

# First Sunday in Lent

February 21, 2021 (Real Church Virtual)



## Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

**C: Amen.**

P: 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*

P: Fountain of living water,

**C: 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.**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

## Gathering Song – A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

### Verse 1

A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious; he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious. The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight. On earth he has no equal.

### Verse 2

No strength of ours can match his might! We would be list, rejected. But now a champion comes to fight, whom God himself elected. You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Jesus, mighty Lord, God's only Son, adored. He holds the field victorious.

### Verse 3

Though hordes of devils fill the land all threat'ning to devour us, we tremble not, unmoved we stand; they cannot overpower us. Let this world's tyrant rage; in battle we'll engage! His might is doomed to fail; God's judgement must prevail! One little word subdues him.

### Verse 4

God's Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it; for God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit. Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day. The kingdom's ours forever!

## Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!

**C: And also with you!**

## Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

**C: Holy God, heavenly Father, in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## Children's Message

### First Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

*As God acted through Christ's suffering and death to bring us to God, so God acts through baptism to save us from a sinful existence. This spiritual cleansing marks our new life in Christ.*

<sup>18</sup>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, <sup>19</sup>in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup>who 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 persons, were saved through water. <sup>21</sup>And 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, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### Gospel: Mark 1:9-15

*The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the good news of God's reign.*

P: A reading from... **C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." <sup>12</sup>And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup>He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. <sup>14</sup>Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup>and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon – Pastor Paul

### 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 / Sign of the Peace / Interlude

### Lord's Prayer

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.

### Final Blessing & Dismissal

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

C: Amen.

A: Go in peace. Share the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

### Closing Song – 40 Days

#### Verse 1

Forty days to wander, forty days to die to self. Forty days to grow stronger as faith breaks open the gates of hell. The jubilee is over, but grace is far from gone in the hearts of the faithful, broken on the wheels of love.

#### Chorus

'Cause in the desert of temptation lies the storm of true conversion, where springs of living water drown and refresh you. And as the Jordan pours out change, your true self is all that remains, where springs of living water bind and break you, bind and break you.

#### Verse 2

Forty days to remember the Paschal sacrifice. Forty days to discover His passion calls us to new life. The jubilee is over, but mercy's far from gone in the arms of the Father as the wayward child comes home.

#### Chorus

'Cause in the desert of temptation lies the storm of true conversion, where springs of living water drown and refresh you. And as the Jordan pours out change, your true self is all that remains, where springs of living water bind and break you. Bind and break you, bind and break you, bind and break you.



**Bethlehem**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**February 21, 2021**

**Hymn Sing Next Week:** Friends, we would like to invite you to another fun filled hymn sing next Sunday, February 28th during our normal Zoom Fellowship Time. In place of the 9am Live Watch on Facebook, join us at 9:45am on Zoom where we will pick and sing some of our favorite hymns live! Don't use Zoom? Don't worry! Visit our Facebook page during the Hymn Sing and we'll be streaming there so you can request your favorite hymns in the Facebook comments section there!

We are pleased to announce that Council voted this week to **resume in-person worship in the sanctuary on Sunday, March 7th at 10am**. We will use the same guidelines and restrictions as we did in October and November (60 people max. in the sanctuary, with overflow in Fellowship Hall and Gathering Space; contact tracing, temp. taking, masks and social distancing and refraining from singing) – but we will be together, and we are thankful for the Covid positivity rates in northern Michigan moving in the right (i.e. downward) direction! (We will continue to monitor those positivity rates for the purposes of safety and staying open, but we give thanks!)

**“Table for 12”:** For the five Wednesdays in Lent (2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17 and 3/24) we will offer a special, in-person communion in the sanctuary for groups of up to 12 people, so 24 people per day. Pr. Paul will hold a brief, socially distant communion service from 11:15-11:30am and 5:15-5:30pm each Wednesday. **This will be by appointment, so please see the February 19<sup>th</sup> Bethlehem Weekend Update to sign up online or by calling Barbara Oster on her home phone (231.668.7038).** This will be a brief 15-20 minute service, so please come at the beginning of the session.

**The BLC book club** continues to meet the 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm via ZOOM. On Feb. 23 we will discuss the book “Little Fires Everywhere” by Celeste Ng. Even if you have not read the book you are welcome to join our discussion. If you are not on the contact list just send your email address to Cindy Monroe at [cmonroe@chartermi.net](mailto:cmonroe@chartermi.net) so you can receive the ZOOM invite.

