

Prelude

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduction

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.

Gathering Hymn: ELW #319 – *“O Lord throughout These Forty Days”*

Greeting - *Page 138*

Kyrie – *Page 138*

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

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.

First Reading: Genesis 9:8-17

⁸God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and 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. ¹¹I 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.” ¹²God 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: ¹³I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I 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. ¹⁶When 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.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 25:1-10

¹To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴**Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.**

⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶**Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.**

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your
goodness, O LORD.

⁸**You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

¹⁰All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

¹⁸Christ 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, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who 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. ²¹And 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, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – *Page 142*

GOSPEL: Mark 1:9-15

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer. Amen

Immediately after Jesus was baptized, the Spirit drove Him out into the wilderness for 40 days, where He was tempted by Satan.

There are about 200 references to the wilderness or the desert in the Bible. The most common reference is to the people of Israel spending 40 years wandering in the wilderness in between leaving Egypt and entering the Promised Land.

There the wilderness is described as a harsh place. There is no reliable source of food or water. God provided manna each day for the people to eat. He led them to pools or springs of water, and on at least 2 occasions, told Moses to strike a rock and water would flow from the rock.

Another reference is Exodus 3. Moses was tending the sheep and goats of his father-in-law. He crossed the desert to get to Horeb, God's mountain. There he saw the burning bush and heard God speak to him out of the bush, calling him to lead God's people out of Egypt.

A third reference is 1 Samuel 23. David lived out in the wilderness for several years to stay away from King Saul, who was jealous of David's success and popularity. Saul wanted to kill David.

A fourth reference is 1 Kings 19. You know the story of Elijah and the 400 prophets of Baal. They had a contest to see which god was supreme. The prophets of Baal prepared a sacrifice to Baal, and then called on Baal to light the fire; nothing happened.

Then Elijah prepared a sacrifice to God, then had it flooded with water. Then he called on God to light the sacrifice. God not only burnt the sacrifice, but also all the water that had collected around it!

Elijah then ordered the people to put all 400 prophets of Baal to death. King Ahab's wife, Jezebel worshiped Baal. She responded to all of this by saying that she would have Elijah put to death within 24 hours.

Elijah feared for his life and ran out into the desert. He traveled for 24 hours straight, then collapsed under a juniper tree.

An angel came to him and provided food and water. The angel told him to eat and drink, then travel to Mt. Horeb, God's mountain. Elijah did, and God spoke to him on Mt. Horeb. God did not speak out of the wind, the earthquake or the fire, but out of the silence, as a gentle whisper.

There are 2 references to the wilderness in the New Testament. One is today's Gospel: Jesus being tempted there. The other is that of John the Baptist preaching there.

To summarize all of these references: the wilderness is a harsh, unforgiving place. There is no reliable source of food or water. If you do not know how to survive in the wilderness, you could easily die there.

At the same time, the wilderness can be a place of refuge. Because it is harsh and unpopulated, it can be a place to hide, or it can be a place to be alone with God. In a few of the references above, individuals were aware of God's presence, and were able to hear him speak in the quiet of the wilderness.

The wilderness reminds us of how dependent we are on God to provide what we need to survive.

In our society, where material goods are readily available, it is easy to forget how dependent we are upon God.

The season of Lent is a kind of wilderness. We talk about fasting, spending more time in prayer, focusing on our sin and our need for forgiveness, and on Jesus' sacrifice to pay the price of our sin.

One thing I didn't mention in my references to the wilderness is fasting. In our Gospel, Jesus fasted during His 40 days in the wilderness. Elijah fasted for 40 days as he traveled across the desert to Mt. Sinai, where God spoke to him. John the Baptist's food was locusts and wild honey. That is a kind of fast.

We have several kinds of fasts during Lent. In our Worship we have a visual fast. We do not have flowers anywhere, so there is less colour. We also have a musical fast. We do not sing Alleluia; many of our hymns are more sombre, some people call them funeral dirges!

We avoid celebrations, such as weddings and baptisms during Lent. That is another kind of fast.

And we have the real meaning of fasting, avoiding food. That can include avoiding a particular food, such as chocolate, or desserts for the whole season of Lent. Or we can fast one day each week, have only water for the whole day, or skip a meal one day a week for the whole season of Lent.

On Easter Sunday, we end all of those, and we feast. We have an abundance of flowers; our church is filled with the smell and sight of Easter lilies; we have songs filled with Alleluias! The music is joyous and uplifting. And no one I know fasts on that day! Families get together to celebrate the day.

