

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

“Cross” Current
PAX Worship Service
March 19, 2023

AS WE GATHER

Some of the central people in the Gospel narratives we get to know by name; others we do not. Although the man born blind is a major person in John 9, we never learn what his name might be. We meet his parents and his neighbors and we meet the Pharisees to whom he tells the story of the miraculous restoration of his sight. Although we do not learn his name, Jesus said of the man born blind that the works of God were displayed in him. As the One brightening our lives with the light of salvation, Jesus brings a new vision to our lives—an eternal vision of life with God that never ends. God knows our names. He directs the cross currents of our daily lives. In His light we see light—and that is what matters!

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING SONG

“Who You Say I Am”

Verse: **Who am I that the highest King would welcome me.
I was lost, but He brought me in. Oh, His love for me.
Oh, His love for me.**

Chorus: **Who the Son sets free, oh, is free indeed.
I’m a child of God, yes I am.**

Verse: **Free at last, He has ransomed me. His grace runs deep.
While I was a slave to sin, Jesus died for me.
Yes, He died for me.**

Chorus: **Who the Son sets free, oh, is free indeed.
I’m a child of God, yes I am.
In my Father’s house is a place for me.
I’m a child of God, yes I am.**

Bridge: **I am chosen, not forsaken. I am who You say I am.
You are for me, not against me. I am who You say I am.**

**I am chosen, not forsaken. I am who You say I am.
You are for me, not against me. I am who You say I am.
I am who You say I am.**

**Chorus: Who the Son sets free, oh, is free indeed.
I'm a child of God, yes I am.
In my Father's house is a place for me.
I'm a child of God, yes I am.**

**In my Father's house is a place for me.
I'm a child of God, yes I am.**

INVOCATION

**Vicar: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**Vicar: Let us make confession of our sins to God, our gracious,
heavenly Father.**

People: Eternal God, we confess that we all have sinned and need forgiveness. By nature, we are sinful from the very beginnings of our lives. Through our thoughts, words, and deeds, we continually sin against You. We have lived for ourselves in many ways, breaking Your commands that direct us not to lie, steal, or transgress Your holy will. We have walked in the darkness of bad choices and have left unfulfilled opportunities to do good and be blessings to others. O God, in Your mercy forgive our sin and free us from selfishness and indifference, that we may joyfully follow Your will and gladly obey Your commandments. Graciously forgive our sins and direct us in ways of compassion and love.

Vicar: God promises to hear those who turn to Him with repentant hearts. Upon this your confession, in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and

may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in ☩ peace.

People: Amen.

SALUTATION

Vicar: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Vicar: Let us pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 42:14-21

¹⁴ For a long time I have held my peace; I have kept still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant. ¹⁵ I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn the rivers into islands,^[a] and dry up the pools. ¹⁶ And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them. ¹⁷ They are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, "You are our gods." ¹⁸ Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see! ¹⁹ Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one,^[b] or blind as the servant of the LORD? ²⁰ He sees many things, but does not

observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear. ²¹ The LORD was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern 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 speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³ But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴ for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

"GRACE"

I was lost when You found me here; You pulled me close and held me near. And I'm a fool, but still You love. I'll be a fool for the King of love.

You gave me wings so I could fly, and gave me a song to color the sky. And all I have is all from You, and all I want is all of You.

Chorus It's grace, Your grace; I'm nothing without You. Your grace, Your grace, shines on me.

**There've been days when I've walked away,
too much to carry, nothing left to say,
Forgive me, Lord, when I'm weak and lost,
for You traded heaven for a wooden cross.**

**And all these years You've carried me,
You've been my eyes when I could not see.**

**And beauty grows in the driving rain,
Your oil of gladness in the times of Pain.**

Chorus X2

Tag **Shines on me, shines on me, Your grace, it shines on me.
Shines on me, shines on me, It's Your grace.
Shines on me, shines on me, Your grace, it shines on me.
Shines on me, shines on me, it's Your grace.**

HOLY GOSPEL

John 9:1-41

Vicar: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the ninth chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

9 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. **2** And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" **3** Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed 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** Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud **7** and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. **8** The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" **9** Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." **10** So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" **11** He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." **12** They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." **13** They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. **14** Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. **15** So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." **16** Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. **17** So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." **18** The Jews^[a] 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 ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹ But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus^[b] to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.” ²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶ They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷ 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?” ²⁸ And they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰ The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴ They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out. ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”^[c] ³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” ³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt;^[d] but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

Vicar: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES CREED (found inside back cover of the hymnal)

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SONG OF THE DAY

“Whom Shall I Fear” (God of Angel Armies)

Verse: You hear me when I call, You are my morning song.
Though darkness fills the night, it cannot hide the light.
Whom shall I fear?

