Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 22, 2020

Today's worship is provided by

St. Andrew's
Episcopal Church

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and

Hope Lutheran Church
and Student Center

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

Welcome

Opening Dialogue
(selections from a Centering Prayer by Amy Loving)

The Apostle Paul tells us that the Spirit of God prays for us “with sighs too deep for words”. Through the Life-Giving Breath of God, we are given all that we need.

Let us breathe deeply—
inhaling the good gifts that God provides,
and exhaling all of the things that we need to release.

Let us breathe in strength. (Pause for breath...)
And, let us exhale our exhaustion. (Pause for breath...)

Let us breathe in hope. (Pause for breath...)
And, let us exhale self-doubt. (Pause for breath...)

Let us breathe in peace. (Pause for breath...)
And, let us exhale anxiety. (Pause for breath...)

Let us breathe in unconditional love. (Pause for breath...)
And, let us exhale distrust and hate. (Pause for breath...)
Life-Giving Breath of God,
Stir up these dry bones of ours and bring freedom to our lives, let us feel the mighty rush of your presence in this place. Blow away our fears and worries, and help us to discover your gifts of life in new ways.

Siblings in Christ, God is at work in us and with us! God's breath sustains us, holds us, and enlivens us. Know that this Divine breath dwells within us, that God may never leave us.

We are wrapped in love by the goodness of God. God urges us, “Keep the word near you, even on your lips and in your heart...

This word is your salvation.”

As we worship today, with the word on our lips, dwelling deep within our lungs, and in our hearts, experience the salvation of God for all manner of things in our lives.

In the promise, presence, and power of God for all manner of things,
Amen.
Gathering Hymn: 323 “God Loved the World”

Text: Gesangbuch, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crail, 1846–1923, alt.
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
Let us pray together: Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Word: God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

First Reading 1 Samuel 16:1-13
1 The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.”  
2 Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’  
3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.”  
4 Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?”  
5 He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.  
6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is now before the Lord.”  
7 But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”  
8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.”  
9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.”
Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.”  And Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.”

He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

R:  Word of God, Word of Life.
C:  Thanks be to God.

Psalm 23

1. The Lord is my shepherd;  
   I shall not be in want.
2. The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures  
   and leads me beside still waters.
3. You restore my soul, O Lord,  
   and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.
4. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
5. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.
6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
Second Reading  Ephesians 5:8-14

8 Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—
9 for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.
10 Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; 13 but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, 14 for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

R: Word of God, Word of Life.
C: Thanks be to God.

P: The Holy Gospel according to John.
C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Gospel  John 9:1-41

1 As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” 6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, 7 saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” 9 Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” 10 But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”
He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.”

They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided.

So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”

His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.”
Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord
C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon
Hymn of the Day 325: “I Want Jesus to Walk with Me”

1. I want Jesus to walk with me;
2. In my trials, Lord, walk with me; walk with me;
3. When I’m in trouble, Lord, walk with me;

I want Jesus to walk with me; in my trials, Lord, walk with me; when I’m in trouble, Lord, walk with me;

All along my pilgrim journey, when my heart is almost breaking, when my head is bowed in sorrow,

Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: SOJOURNER, African American spiritual; arr. hymnal version
Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

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**Apostle’s Creed**
We confess the faith of the church with the words of the Apostle’s 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 People**
You will be lead in a series of prayer petitions, not printed here, respond to  
each petition which ends:  
“Hear us, O God,” with the response: “Your mercy is great.”

Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the  
church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we  
commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.
The Peace
The Peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

At this time, we invite you to take a moment and text one or two people a word of peace.

Thanksgiving: God gives generously to us and the world

Offering Prayer
Let us pray together:
O God of justice and love,
we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of Jesus.
Give us the light we need,
awaken us to the needs of others,
and at the end bring all the world to your feast;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.
Amen.

Your generosity helps us continue to be the Body of Christ in and for the world. As we continue to seek ways to be faithful and look for opportunities to serve our neighbors, we encourage you to be faithful in your giving.

St Andrews: There are many ways you may give to support the work of St. Andrew’s. For your convenience, you may give online using your credit card at https://saeccp.org/give, or you may text saeccp to 73256. All donations and gifts to St. Andrew’s are fully tax-deductible. Receipts for your gifts are available upon request.

Hope: You may mail checks to Hope or give online at www.hopecp.org. Look on the top red toolbar for the word “Donate.”
The Lord’s Prayer
We pray together as 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.

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

Benediction
Sending Hymn: 793 “Be Thou My Vision”

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
3. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise;
4. Light of my soul, after victory won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
thou mine inheritance, now and always:
may I reach heaven’s joys, O heaven’s Sun!

thou my best thought both by day and by night,
Thou my soul’s shelter, and thou my high tow’r,
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,

waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
raise thou me heav’n-ward, O Pow’r of my pow’r.
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

Dismissal
Go in peace. Share the good news.
Thanks be to God.