**“Zoom Bible Study”** gathering via Zoom has completed its study of Paul’s Letters to the Corinthians and will take a short break until after Ash Wednesday. The group will continue on Wednesday, February 24th from noon until about 1:15pm. Besides the thought-provoking discussions, we also have great conversation and fellowship. We are using the book *The Great Conversation: Nature and the Care of the Soul* by Belden C. Lane. Please contact Pr. Paul if you are interested in joining.

### Lent 2021 Season Schedule

**Wed, Feb. 24th (Week / Faithscape #1 - Desert, Dune and Mountain (Scarcity and the highlands of the spirit)**

- \* “Table for 12”: In-sanctuary Communion at 11:15-11:30 (up to 12 people) and 5:15-5:30 (up to 12 people)
- \* Virtual Fellowship – via Zoom at 6:30pm
- \* Virtual Worship for Lent at 7pm on Youtube and Facebook

**Wed, March 3rd (Week / Faithscape #2 - Countryside and Prairie (The Openness of the familiar and inviting)**

"Table for 12" (11:15 and 5:15), Virtual Fellowship (6:30pm) & Worship (7pm)

**Wed, March 10th (Week / Faithscape #3 - City and Township (The streets we walk, the structures that define...)**

"Table for 12" (11:15 and 5:15), Virtual Fellowship (6:30pm) & Worship (7pm)

**Wed, March 17th (Week / Faithscape #4 - Spiritual Valley and Canyon**

"Table for 12" (11:15 and 5:15), Virtual Fellowship (6:30pm) & Worship (7pm)

**Wed, March 24th (Week / Faithscape #5 - Seashore and Lakeshore (Returning to the place/s Christ calls us)**

"Table for 12" (11:15 and 5:15), Virtual Fellowship (6:30pm) & Worship (7pm)

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**The FEBRUARY issue of the STAR is ready!** Feel free to check online at [www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org) < About Us > “The Online Bethlehem Star” or type this URL to get these directly: <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>

The outdoor **“Shooting STAR Dispenser”** at BLC is now full with several paper publications, including the February STAR and the current week’s worship folder/bulletin. If you would like a copy of a DVD, please contact the church and one will be produced for you.

**Calling all Knitters!!:** There is an overabundance of yarn skeins in the bin under the mailboxes in the narthex. PLEASE feel free to grab some to make hats, mittens, prayer shawls, etc.! The yarn is sorted according to kind, so you can be sure to find something appropriate for whatever project you have in mind. Questions? Call Betty R. (947-1013)

**Christ in Our Home Devotionals for January/February/March.** They can be picked up at the name tag table on Sunday mornings, from the STAR box below the outside mailbox, or during parking lot communion. The newest *Living Lutheran* magazine is also available in the same locations.

**A big thank you to those who have turned in Oleson's receipts.** For 2020, we received a total of \$545.66. Please continue saving your Oleson's receipts for Bethlehem. Please drop them off in the bin under the mailbox counter. Thanks.

**Keep "Hope Spreading":** Don't forget our blog "Hope Spreads Further" is still going strong! We've had many very inspiring entries and hope to read more. We invite you to help us build this blog or just read current entries at <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/hope-spreads-further>. Reach out to *Pastor Paul* at [paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org) or *Sharon* at [admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org) if you'd like to contribute to the blog!

**The cold and gray days of mid-winter are here and many of our members have little to no contact with the outside world. Please use your church directory or the addresses below to send a cheery note or make a phone call to someone. Don't have much time and not sure who to contact? How about choosing those whose last name is closest in the alphabet to your own?**

**List of Home Bound Members of BLC 2021  
BLC = Directory**

**Marlene Baesch - BLC**

**Marinan Bradford - Traverse Manor on Draka Rd. Traverse City, MI**

**Carol Collins – Burcham Assisted Living 2700 Burcham Dr. East Lansing, MI 48823**

**Brenda Denoyer - BLC**

**Richard Fernholz - BLC**

**Jacque Rossfeld – BLC**

**Corinne Hill - BLC**

**Christian Stretlien and Julie LaPeer - 14720 Mc Coll Ave. Thompsonville, MI 49683**

**Tom and Lee Miller - BLC**

**Nancy Smith - BLC**

**Lois Stretlien (Jan's sister in-law) - Traverse Manor Room #24**

**Ellie Tacke - BLC**

**Inge Thomas - BLC**

**Priscilla Thomas - Samaritas Assisted Living 4354 Mt. Hope Rd. Williamsburg MI 49690 BLC**

**Jan and Butch Waisanen - BLC**

**Dee and Bill Springer - Boardman Lake Glens 1400 Brigadoon Ct. TC 49684 BLC**

**Marjorie Whitney - Traverse Manor on Draka Rd. Traverse City, MI BLC**