

Second Sunday in lent

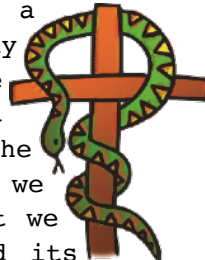
March 8, 2020

• 8:00 & 10:30 a.m. •
Church • El Paso, Texas

Ascension Lutheran

As We Gather

Today we hear the wonderfully familiar “Gospel in a nutshell” from John 3. The first words of the passage say it well: “God so loved.” God is loving even when we are less than lovable. That which is born of flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God, only that which is born of the Spirit, born from above and born anew. With Nicodemus we marvel at Jesus’ words. It is hard for us to admit that we cannot save ourselves but must be redeemed from sin and its death. Even more difficult is to see in the baptismal water that awesome power of the Spirit connecting us to Christ’s death and resurrection—giving us this new birth. “How can this be?” Nicodemus marvels at Jesus’ words and promise, and so are we in awe of God’s gracious favor: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). In the season of Lent, we see God’s love at work so clearly in the cross of Jesus.



✠ We Gather in God’s Name ✠

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Opening Sentences

- P** The LORD is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation.
C Glad songs of salvation are heard in the tents of the righteous:
P “The right hand of the LORD has done a mighty deed!
C The right hand of the LORD is lifted high!
A *The right hand of the LORD has done a mighty deed!”*
P I will not die. No, I will live,
C and I will proclaim the works of the LORD.

P Open for me the gates of righteousness.

C I will enter them. I will give thanks to the Lord. (Psalm 118:14-17, 19).

P Let us do so in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Hymn

LSB 912 | "Christ Is Our Cornerstone"



1 Christ is our cor - ner - stone, On Him a - lone we build;
2 Here may we gain from heav'n The grace which we im - plore,
3 Oh, then, with hymns of praise These hal - lowed courts shall ring;



With His true saints a - lone The courts of heav'n are filled. On His
And may that grace, once giv'n, Be with us ev - er - more Un - til
Our voic - es we will raise The Three in One to sing And thus



great love Our hopes we place Of pres - ent grace And joys a - bove.
that day When all the blest To end - less rest Are called a - way.
pro - claim In joy - ful song, Both loud and long, That glo - rious name.

Please stand.

Confession and Forgiveness

P Today, while we hear the great promises of God first given to Abram of old, we recall the promises we have made to others—to spouse, to children, to friends, and co-workers—and to God, especially those promises we have broken that have proved our unfaithfulness. Apart from God's mercy and grace our sin cripples even our best intentions and we fail in our love of God and of neighbor. Therefore let us confess our sin and flee for refuge to the only God who promises forgiveness and new life in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord.

C Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and give us new life according to Your own Word and promise. Amen.

P "Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin" (Romans 4:8). Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the

grace of God unto all of you, and 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.

C Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

Please be seated.

Hymn of Commitment

LSB 437 | "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed"



1 A - las! And did my Sav - ior bleed, And
2 Was it for crimes that I had done He
3 Well might the sun in dark - ness hide And
5 But drops of grief can ne'er re - pay The



did my sov - 'reign die? Would He de - vote that
groaned up - on the tree? A - maz - ing pit - y,
shut his glo - ries in When God, the might - y
debt of love I owe; Here, Lord, I give my -



sa - cred head For such a worm as I?
grace un - known, And love be - yond de - gree!
mak - er, died For His own crea - tures' sin.
self a - way: 'Tis all that I can do.

Prayer of the Day

P Faithful Lord, You promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation and through him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Receive our thanks for the promise kept in the gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, whose death and resurrection have paid the price of sin and reconciled us to You. Lead us to follow Abraham's example of faith, trusting in Your Word and promise all the days of our lives. We pray in Your holy name, whom with the Father and the Spirit, You are one God and one Lord, now and forever.

C Amen.

✠ We Listen to God's Word ✠

Old Testament Reading

Genesis 12:1-9

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

¹Now the LORD said to Abram, "Get out of your country and away from your relatives and from your father's house and go to the land that I will show you. ²I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. You will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse anyone who dishonors you. All of the families of the earth will be blessed in you." ⁴So Abram went, as the LORD had told him. Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵Abram took Sarai his wife, Lot his brother's son, and all the possessions they had accumulated and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to travel to the land of Canaan. Eventually they arrived in the land of Canaan. ⁶Abram passed through the land until he came to the Oak of Moreh at the place called Shechem. The Canaanites were in the land at that time. ⁷The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." Abram built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸He moved on from there to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent there, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁹Abram pulled out from there and kept traveling toward the Negev.