This season of Covid-19 has been a kind of wilderness. We have been forced into a kind of fast that we didn't choose: social isolation. The periods of lockdown have increased our isolation. Rose and I miss being able to regularly visit our children and grandchildren. They are 8 and under, and don't really understand why we can't visit more often, and why we can't hug them.

During this season of Lent, and of Covid, I encourage you to give some thought to finding a wilderness place, a place of refuge, a place that is isolated and quiet, a place where you realize that you are totally dependent on God.

Those of you who are seniors like I am, may not have much difficulty finding a quiet place. However, if you are like our 2 children, and have 3 or 4 young children, who have been home for a good part of the last year, while one or both parents are trying to work from home some, or all of that time, finding a quiet spot can be a challenge.

Look for a time and place that is free of distractions, where you can focus your attention on God, in prayer, in reading His Word, and simply sitting quietly in His presence, open to hearing anything He may want to say to you.

I will highlight Elijah's time on Mount Horeb. God did not speak out of the wind or the earthquake; He spoke out of the stillness, with a gentle whisper. It is extremely difficult to hear God speak to us in the midst of our busyness, or in the midst of distractions like TV, smartphones, computers and all our other devices (or voices and thoughts) demanding our attention. God's gentle whisper is easily drowned out.

It may also be that we don't have to go looking for a wilderness place. In the midst of Covid-19, we may already be in a wilderness, an unpleasant experience.

The wilderness that the people of Israel experienced was not a quiet refuge away from worldly distractions, where they could simply sit and focus on God. It was, for the most part, unpleasant and at times frightening. They were afraid of dying of thirst or hunger. Many people, especially seniors, or those with underlying health issues, are staying in their homes out of fear of catching the virus.

We all have times when life is unpleasant, not going at all the way we want it to. That is our wilderness experience. For the people of Israel it was partly discipline, and partly preparation for their new life in the Promised Land.

Moses sent 12 men to check out the Promised Land. They returned to report that the cities were well fortified, and the people were much taller than they were. Ten of the spies did not believe that God would lead them to defeat these peoples; instead, they thought these would defeat them.

God knew that the only way His people could survive in the Promised Land was by trusting Him. The 40 years in the wilderness was not about punishing the people for their lack of faith; rather, it was about teaching them to depend on God for everything, so that they could enter the Promised Land, and live there without fear.

At the end of the 40 years, they were prepared to enter the Promised Land.

Our unpleasant times / wilderness times, can be opportunities for us to become prepared; times when we learn to trust more fully in God; times to allow God to show us what He can do, and as He does that, our faith in Him and our love for Him grows. Then we will be prepared for whatever God has planned for us.

If this season of Covid is unpleasant, or a time of fear, I encourage you to take time to sit quietly with God. Tell him how you feel. As him and trust him to lead you through this difficult season. Spend some time each day reading your Bible and listening for God to speak to you through the words and passages that you read. Seek the peace and comfort that only he can give.

In summary, our wilderness experiences are opportunities for God to lead us closer to Him, to trust Him more deeply, to depend on Him to provide for us and guide us, and to prepare us for what He wants us to do in us and through us in the future. Amen

Hymn of the Day: ELW #517 - *“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”*

Apostles’ Creed – Page 105

Prayers of Intercession

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

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.

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; especially, Florence, Jason, Harold, Richard, Robert, Dorian, Sharon. 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 (*especially*). 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.

COMMUNION

Music As Table Is Prepared

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING – *Page 144*

“Lamb of God”

COMMUNION HYMN: ELW #777 – *“Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty”*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN: ELW #321 – *“Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church”*

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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News and Announcements:

Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Harold Hampel, Richard Hubert, Robert Schoof, Dorian Verch, Sharon Watt.

SERVICE BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday mornings a week later.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

1. With the restriction of the Covid pandemic we have begun using Zoom as a communication tool. I have purchased an account that can be accessed by other committees in the congregation. Please contact Jean for the account name and password. If you would like help with how to use Zoom please let me know. Susan Dupuis

2. We want to say a special "Thank you" to everyone who has given a special offering to our Stained Glass Window account. We now have enough money to complete this project. We are in the early stages of making plans to upgrade the entrance to the building from the parking lot. This area has deteriorated over the years and needs attention. If you would like to make a special donation we would suggest that you consider the building account. Susan Dupuis

3. Please remember that Pastor Leena is available to all for pastoral care during the next few months. This support may look different than we are accustomed to as she will be following all of the covid restrictions. She can be contacted at 613-631-1082

4. Zion's Annual Meeting: I am planning to hold the annual meeting on February 28 with March 7 as the alternate date if the February 28 date is cancelled. We will be holding a short worship service at 10:00 and will follow with the meeting at 10:30. The meeting will be a maximum of 1 hour long. I realize that attending in-person may not be possible for many members. We do not have the ability to do an electronic meeting at this time. We will be sending the annual report by e-mail to anyone that we have an address for. If you would like to pick up a print copy of the report,

please call Jean to make the arrangement for pick up. If you will not be able to attend and have any questions regarding the report please give me, Susan Dupuis 343-369-2057 or Gerry Vandersleen 613-732-7649 a call

HELP FOR ONE OF ZION'S FAMILIES

It is with a caring and prayerful heart that the Social Ministry Committee is appealing to Zion's church family and friends to assist one of our young families.

