

# FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 22, 2020 - 10:00 AM

## Living Springs Lutheran Church

4224 Hard Scrabble Road, Columbia, SC 29223  
www.livingspringscolumbia.org



*Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.*

### GATHERING: GOD-STORIES

*As we gather, we reflect on God's work, with some visual examples on the display screens. You may send your photos and/or God Stories to [GodAroundUs@livingspringscolumbia.org](mailto:GodAroundUs@livingspringscolumbia.org). Where have you seen or experienced God at work in yourself, in the lives of others, or the world this past week? Names are NOT required.*

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*We stand as able*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who is present, who gives life, who calls into existence the things that do not exist.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: If you were to keep watch over sins, O Lord, who could stand? Yet with you is forgiveness, and so we confess.

*(Silence for reflection - we kneel as able)*

Pastor: Gracious God,

People: **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned away from you, knowingly and unknowingly. We have wandered from your resurrection life. We have strayed from your love for all people. Turn us back to you, O God. Give us new hearts and right spirits, that we may find what is pleasing to you and dwell in your house forever. Amen.**

Pastor: Receive good news: God turns to you in love. "I will put my spirit in you, and you shall live," says our God. All your sin is forgiven in the name of ✚ Jesus Christ, who is the free and abounding gift of God's grace for you.

People: **Amen.**

*We focus on the cross as it enters the sanctuary.*

## GATHERING SONG

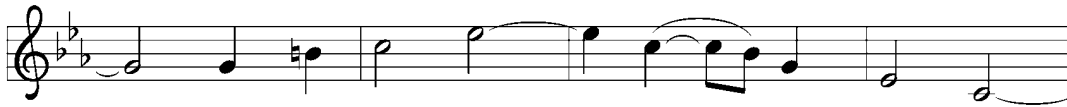
*"I Want Jesus to Walk With Me"*



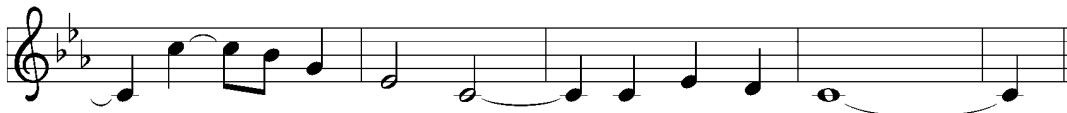
1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;  
2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;  
3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



I want Je - sus to walk with me;  
in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;  
when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,  
when my heart is al - most break - ing,  
when my head is bowed in sor - row,



Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.  
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.  
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

## APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

**People:** **And also with you.**

## KYRIE AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Pastor:** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** For the body of Christ, and for all who offer their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** **Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**People:** **Amen. Amen.**

**Pastor:** Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** **Amen.**

*We are seated*

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

*Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.*

*So we gather in His name, offering our love and praise.*

*Jesus loves the little children of the world.*

(Tune by C.H. Woolston, Public Domain. Alt. Text by G. Donovan, Jr.)

## FIRST READING

Lector: A reading from 1 Samuel.

*The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah. (1 Samuel 16:1–13)*

Lector: Word of God, Word of life.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 23

Lector: The LORD is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.

**People: The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.**

Lector: You restore my soul, O LORD,  
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

**People: Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

Lector: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

**People: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

## SECOND READING

Lector: A reading from Ephesians.

*Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." (Ephesians 5:8–14)*

Lector: Word of God, Word of life.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*We stand for the reading of the Gospel*

## **GOSPEL LESSON**

**Pastor:** The Holy Gospel according to John.

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

*As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews 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 and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 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?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains." (John 9:1-41)*

**Pastor:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**People:** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*We are seated*

**MESSAGE**

Rev. Eric Fink

## HYMN OF THE DAY

"Amazing Grace" vv. 1-3

1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that  
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and  
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but  
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that  
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me

now am found; was blind, but now I see.  
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!  
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

## APOSTLES' CREED

**People:** 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 to the dead. 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.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Assist: Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*+ A brief silence +*

Assist: God of insight, open the hearts of the church and the world to all who testify to your deeds of power. Raise up voices in your church that are often silenced or overlooked due to age, gender, race, or economic status. Hear us, O God.

**People: Your mercy is great.**

Assist: God of insight, empower us to care for the land and all living things that dwell in it and beneath it. Provide rich soil for crops to grow. Bring rain to lands suffering drought. Protect hills and shorelines from damage caused by erosion. Hear us, O God.

**People: Your mercy is great.**

Assist: God of insight, bring peace to all people and nations. Anoint leaders who seek goodness, righteousness, and truth on behalf of all. Frustrate the efforts of those who would seek to cause violence or terror. Hear us, O God.

