

Sunday, February 21, 2021 – First Sunday in Lent

# Trinity's Weekly Connection

You are welcome to join us for live streaming of our "Virtual Worship" service from Centennial Hall on the First Sunday in Lent, February 21 at 9:15 a.m. If you are unable to join us at that time, be welcome to access the service at your convenience via Trinity's YouTube channel. Instructions for access to the live stream and the recorded video are below.

## Trinity is live streaming worship – how do I find it?

We are streaming our 9:15 a.m. "Virtual Worship" service on YouTube. To find it, do the following:

- Follow the home page link to "Virtual Worship" on Trinity's website, select "video" and you will be connected to the stream.

OR
- Go to YouTube, either by opening the app on your phone or by visiting the webpage on your computer.
- Search for 'Trinity Lutheran Church Grand Rapids.' The first option should be one with a picture of our cross tower (that is our channel).
- When you click on it you will be brought to our channel. If the service is live (from about 9:10 to 10:20 a.m. on Sunday morning) there will be a video with 'Live Now' on it.
- Simply click on the video and you will be connected to the stream.
- We also save past services in a play list called 'Rejoice Worship,' so you can view a past worship service at any time. It takes a couple of hours for the video to download on YouTube after worship ends.

If you have a YouTube account please subscribe to the channel. This will allow our videos to show up in your video feed and when we reach enough subscriptions allow us to change our YouTube url.

## Prayer of the Day for the First Sunday in Lent

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.

## Prayer for Health Care Providers

Merciful God, your healing power is everywhere about us. Strengthen those who work among the sick; give them courage and confidence in all they do. Encourage them when their efforts seem futile or when death prevails. Increase their trust in your power even to overcome death and pain and crying. May they be thankful for every sign of health you give, and humble before the mystery of your healing grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Trinity Members in Our Prayers

We pray for Trinity members Emily Albaitis, Fran Anderson, Deb Bambini and family, George Bauer, Janelle Beaudry, Jim and Sue Boyse and family, Bonnie Brandstadt and family, Pat Bruin, Judy Cisler, Barb and Bob Crossman and family, Mike Danielski, John Derbin, Renee Fisk and family, Mari Franz and family, Mary Frick, Richard Gehl and family, Jack Greiner, Elena Griewahn, Adam Guigue, Craig Gunderson, Mark Hahn, John Hall, Bob and Linda Heine and family, Ruth Helzer, Jerry Hendricks, Bev Heyne and family, Sid and Carrie Hoeksema and family, Callan Hughes, Carol Huttenga, Austin, Meredith and Theodore Johnson, Christopher Keller, Gayl Kessel, Susan Knoll, Jen Knowles, Joni Korb, Chris and Joanna Kutschinski, Roy Lamprich, Marilyn Leese, Jane Legault, Judy Mallen, Jessica Marks and Patti Patton and their families, Roger Marks, Mark and Rebecca Mattison and family, Brian Mazurek and family, Marcia McClimans and family, Jill McKinney, Marilyn Mellema, Johnny Mielock, John and Karin Moglia and family, Christophe and Benita Muganza, Kenny Muganza, Michael Mulligan, Tim Neilson, Joan Perham and family, Valeriano Ramirez and family, Jacqueline Riegling, Mark and Gayle Rohde and family, Lynn Rose, Petra Rotzell and family, Thiago Saline, Marian Schaible, Chas Schaner, Chris Schomberg, Jim Searfoss, Joan Sellman, Neil and Sue Sendler and family, Matt and Kara Seyffert and family, Kris and Tom Shannon and family, Michael Smith, David and Mary Smoes and family, Courtney Steketee and family, Gary and Pat Stevens and family, Linda Taffs, Shirley Tedford, Jeremiah (JD) Thamban, Chris and Joanna Waite and family, John Walls, Fred Wilcox, Eric Wollen, Peyton Wollen, Rick and Michelle Wolner, Susan Youngren, and Kathryn Zielinski.

## First Sunday in Lent

February 21, 2021

*On Ash Wednesday the church began its journey toward baptismal immersion in the death and resurrection of Christ. 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. The baptismal covenant is made with us individually, but the new life we are given in baptism is for the sake of the whole world.*

### FIRST READING: Genesis 9:8-17

*Today's reading is the conclusion to the flood story. Because of human sin, God destroys the earth by flood, saving only Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Yet divine destruction gives way to divine commitment. As in the first creation, God blesses humanity and establishes a covenant with all creatures.*

<sup>8</sup>God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup>"As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>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." <sup>12</sup>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: <sup>13</sup>I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup>When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>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." <sup>17</sup>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."