Verse: You crush the enemy underneath my feet.
You are my sword and shield, though troubles linger still.
Whom shall I fear?

Chorus: *I know who goes before me, I know who stands behind.
The God of angel armies is always by my side.
The One who reigns forever, He is a friend of mine.
The God of angel armies is always by my side.*

Verse: My strength is in Your name, for You alone can save.
You will deliver me, Yours is the victory.
Whom shall I fear? Whom shall I fear? (*Chorus*)

Bridge: And nothing formed against me shall stand,
You hold the whole world in Your hands.
I'm holding on to Your promises,
You are faithful, You are faithful, (repeat bridge)

You are faithful.

(Chorus X2)

The God of angel armies is always by my side.

SERMON

*“Jesus Helps Us See”
Rev. Gordon W. Bruce*

John 9:1-41

PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING SONG

“King Of Kings”

**In the darkness, we were waiting without hope, without light.
‘Til from heaven you came running, there was mercy in your eyes.
To fulfill the law and prophets to a virgin came the Word.
From a throne of endless glory, to a cradle in the dirt.**

**Praise the Father, praise the Son, praise the Spirit, three in one.
God of Glory, Majesty. Praise forever to the King of Kings.**

**To reveal the kingdom coming and to reconcile the lost,
To redeem the whole creation, you did not despise the cross
For even in your suffering, you saw to the other side.
Knowing this was our salvation, Jesus for our sake You died.**

**Praise the Father, praise the Sone, praise the Spirit, three in one.
God of Glory, Majesty. Praise forever to the King of Kings.**

**And the morning that You rose, all of heaven held it's breath
'Til that stone was moved for good, for the Lamb had conquered death.
And the dead rose from their tombs, and the angels stood in awe,
For the souls of all who'd come to the Father are restored.**

**And the church of Christ was born, then the Spirit lit the flame.
Now this gospel truth of old shall not kneel, shall not faint.
By His blood and in His name in His freedom I am free,
For the love of Jesus Christ who has resurrected me.**

**Praise the Father, praise the Son, praise the Spirit, three in one.
God of Glory, Majesty. Praise forever to the King of Kings.
Praise forever to the King of Kings.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Vicar: Petitions heard... *(ending with...)* Lord, in Your mercy,
People: hear our prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER *(found inside back cover of the hymnal)*

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The blessing of almighty God, the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy
Spirit be and remain with you always.
People: Amen.

CLOSING SONG

“Jesus Messiah”

Verse: He became sin who knew no sin.
 That we might become His righteousness.
 He humbled Himself and carried the cross.
 Love so amazing. Love so amazing.

Chorus: Jesus Messiah, name above all names. Blessed Redeemer,
 Immanuel. The rescue for sinners. The ransom from
 heaven. Jesus Messiah, Lord of all.

Verse: The body the bread, His blood the wine.
 Broken and poured out, all for love.
 The whole earth trembled and the veil was torn.
 Love so amazing, love so amazing, yeah.

Chorus: Jesus Messiah, name above all names.
 Blessed Redeemer, Immanuel.
 The rescue for sinners. The ransom from heaven.
 Jesus Messiah, Lord of all.

Bridge: All our hope is in You, all our hope is in You.
 All the glory to You, God, the light of the world.

Chorus: Jesus Messiah, name above all names.
 Blessed Redeemer, Immanuel.
 The rescue for sinners. The ransom from heaven.
 Jesus Messiah, Lord of all.
 Jesus Messiah, Lord of all. The Lord of all, the Lord of all.

SILENT PRAYER