**People: Your mercy is great.**

Assist: God of insight, you care for our needs even before we ask. Accomplish healing through the work of doctors, nurses, physical therapists, nutritionists, and all who tend to human bodies. Come quickly to all we uplift in prayer this day, especially *Margaret Blank; Evelyn Long; Charles Kauffman; JoAnn Pulse; Bill Bloss; and those we name before you now, either silently or aloud....* Hear us, O God.

**People: Your mercy is great.**

Assist: God of insight, help this community lift up the unique gifts of each person, no matter their physical capacity, cognitive ability, or sensory need. Help us to be creative and brave in making our ministries accessible to all. Hear us, O God.

**People: Your mercy is great.**

Pastor: God of insight, you call out to those who are asleep and awaken them to new life with you. We give thanks for your saints. Join us together with them as your children in this world and the next. Hear us, O God.

**People: Your mercy is great.**

Pastor: God, our peace and our strength, we pray for our nation and the world as we face new uncertainties around coronavirus. Protect the most vulnerable among us, especially all who are currently sick or in isolation. Grant wisdom, patience, and clarity to health care workers, especially as their work caring for others puts them at great risk. Guide us as we consider how best to prepare and respond in our families, congregations, workplaces, and communities. Give us courage to face these days not with fear but with compassion, concern, and acts of service, trusting that you abide with us always. Hear us, O God.

**People: Your mercy is great.**

Pastor: According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

## SHARING OF PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**People: And also with you.**

*We greet one another, with the words that the risen Jesus spoke to his disciples: "Peace be with you."*

## OFFERINGS ARE GIVEN

*Offering may be dropped off at the office during the week or sent through the mail. For those who wish to give electronically, you may use the secure Givelify app.*

Google Play



App Store



## OFFERING PRAYER

Assist: Let us pray. O Lord our God, maker of all things:

**People: Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

## THANKSGIVING FOR HOLY COMMUNION (IN TIME OF FASTING FROM THE MEAL)

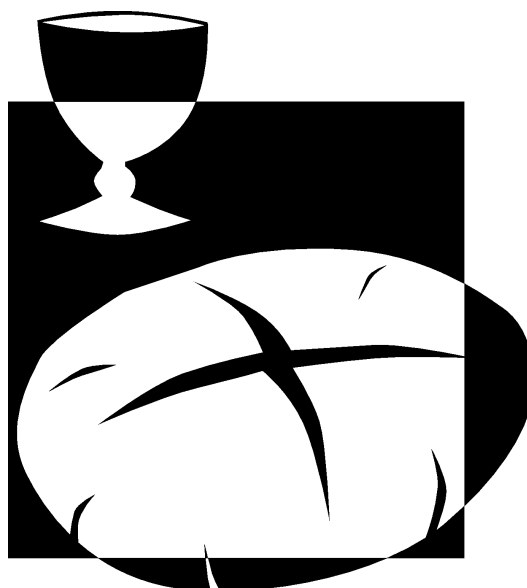
Pastor: We have been made one as the body of Christ through the waters of baptism. In our journey of faith & life, we have been fed with Christ's own body and blood. Even though we fast from the Lord's Supper on this day, we give thanks for the gift of Holy Communion, as we look forward to the joy of that day when we will again be gathered and fed at your table.

Pastor: O God most mighty, O God most merciful, O God our rock and our salvation, hear us as we offer our praise and give you thanks. When the earth was a formless void, you formed order and beauty. When Abraham and Sarah were barren, you sent them a child. When the Israelites were enslaved, you led them to freedom. Ruth faced starvation; David fought Goliath; the psalmists cried out for healing, and full of compassion, you granted the people your life. You entered our sorrows in Jesus our brother. He was born among the poor, he lived under oppression, he wept over the city. With infinite love, he granted the people your life.

We give you thanks and praise for the gift of Holy Communion and for the blessing it brings to your people. Even though we abstain from your meal this day for reasons you understand, we sense the power of your forgiveness and grace offered to us and the world through your Son. Awaiting that day when we may fully share in his meal, we still remember, and cherish in our hearts, the words uplifting this great and glorious gift which Jesus gave us:

**People: In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of Me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of Me."**

*We pause in silent prayer and reflection, giving thanks to God for all the times we have been fed with our Lord's body & blood.*



## SONG FOR REFLECTION

"Bread of Life From Heaven" vv. 2-3

*Refrain*



Bread of life from heav-en, your blood and bod - y giv - en,



we eat this bread and drink this cup un - til you come a - gain.



2 Seek not the food that will pass a - way; set your  
3 Love as the one who, in love for you, gave him -



hearts on the food that en - dures. Come, learn the true and the  
self for the life of the world. Come to the one who is



*Refrain*

liv - ing way, that the full - ness of life may be yours.  
food for you, that your hun - ger and thirst be no more.

