

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

February 28, 2016

THEME: God gives growth through repentance.

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER AND INVOCATION

WE CONFESS OUR SINS...

P: As we gather to celebrate our wonderful God, we do well first to recognize our sins that separate us from God, and know that He graciously forgives us.....

**C: Dear Lord God, we come to you humbly,
Admitting our sins, our lack of love, our arrogant ways.**

**We confess today that we have, at times,
Seen ourselves as better than other people.**

**We have looked down on those who do not know You,
Thinking that they do not deserve your mercy,
Thinking and acting as if they do not need your forgiveness.**

Forgive our pride and arrogance, and our limited understanding of your grace and mercy.

**Open the eyes of our hearts to see that you are powerfully at work in all creation
For the salvation of all people.**

**Give us humble and gracious spirits,
To try to understand people that are different than us,**

**So that we can share Your Grace with them,
Intercede on their behalf in prayer,
And partner with You in bringing them Your kingdom.**

SONG OF CONFESSION "Red Book" 157 Open Our Eyes

Open our eyes, Lord,
We want to see Jesus
To reach out and touch Him
And say that we love Him.
Open our ears, Lord,
Help us to listen
Open our eyes, Lord,
We want to see Jesus.

...HEARING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

P: God knows our hearts, our arrogance and pride, and yet He loves us and forgives us for this sin and for all our sins, the evil things we've done and the good we've failed to do. Through His Son Jesus, I announce His grace to you. In the stead and by the command of Jesus, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

C: Amen.

OPENING SONG "Red Book" 49

Glorify Thy Name

Father, we love Thee, we praise Thee, we adore Thee.
Glorify Thy name in all the earth,
Glorify Thy name, glorify Thy name.
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.

Jesus, we love Thee, we praise Thee, we adore Thee.
Glorify Thy name in all the earth,
Glorify Thy name, glorify Thy name.
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.

Spirit, we love Thee, we praise Thee, we adore Thee.
Glorify Thy name in all the earth,
Glorify Thy name, glorify Thy name.
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

FOCUSSED PRAYER

P: The Lord be with you

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray: Eternal Lord, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your Word and obey it, so that we become instruments of your redeeming love; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS

The First Lesson: Ezekiel 33:7-20

The Lord sets up his watchmen over the people

"So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

"And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, thus have you said: 'Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away because of them. How then can we Live?' Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? "And you, son of man, say to your people, the righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his wickedness, and the righteous shall not be able to live by his righteousness when he sins. Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in his injustice that he has done he shall die. Again, though I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die', yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely

live; he shall not die. None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live. "Yet your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not just,' when it is their own way that is not just. When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it. And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by this. Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways."

The Second Lesson: I Corinthians 10:1-13

God provides a way to endure every temptation

For I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were, as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

The Gospel Lesson: Luke 13:1-9

Jesus tells of the importance of repentance

There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

CHOIR ANTHEM

You Are the Salt and Light

By Pepper Choplin

THE CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON SONG "Green Book" 320 O God, Our Help.....

O God, our help in ages past our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.

SERMON

The Importance of Pruning

AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

P: Let us affirm together the faith of the Church throughout the ages:

**C: We believe in one God, the Father the Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
The only Son of God,
Eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
True God from true God,
Begotten, not made,
Of one being with the Father;
Through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**He came down from heaven,
Was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
And became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
In accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
And his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
Who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.**

OFFERINGS (Music)

The offerings gathered are a sign of our whole lives Offered to God in humble gratitude for his greatest of all Offerings, his Son offered for our salvation.

COMMISSIONING OF CHURCH COUNCIL

THE PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

P: Let us pray for the whole people of God, and for all people according to their needs:
(after each prayer request)

P: Lord in your mercy

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

OUR MINISTRY PARTNER: WE CARE

CLOSING SONG "Red Book" 241 To God Be the Glory

To God be the glory, great things He has done;
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life gate that all may go in.
*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory, great things He has done.*

Great things He has taught us, great things He has done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.
*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory, great things He has done.*

BENEDICTION

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!