal peace with God You made: give us Your peace, we pray.***

THE HOLY COMMUNION

*Now we share God's consecrated gifts among God's consecrated people, knowing that our living Lord Jesus is fully present with us in His Supper, giving Himself to us in bread and wine and forgiving love. Today, we'll share the Lord's Supper by receiving the body and blood of Christ at communion "stations" at the altar rail. Come forward a pew at a time; take a glass already filled with grape juice if necessary. Receive "**the body of Christ, given for you**" from the Pastor; then, by dipping the bread into the wine ("intinction") or drinking the grape juice from your glass, receive "**the blood of Christ, shed for you**" from our communion assistant. We'll pause for silent prayer after we've all communed...*

*If you're joining us from your home, we invite you to share the bread and cup with one another. When giving the bread to your neighbor, say "**The body of Christ, given for you.**" When giving the wine/grape juice say, "**The blood of Christ, shed for you.**" Whatever's left over may be reverently eaten and drunk by everyone after our worship is over. Once we've all shared in the body and blood of Christ, we continue in blessing and prayer:*

SENDING

THANKSGIVING, PRAYER, AND BENEDICTION:

May the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen us and keep us in His grace.

Amen.

Embodied God, at Your table, we've tasted the goodness of Jesus.

With the eyes of our hearts open to Your promise,

empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with Your love. ***Amen.***

And now may God the Wellspring of Life,
 Christ + Jesus the Embodiment of death-defying Love,
 and the Holy Spirit of rebirth and reconciliation bless you in your Lenten journey. *Amen.*

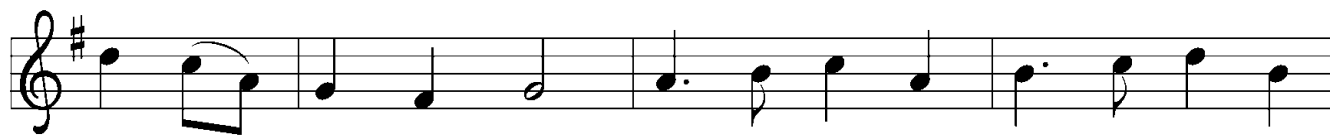
SENDING HYMN: “Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer” *ELW 618*



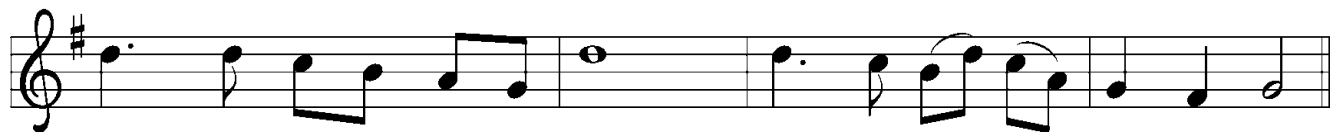
1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me
 wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me
 fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me



with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
 all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,
 safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es



feed me now and ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.
 shield me with your might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.
 I will raise for - ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

Text: William Williams, 1717–1791; tr. William Williams and Peter Williams, 1722–1796, alt.
 Music: CWM RHONDDA, John Hughes, 1873–1932

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DISMISSAL:

God has a plan.

We're it!

What's our part in God's plan?

Sharing God's love in joyful service!

Then let's go in peace, live in joy, and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

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Baptized and Thrown Out?

Jesus is baptized, Mark reminds us— and then the next thing we hear is that “the Spirit immediately drove Him out into the wilderness” to be tempted by Satan for forty days! It’s an interesting choice of words. Matthew’s and Luke’s versions of this story describe the Spirit as “leading” Jesus into the wilderness; but here in Mark’s account, the Spirit’s action is much more forceful than that.

The Spirit **drove** Jesus into the wilderness! The Greek is *ekballo*, which in the rest of Mark’s gospel means “to grab by the scruff of the neck and throw out” the way a bouncer does. Whenever Jesus confronts the demonic spirits, He *ekballo*’s them— throws them out of the people they inhabit, roughly, violently, forcefully!

A seemingly less violent image might be that of giving birth. Children aren’t gently eased into the world; they’re forcefully pushed and shoved by powerful contractions. They’re thrust into a hostile world, a “wilderness”. The wonder is that God “drives out” His beloved Son to be in the wilderness with **us** and for **us**. God didn’t put a protective bubble around Jesus, His beloved Son, after His baptism. Rather, God sent Him into the most hostile environment any human being has ever had to face— tempted by Satan himself, intensely, for forty days.

It’s part of a larger pattern. On the cross, Jesus endured the greatest temptation of them all— to save His own life— but instead, Jesus chose to save ours. His endurance becomes our own. All of Jesus’ exorcisms show that He has the power to throw Satan out and to create a more hospitable environment through the ministrations of His messengers, which include anyone who repents and believes in Him.

Our Baptism tells us who we are. We’re the children of God, which means we’re never alone in this world of ours. Jesus has come into the wilderness to fight for us, and by His own obedience gives us the power to endure...

Adapted from Sundays and Seasons 2006, © 2005 Augsburg Fortress.

And He Was with the Wild Beasts

Jesus knows God loves the earth,
its beasts: He thinks of Noah,
the families of animals
patiently gathered, the deluge
survived, looking wearily
out of the ark onto
what was left of what he'd known,
wreckage all around,
the twisted bits of wood
that had been trees, rubble
that had been houses, mud
covering everything, mud
and the stench of decay,
his eyes filling with tears;
and God — like Noah
grieving the ruin
and memory of beauty —
sorrowing, repenting
of destruction, declaring
“never again, never again”:
a covenant made, its sign displayed
in brilliance in the clouds,
hovering somewhere
over the animals that,
scattered from the battered hulk,
begin their search for food
on the shattered ground.

Jesus knows God loves the earth,
its many peoples,
He knows God wants
to take them into an ark
of compassionate love,
to save them from destruction
of their own making.

So He carries the brokenness
of the world into this

pathless place of longing —
as He is with the beasts
in the wilderness,
in the hungering and searching,
so He is with us in our hungry
search for love;
as He is with the beasts in needing
shelter from the sun and cold,
so He is with us in our need
for peace and joy.

And as the angels minister to Him,
so He will walk love's paths among us;
He will feed us in our emptiness
and comfort us in the wasteland
of our sorrows.

A fresh covenant of love
is waiting to be displayed,
and He has come
to be its sign forever.

• *Andrew Ki*