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

Epistle Reading

Romans 4:1-8, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jewish and Gentile believers, because we too trust that our God is One who gives life to the dead.

¹What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered according to the flesh? ²If indeed Abraham had been justified by works, he would have had a reason to boast—but not before God. ³For what does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as

righteousness.” ⁴Now to a person who works, his pay is not counted as a gift but as something owed. ⁵But to the person who does not work but believes in the God who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness. ⁶This is exactly what David says about the blessed state of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven and whose sins are covered. ⁸Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him. ¹³Indeed, the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not given to Abraham or his descendants through the law, but through the righteousness that is by faith. ¹⁴To be sure, if people are heirs by the law, faith is empty and the promise is nullified. ¹⁵For law brings wrath. (Where there is no law, there is no transgression.) ¹⁶For this reason, the promise is by faith, so that it may be according to grace and may be guaranteed to all of Abraham’s descendants—not only to the one who is a descendant by law, but also to the one who has the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.” In the presence of God, Abraham believed him who makes the dead alive and calls non-existing things so that they exist.

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

Please stand in honor of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lenten Verse

C Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for He is gra-cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a-bound-ing in
stead-fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

Holy Gospel

John 3:1-17

C Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third chapter.

C

A curious Pharisee named Nicodemus visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

¹There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher Who has come from God, for no one can do these miraculous signs You are doing unless God is with him." ³ Jesus replied, "Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God! ⁶ Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh. Whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be surprised when I tell you that you must be born from above. ⁸ The wind blows where it pleases. You hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹ "How can these things be?" asked Nicodemus. ¹⁰ "You are the teacher of Israel," Jesus answered, "and you do not know these things? ¹¹ Amen, Amen, I tell you: We speak what we know, and we testify about what we have seen. But you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven, except the One Who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, Who is in heaven. ¹⁴ "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C



C Praise to You, O Christ.

Please be seated.

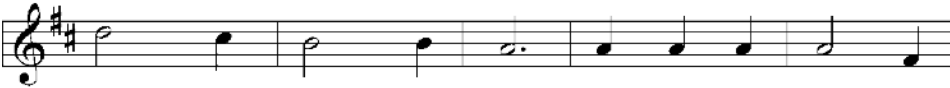
Children's Message

Hymn of the Day

LSB 571 | "God Loved the World So That He Gave"



1 God loved the world so that He gave His on - ly
2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, Who was made
3 God would not have the sin - ner die; His Son with
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son For - gives all



Son the lost to save, That all who would in
flesh and suf - fered death; All then who trust in
sav - ing grace is nigh; His Spir - it in the
sins which you have done; And, jus - ti - fied by



Him be - lieve Should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Him a - lone Are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
Word de - clares How we in Christ are heav - en's heirs.
Je - sus' blood, Your Bap - tism grants the high - est good.

Message

Hymn of Response

LSB 571 | "God Loved the World So That He Gave"

Please stand on stanza 6.

5. If you are sick, if death is near,
This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death;
That is the firmest ground of faith.

△ 6. Glory to God the Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To You, O blessèd Trinity,
Be praise now and eternally!

Please stand.

✠ We Respond to God's Love ✠

Profession of Faith

Apostles' Creed

A *I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.*

And in Jesus Christ, His 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. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.

Please be seated.

Offering

A SPECIAL NOTE: The mission and ministries of Ascension are supported by the love, generosity and sacrificial giving of our members and friends. If you are a GUEST today, please do not feel obligated to make a contribution, but know that any financial gift which you make will be used to help share Christ's love and salvation. Our offerings are an important part of our worship. Also, take a moment to fill out a blue Friendship Card and place it in the offering plate. Thank you!