## LORD'S PRAYER & BENEDICTION

Pastor: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**People: 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.**

Pastor: Now is the acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation. Holy God, speaking, spoken, and inspiring, ✚ bless you, unbind you, and send you in love and in peace.

**People: Amen.**



**SENDING SONG***"The Lord Now Sends Us Forth"**(We focus on the processional cross as it is carried out.)*

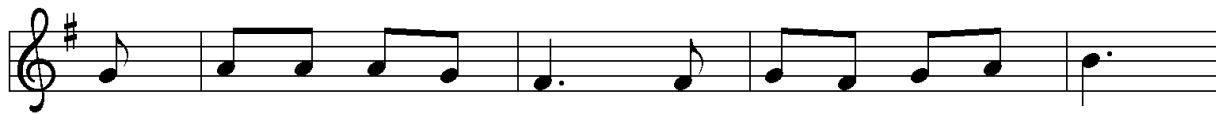
*En - via - do soy de Dios, mi ma - no lis - ta\_es - tá*  
 The Lord now sends us forth with hands to serve and give,



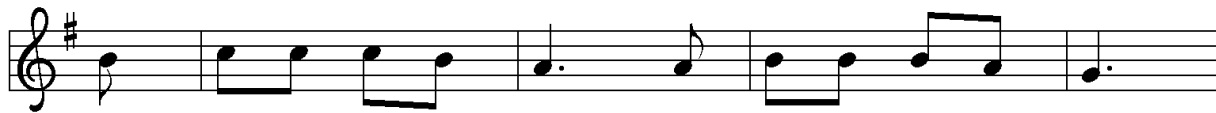
*pa - ra cons - truir con él un mun - do fra - ter - nal.*  
 to make of all the earth a bet - ter place to live.



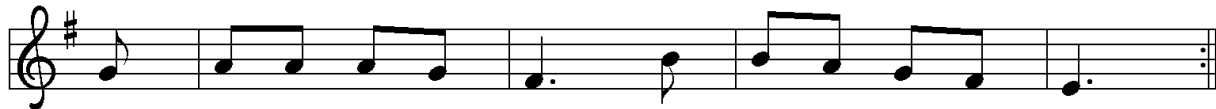
*Los án - ge - les no son en - via - dos a cam - biar*  
 The an - gels are not sent in - to our world of pain



*un mun - do de do - lor por un mun - do me - jor;*  
 to do what we were meant to do in Je - sus' name;



*me ha to - ca - do a mí ha - cer - lo rea - li - dad.*  
 that falls to you and me and all who are made free.



*A - yú - da - me, Se - ñor, a\_ha - cer tu vo - lun - tad.*  
 Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will to - day.

**DISMISSAL**

**Assist:** Go in peace. Grow Deeper in the Cross. Share the good news!

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

## LENTEN DEVOTIONAL ITEM

*During Lent, the back partition walls are partially closed, as a reminder that we are on a journey that leads through the closed tomb to the joy of Easter. Please exit through the main doors, where each household will receive a weekly devotional item to add to your Lenten cross. The walls will be symbolically re-opened for Easter worship, as we rejoice in the Good News of the stone rolled away from our Savior's tomb!*



## Seasonal Emphasis

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross & follow me." Mark 8:34

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT:

#### *Eyes Opened*

Toward the end of today's lengthy gospel reading, religious leaders summon, for a second time, the man who was blind from birth and whose sight Jesus restored one sabbath day. Confounded by Jesus' disregard for the sabbath, they judge him a sinner and ask how a sinner could have worked such healing. They cry to the newly sighted man, "'Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see'" (John 9:24-25; emphasis added).

It is such a radically simple answer. But this clear testimony does not align with the preconceived judgment of the religious leaders, who won't rejoice that the man's eyes have been opened. Instead, the blame game initiated by Jesus' disciples rages on in altered form. While the disciples wondered if it was the man's or his family's fault that he was blind to begin with, the religious leaders focused on a way to discredit the one who had restored his sight. Neither the disciples nor the religious leaders seem empathetic about the man's blindness, nor joyful about the new possibilities for his life and participation in community now that he can see.

As we listen to the narrative unfold, perhaps we recognize some of the voices blaming, accusing, or (as with the man's parents) seeking to withdraw from the controversy. The story stands in John's gospel as another important sign, identifying Jesus as "light of the world" (John 9:5). But it also serves to remind us of ways we are blinded by our judgments and critiques of others and of ourselves. To what and whom are our eyes closed? What mixture of mud and washing might open us to see differently and, in so doing, restore us in and to community?

### ✠ COMMEMORATIONS FOR TODAY ✠

#### **Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, died 1758**

A Puritan minister in Connecticut, Edwards is remembered as being a great preacher. Though his most famous sermon talks at length about hell, he was more concerned with God's love. He served both as missionary to the Housatonic people in Massachusetts, and as president of the future Princeton University.