Jason and Karen Godin, with their children Haley and Lucas are active members here at Zion. Jason is the son-in-law of Cheryl Sack and brother-in-law of Blaine Sack. Jason works as a Commissionaire Barrack Warden at Garrison Petawawa as well as a volunteer firefighter for Petawawa.

Jason recently received a Giobastoma brain cancer diagnosis - the same type of cancer that GordDownie battled. Jason will be needing radiation and chemotherapy treatment for this aggressive, incurable type of cancer.

With the long road ahead; they could use some assistance as Jason's work benefits will not be enough to cover the many expenses that will be incurred in the foreseeable future. Therefore, we are asking for your help to soften the financial stress. Let us show them our love and support.

You can help with your contribution of cash, cheque or e- transfer.

- Make the cheque payable to Zion Lutheran Church, noting 'Karen and Jason Godin' on the envelope or the memo line. You can drop off the cheque at the church office or mail it to:

Zion Lutheran Church,
454 Miller Street,
Pembroke, ON K8A 5Z4.

****Please note that we will not be able to issue donation receipts for this appeal due to what the CRA refers to as "private benevolence". The CRA does not permit a charitable donation receipt under these circumstances.**

- Use your online banking to send an e-transfer to: "zionoffice@nrtco.net". Passwords are not required as auto deposit is set up. Please indicate that it is for Karen and Jason in the message box.

We pray for God's healing touch.

Thank You and blessings to each of you for your generosity!

COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR - ABOUT THE EVENT

It's cold out there. The Coldest Night of the Year is a covid-safe, family-friendly walk to raise money for charities serving people experiencing homelessness, hurt, and hunger. Walk virtually or in-person on February 20, 2021 – there's a place for everyone!

About Our Cause

The Coldest Night of the Year is a moment when tens of thousands of Canadians step outside the warmth and comfort of home and shine a light of welcome and inclusion.

Together, we're collecting donations that fund critical services at a local charity partner who serves and supports vulnerable families and individuals in our CNOY community.

- **We walk** through the cold and dark on **February 20, 2021** to declare our concern for people who have no home, and take shelter in nooks and crannies.
- **We walk** for those whose days are a battle to house and feed their families, and whose nights are filled with fear and frustration.
- **We walk** for those driven from home by violence and abuse. And we walk for people overwhelmed by isolation, guilt and despair
- **We walk** humbly, realizing that anyone can lose their footing and then lose everything else.

Each step we take brings someone closer to safety, health and home, as together, we raise funds for organizations whose commitment and work transforms peoples' lives.

Please support the vulnerable in our community by donating to Coldest Night of the Year. You can do that by:

1. Writing a cheque to Zion Lutheran Church and/or cash and mark the envelope or memo Coldest Night of the Year and bring or mail to the church then Zion will submit one cheque, for all who donate this way.
2. Go to the Coldest Night of the Year website and look for Team Zion with Team Captain Ellen and donate to the team. You can pick a team member to sponsor if you wish. You will need your credit card for that. If you wish to join the team, awesome, there is room for everyone.

Please help anyway that you can. This is the last week for donations.
Call Ellen @ 613 732 7649 if you have any questions
Your Social Ministry Committee

Today's Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church's Production Crew:

Presider: Pastor Jim Goos
Musician: Blaine Sack
Worship Assistant/Reader: Debbie Wegner
Projectionist: Krista Grosskleg
Recorder: Ty Phannenhour
Sound Board Operator: Todd Phannenhour
Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

Today's Worship Volunteers

Counters: Kathy Godin, Kathy Hoffman, Christine Booth
Sexton: Koit Rull
Ushers: Cheryl Sack, Pam Duplessis

This Week at Zion – February 22 – 28

Tuesday	7p.m.	Narcotics Anonymous
Wednesday	7pm	Lenten Service
Sunday	10am	Lent 2 Worship Service with Holy Communion
	10:30 a.m.	Annual Meeting