

Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 22, 2020



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LOOK WITH THE LIGHT

AS WE GATHER

It's said that darkness is nothing more than the absence of light. Darkness and blindness are words often used throughout Scripture to describe our sinfulness—the absence of the true Light. In our continued Lenten journey, we prepare our hearts for the dark afternoon of Good Friday at the cross. Yet even in that darkness, Jesus Christ brings the light of life. In our times of spiritual blindness and comfort in the darkness of this world, we gather again today to see His light through our vision of Spirit-given faith, that our eyes may look to Him who is the light of the world—the light no darkness can overcome.

MEMORY VERSE OF THE MONTH

And God spoke these words, saying, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.” *Exodus 20:1-3*

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Isaiah 42:5–7

- P** Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
- C** **who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it:**
- P** “I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,
- C** **to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Joel 2:13; Isaiah 42:16

- P** In the darkness of the world around us and amid our own blindness to His will and ways, God calls us to confess our sins.
- C** **Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

Silence for reflection and self-examination

- P** God of God, Light of light,
- C** **we confess that by nature we are sinful and unclean, born in darkness. We are often blind to Your Word and Your work in our lives, sinning against You and against one another in thought, word, and deed. For the sake of Jesus, who is the light of the world, forgive me all my sins, that my eyes may be opened and my heart enlightened to look to You in faith and hope.**
- P** “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.”
- P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. Through His death on the cross, Jesus Christ has shined His eternal light of forgiveness, peace, and life on you. In the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ as a called and ordained servant of the Word, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P 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.

C Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 42:14–21

¹⁴For 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. ¹⁵I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn the rivers into islands, and dry up the pools. ¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷They are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, “You are our gods.” ¹⁸Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see! ¹⁹Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of the LORD? ²⁰He sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear. ²¹The LORD was pleased, for his righteousness’ sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

Ephesians 5:8–14

⁸For 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), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹As [Jesus] passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ²And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud ⁷and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵So 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.” ¹⁶Some 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. ¹⁷So 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.” ³⁴They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out. ³⁵Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G Praise to You, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

810 O GOD OF GOD, O LIGHT OF LIGHT

- 1 O God of God, O Light of Light,
O Prince of Peace and King of kings:
To you in heaven’s glory bright
The song of praise forever rings.
To Him who sits upon the throne,
The Lamb once slain but raised again,
Be all the glory He has won,
All thanks and praise! Amen, amen.
- 3 That life of truth, those deeds of love,
That death so steeped in hate and scorn—
These all are past, and now above
He reigns, our King once crowned with thorn.
Lift up your heads, O mighty gates!
So sang that host beyond our ken.
Lift up your heads, your King awaits.
We lift them up. Amen, amen.
- 4 Then raise to Christ a mighty song,
And shout His name, His mercies tell!
Sing, heav’nly host, your praise prolong,
And all on earth, your anthem swell!
All hail, O Lamb for sinners slain!
Forever let the song ascend!
Worthy the Lamb, enthroned to reign,
All glory, pow’r! Amen, amen.

SERMON “Look What God Can Do!” John 9:1-7,13-17,34-39

CREED Apostles’ Creed

MUSICAL OFFERING “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus” Vonna Goddard

- 1 O soul, are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There’s light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free! **Refrain**

- 2 Through death into life everlasting
He passed, and we follow Him there;
O'er us sin no more hath dominion—
For more than conqu'rors we are!

**Ref Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.**

- 3 His Word shall not fail you—He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell! **Refrain**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

After each petition, please respond with the following:

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

At the end of the prayer:

C Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

POSTLUDE

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