

Welcome!

O Come, let us worship! (Ps. 95:6)

***Fourth Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 10, 2024***



St. James Lutheran Church

1213 U. S. Route 22

Phillipsburg, NJ 08865

Vice Pastor: Rev. Scott Schantzenbach

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Welcome to St. James!

We are so glad you are here! The people of God have been worshipping in this place since 1750. Much has changed since then, but God has not changed. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is our anchor in every storm, a light to our feet, our savior and our friend. Jesus rejoices that each of us has come to His house!

Introduction to the day

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.

If you are visiting today: Thank you for joining us today! If you have any questions, please ask! We ask that you sign our guest book or complete a hospitality card located in the pew racks. If you would like more information about us, please don't hesitate to contact the church office.

Presiding

Liturgist

Musicians

Seminarian Daniel Marrone

Dan Gulick

Dave Miller

Vice-Pastor Contact Information:

Pastor Scott Schantzenbach

908-892-8299

pastorschantzenbach@gmail.com

† WE GATHER †

We prepare our hearts and minds to receive God's grace through Word & Sacrament

PRAYER CONCERNS, GOD-SPOTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS **(please stand if able) **

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Beloved of God: your sins are forgiven † and you are made whole. God points the way to new life in Christ, who meets us on the road. Journey now in God's abiding love through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: WOV 734 - "Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling"

GREETING

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

And also, with you.

KYRIE



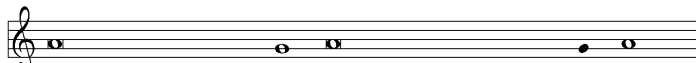
A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



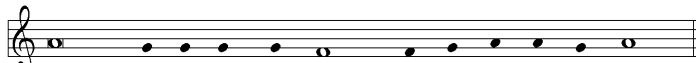
A For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.



G Lord, have mer - cy.



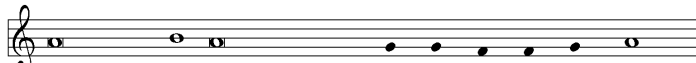
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



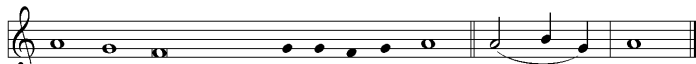
G Lord, have mer - cy.



A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **G** Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. **G** A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also, with you.

Let us pray.

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

† WORD †

God speaks to us through scripture, sermon and song.

**(The congregation may be seated.) **

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9

Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.

⁴From Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

You deliver your people from their distress. (Ps. 107:19)

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good,
for God's mercy endures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim
that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**

³gathering them in from the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

¹⁷**Some were fools and took rebellious paths;
through their sins they were afflicted.**

¹⁸They loathed all manner of food
and drew near to death's door.

¹⁹**Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD
and you delivered them from their distress. R**

²⁰You sent forth your word and healed them
and rescued them from the grave.

²¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love
and your wonderful works for all people.**

²²Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving
and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy. **R**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:1-10

While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God's grace at work in our lives.

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it

is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: **(please stand if able)**

God so loved the world that he gave his | only Son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish, but have e- | ternal life. (John 3:16)*

The Holy Gospel according to **John 3:14-21**

Glory to you, O Lord.

To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁴“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

**(The congregation may be seated.) **

SERMON

Silence for reflection may follow

HYMN OF PRAISE: WOV 737 – “There is a Balm in Gilead”

APOSTLES’ CREED **(please stand if able)**

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 into hell. 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.

THE PRAYERS

Trusting in God’s promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, your love unites. Give vision to the global church and foster cooperation in mission. Increase inter-religious understanding and ecumenical dialog. Make your church a sanctuary for all fleeing persecution, disaster, and war. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, your love enlivens. Restore balance to the earth's fragile habitats. Preserve wilderness lands, rainforests, and wildlife. Cleanse oceans and rivers. Make us good stewards of the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Righteous God, your love liberates. We give thanks for those who courageously witness to your liberating love (*especially Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth, renewers of society, whom we commemorate today*). Free all people from the evils of racism, religious strife, and hatred. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Merciful God, your love heals. Care tenderly for all whose loved ones perished from pandemic disease in every nation. Strengthen health care workers, first responders, and caregivers. Relieve all who live with chronic illness and pain. We pray for the Friends and Family of Pr. Brndjar, the Family and Friends of Marcia Kelly, the Stoudt Family, Andrew, Cawley, Harvey, Shirley J and Aric, Lindsey & family and our homebound; Beverly, Helen, Alayne & Elsie. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Incarnate God, your love enlightens. Open our hearts and minds to fresh understandings of our faith. Deepen our love for you and for one another. Teach us to pray for our enemies. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abiding God, your love saves. Those who died in the faith are made alive in Christ. We give thanks for your promise that we also will be raised to newness of life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

**(The congregation may be seated.) **

OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY PRAYER **(please stand if able) **

Let us pray.

Merciful Father,

we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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.

BLESSING

Pastor

God who names you,
Christ who claims you,
and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you,
✠ bless you and remain with you always.

Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

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

SENDING HYMN: LBW 448 - “Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are God’s beloved.

Thanks be to God.

Altar Flowers: There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex.

No Flowers during Lent 2/14-3/31

Communion: Please fill out the communion cards so record of who takes communion can be kept.

EVENTS

Church Council: Tuesday, March 19@ 7:00pm at the church.

Property: Tuesday, March 12@ 10:00am at the church.

Social Ministry: Wednesday, March 13@ 10am at the church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Social Ministry will be taking donations for Links of Love until Palm Sunday, March 24. They are \$1 for one or \$5 for 6.
- Social Ministry is collecting donations for Veteran's Haven North. Please see UPDATED wish list below:

Cleaning Supplies

- **Clorox wipes**

We have exciting news!

Based on your feedback, we have started an Amazon Wishlist! Follow the below link for ease of access to desired items. Please include your name and address on any purchases so we know who sent us the item, can express our gratitude and confirm receipt. Thank you!

<https://a.co/8cEyvVe>

We are so very, very grateful for the recent outpouring of support! Due to inventory and space, at this time we are not able to accept donations of items not on this list. Thank you again for your generosity and your understanding. Our Wish List is a living document; we will update it again as your donations are distributed and our needs change.

Personal Use Items

- Men's Wallets
- Watches
- Gift Cards (ShopRite, Walmart, Dunkin Donuts, Uber/Lyft, Visa, etc.)
- Water Bottles with Spout Lid
- Black Work Boots (Non-slip, Oil-resistant, Mens/Womens, All Sizes)
- Winter boots, (Mens/Womens, All Sizes)
- Black Work Pants (Mens/Womens, All Sizes)
- Comforters Sets (XL-Twin sheet set included)
- Pillows
- Towels
- Small Garbage Cans
- Coffee (Regular Only)
- Coffee Makers
- Small Desk Lamps
- Alarm Clocks
- Musical Instruments & Accessories (Acoustic and Electric Guitars, Strings, Guitar Stands, Amplifiers, Cables)