Choir Anthem | 10:30

"God So Loved the World" | John Stainer

Prayer of the Church

P Lord God, along with Abraham, let us hear and follow Your call to faith. Guide us and protect us by Your Spirit. Count such God-given faith as righteousness, as Abraham was once commended to You. God of our salvation,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, having received the new birth of water and the Spirit, let us daily manifest this new life and show forth the fruits of this new birth in word and in deed. Let the forces of evil be hindered that the Gospel may be preached in every place and to every people, so that they too may become with us sons and daughters of Abraham by faith. God of our salvation,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, according to Your gracious will, relieve the suffering and heal the sick (especially . . .). Safeguard us from the coronavirus, influenza, colds, and all other infectious diseases. Grant peace to the dying and comfort to the grieving (especially . . .). Bless them with the hope of the resurrection. God of our salvation,

C hear our prayer.

P Lord God, for the sake of peace among nations, grant our government and those who lead us to be equipped with wisdom and courage. May they do what is pleasing in Your sight. Watch over and protect the unborn and the frail against all threats and abuse. God of our salvation,

C hear our prayer.

P (Other petitions may be offered.) Receive our prayers and grant us Your mercy, Lord God, in the name of the crucified and risen One, Jesus Christ our Savior, who has taught us how to pray:

A *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.*

Please stand.

✠ We Depart with God's Blessing ✠

Benediction

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you, now and forever.

C Amen.

Closing Hymn

LSB 782 | "Gracious God, You Send Great Blessings"

1 Gra - cious God, You send great bless - ings
 3 In His earth - ly life, our Sav - ior
 4 Heav'n - ly Fa - ther, may our car - ing

New each morn - ing all our days. For Your mer - cies
 Knew the care of faith - ful friends; May our deeds of
 Bear the im - print of Your grace; With the Son and

nev - er end - ing, For Your love we of - fer praise.
 ded - i - ca - tion Of - fer love that nev - er ends.
 Ho - ly Spir - it, Praise be Yours in ev - 'ry place!

Refrain

Lord, we pray that we, Your peo - ple Who Your gifts un - num - bered claim,
 Through the shar - ing of Your bless - ings May bring glo - ry to Your name.

Sending

- P** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord through your neighbor!
- C** Thanks be to God!

Postlude

✠ WE EXIT TO WITNESS ✠

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This Week at
 Ascension



March 8

Flowers for Sunday

Flowers on the altar are given by Laila Schmidt in memory of her husband B.L. Schmidt.

Serve at Ysleta Lutheran Mission

Please join the youth of Ascension at Ysleta Lutheran Mission on Saturday, March 21 from 7:30 to 10:30 am to distribute food from the food pantry. There is a sign-up sheet on the A-frame bulletin board. If you have questions you can call Rachel Witty (915) 227-7646.

Attention Thrivent Members!

March 31 is the deadline to designate your 2019 Thrivent Choice! You can do so online at thrivent.com or over the phone 1-800-847-4836 and say "thrivent choice"—this will bring you to a live person. Ascension Lutheran along with many other great ministries and other charitable organizations are in the catalog. If you have any questions or want more information about Thrivent Financial, please contact local representative Susan Hernandez at 565-1010 or via email susan.hernandez@thrivent.com.

Easter Book Sale Starting March 22
The Board of Christian Education will hold their annual Easter Book Sale on Sun, March 22, and Sun, March 29, in the Narthex. Books for all ages will be available for purchase. The Board was able to purchase the books without a shipping and handling charge and they are passing those savings onto the congregation.

Books may be purchased with cash or by check drawn payable to "Ascension Lutheran Church" placing "Book Sale" on the memo line. Please stop by to take a look at these great books. We hope you will find a book for those special people in your life and one for yourself, too!

Stewardship Corner

"Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith," (Hebrews 12:2) has already won the victory over sin for us. It still remains to us, however, to continue to fight for the faith, refusing to let sin reign in our bodies. The Apostle Paul tells us to *"count [ourselves] dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."* By God's grace, sin no longer is our master. We are new creatures who *"offer the parts of [our bodies] to Him as instruments of righteousness . . . because [we] are not under law, but under grace"* (Romans 6:11-14).

Prayer Ministry

If you have a prayer request for the prayer chain, please call Olga Sullivan at 581-1450 or e-mail Jan Schlak at oveja6925@aol.com.

Please call the church office @ 833-1009 to include a prayer request for the bulletin.

Missions: Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute and Uprising.

In Our Hearts & Prayers




SUNDAY

Adult Bible Class

Pastor Bestian will continue the study on the Book of Acts during Family Bible Hour at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All members & friends of Ascension are encouraged to attend.