### SECOND 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.

### 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.*

<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."



## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

In Jesus your realm has come near to us in every place and time. Give your church throughout the 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.**

We pray for Pastor Chrisy Bright and the people of Trinity Lutheran Church in Barton City, synod partners with us in mission and ministry. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We pray for a spirit of unity and harmony so that we may come to cherish our commonalities with people of other faiths, including our three "Standing Together" partner congregations here in Grand Rapids, Masjid At-Tawheed, Westminster Presbyterian Church and Temple Emanuel. 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. 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. 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, including those we name now in our hearts (*a brief silence*). 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, including our Stephen Ministry, Trinity in Touch callers and the new Trinity Neighbors initiative. 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.**



### Prayer for this time of pandemic and social upheaval

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

### A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit among the People of God

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### A Prayer for our Nation in a Time of Transition

Eternal God, amid all the turmoil and changes of the world your love is steadfast and your strength never fails. In this time of transition in our nation, be to us a sure guardian and rock of defense. Guide the leaders of our nation with your wisdom, comfort those in distress, and grant us courage and hope to face the future; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FEBRUARY 21, 2021  
FIRST SUNDAY  
IN LENT

# taking<sup>+</sup> faith home

*God's mercy conquers evil.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 1:9-15	Temptation of Jesus
Monday	Genesis 9:8-17	God's promise to Noah
Tuesday	1 Peter 3:18-22	Suffering for doing right
Wednesday	2 Samuel 24:10-17	Judgment on David's sin
Thursday	Titus 3:1-11	Maintain good deeds
Friday	Hebrews 4:14-16	Jesus is the great high priest
Saturday	Psalm 25:1-10	Prayer for guidance
Sunday	Mark 8:31-38	Jesus predicts his death

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Psalm 25:6 (NRSV)*

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, thank you for entering our lives and our world to confront all that is opposed to your reign of mercy through Christ, your Beloved Son. Amen.

### Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, with this gift of food, let us remember your steadfast love and mercy that gives us life that we may live with hope. Amen.

### A Blessing to Give:

May God lead you in truth and teach you the way of Christ our Lord. (Psalm 25:5)



FEBRUARY 21, 2021

## HYMN OF THE WEEK

*O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days*



## WEEKLY MILESTONES



Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

## CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How would you describe evil?
- Tell or think about a time you felt tested or tempted to do something wrong.
- Jesus was tested by Satan. How is Jesus' confronting Satan in the wilderness a story of hope?

## DEVOTIONS



*Read:* Mark 1:9-15.

This text is a fitting beginning for the season of Lent. At Jesus' baptism God intervenes by opening up the heavens and speaking of Jesus as God's Beloved Son. Jesus is thrown into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to confront Satan, the personification of all that opposes God's reign. Jesus endures, and he is cared for by the angels of God. Jesus then begins his own public ministry following the arrest of John the Baptist. John's experience is a precursor to Jesus' own betrayal and arrest to fulfill all that God intends to do through the Beloved Son. And, then, Jesus goes out to do the work of the kingdom, the reign of God that has not been stopped by Satan and will not be stopped, ever. The preaching is simple: repent and believe in the good news of God's reign. Repentance is not about remorse but about turning around and going in another direction, toward God and what God can and will do. This Lent, we are reminded to trust the work of God that will defeat everything opposed to God's rule of steadfast love and mercy. How will you repent and focus on the reign of God in your life and in the world?

*Pray:* Almighty and merciful God, help us to trust your reign present now and forevermore through Jesus, your Beloved Son and our Savior and Lord. Amen.

## SERVICE



The story of Noah and the flood is a difficult story to grasp. The point of the story is that God's demand for justice (the flood) is finally outdone by God's mercy (a new beginning for creation for those on the ark). Justice does not stand alone. It needs mercy, especially in our world where no human has the wisdom of God to judge. Do you know someone who needs a word of mercy? Write a note to that person and pray for them this week.

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Lent is a season filled with traditions that focus on discipline and discipleship. Choose a devotional space in your home. Consider laying out a purple cloth (the color for repentance and Lent) and place a candle and Bible on it. Read the *Daily Bible Readings*. Use the *Prayer for the Week* and add your own prayers. End the time by saying: **Remember that you are God's, and to God you shall return.**