Youth Ministry

God is described as all-knowing, all-present, all-powerful, and never changing. If Jesus really is God, why did He say there were things only God knew? Why was He unable to perform miracles in Nazareth? Why was He unable to be in two places at once? All youth are encouraged to come downstairs to the Youth Room at 9:15 a.m.

Children's Sunday School

This week in Sunday School we studied, "The Triumphal Entry." Jesus' victorious entry into Jerusalem begins the week, which ends with His crucifixion and death. As a family, talk about, "How did the people welcome Jesus to Jerusalem? How can we praise and honor God today?"

Interim Sunday School Head Coordinator:

Kim Bestian

Preschool – Kindergarten: Nethia Kelly

Grades 1-3: Debbie Epperson

Grades 4-6: Cheryl Canada

Children's Sunday School meets in the

18 | Second Sunday in Lent

8:00 am Worship
9:00 am Fellowship
9:15 am Family Bible Hour
10:30 am Worship

MONDAY | 9

Church Office Closed

TUESDAY | 10

10:00 Woman-to-Woman Bible Study
6:30 am Women's Bible Study
6:45 pm Boy Scouts

WEDNESDAY | 11

10:00 am Weight Watchers
11:15 am Sit & Sew
12:15 pm **Board of Preschool**
6:00 pm **Lenten Meal**

Immediate Concerns: **Ron Spott, Pastor Neil Vanderbush, Dan Chambers, Tom Wade** (prostate cancer), **Susan Weber** (carpal tunnel surgery), **Arelis Baez** (friend of Ryden Richardson—cataract surgeries), **Ray Southard** (brain surgery), **Paul Antrim** (Multiple Myeloma with kidney issues & a cracked vertebrae—now in ICU), **Donald Levenhagen** (Linda Canada's brother—hospitalized), **Bruce Walker** (Daren Walker's father), **Dafney Alvarez** (friend of Luz

Soto—complications from kidney transplant), **Tim Weyer** (recovery from heart bypass surgery), **Marilyn Johnson** (recovery from heart surgery—Ordella Uhde’s sister-in-law), **Rhea Tarin** (recovery from surgery), **Judi Eifert** (recovery from surgery—Barb Spott’s sister), **John Switzer** (cancer), **Scarlett Orwig** (leukemia—teammate of Madison Schwitters), **Jesus Gomez** (Alicia Gomez’s father), **Pastor Daniel Salinas** (heart attack), **Sue Anderson**, **Martha Neal**, **Judie Pinal** (successful cancer treatments), **Rosie Aguirre** (friend of John Witty—cancer treatment), **Aaron Levenhagen** (Linda Canada’s nephew—correct diagnosis), **Mona Chandler** (Alzheimer’s—Harry Clark’s sister), **Cindy McGuire** (motorcycle accident), **Jerad Knight**, **Olga Sullivan** (Parkinson’s), **Judy Freubenburg** (Ordella Uhde’s sister-in-law), **James Goldsmith**, **June McClanahan** (Pastor’s aunt—pancreatic cancer), **Brent Behrens** (continued healing after stroke), **Natalie Knight**, **Tony Evans** (ALS diagnosis), **Erin Naylor Leach** (friend of Hite family—successful rehab), **Herb Harper** (effective treatment), **Lorie Nadelborg** (inoperable brain tumor).

Ongoing Prayers: Bob Gallagher, Annabelle Leupp, Todd Maki, Jerry Aguilera, Helen Allen, Rick Barber, Eric Bell, Juan Chacon, Peter Chisholm, Ron Cleavenger, Micah Cohen, Josephine DeMartelaere, Julie DeRusha, Humberto Garcia, Angelika Grossnick, Tina Guerrero, Wayne Kendrick, William Peevey, Lenae Rasmussen, Cheryl Rassette, Eloisa Regalado, Gideon Rhodes, Alicia Rich, Paul Robinson, Julio Rodriguez, Gabriella Rubio, Garry Simmons, Bill Strickland, Louise Strickland, Anthony Sullivan, Tony Sullivan, Fred Svarney, Jim Swegarden, Greg Vaughan, Grace Wells, Jim Werner, Marge Jordan

Deployed Troops: Sean Mattes. Please pray for all deployed troops and their families as they serve our country around the world.