

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 24, 2019

THEME: Someone's always watching. At least it seems that way, doesn't it? In a world full of security cameras and alarm systems, there seem to be millions of ways to keep your property secure and guard your valuables from intruders who would seek to cause trouble. But what are your thoughts about having someone to watch over you and your family at all times and in all places? This would be a blessing! And this is exactly what our God does for you. God stands by you today in worship and reminds you that He is always here to watch over you.

RINGING OF THE BELL:

After the ringing of the bell, we prepare our hearts in silence for today's worship.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

CONFESSING TO GOD

P: Almighty God, You take no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

C: You call Your people to turn to You and live.

P: Therefore, we turn to You, Father, in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ.

C: Hear us as we come before You in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Silence for reflection and confession

P: Father, Your voice of truth confronts us in our sin.

C: We confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean.

P: Your Son stands as the watchman over Your house, calling us to repentance and faith.

C: We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

P: Your Spirit leads us to acknowledge our rebellion against You so that, confessing our sins, we might receive Your pardon and peace.

C: We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

SONG OF CONFESSION: “*White As Snow*” (twice through)

White as snow, white as snow,
Though my sins were as scarlet
Lord, I know,
That I’m clean and forgiven.
Through the power of Your blood,
Through the wonder of Your love,
Through faith in You
I know that I can be white as snow.
White as snow

RECEIVING FORGIVENESS

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, 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. O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways.

C: Bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word.

P: We pray this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

HEARING FROM GOD'S WORD

Old Testament Reading:

Ezekiel 33:7-20

The prophet serves as a watchman for Israel.

“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.”

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel:

Luke 13:1-9

Jesus warns us that we will all perish unless we repent.

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.’”

P: This is this Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHORAL ANTHEM:

Amazing Grace

By: John Coates, Jr. & John Newton

*Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.*

*'Twas grace that taught my heart to
fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!*

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares,

*I have already come;
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus
far,
And grace will lead me home.*

*When we've been there ten thousand
years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's
praise*

Than when we first begun.

*Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON SONG: "Shine, Jesus Shine"

1. Lord, the Light of Your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us.
Set us free by the truth You now bring us.
Shine on me, shine on me. - Refrain

Refrain: *Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.*

*Flow, river flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.*

2. Lord, I come to Your awesome presence,
From the shadows into Your radiance;
By the blood I may enter Your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness,
Shine on me, shine on me. - Refrain

3. As we gaze on Your kingly brightness,
So our faces display Your likeness;
Ever changing from glory to glory,
Mirror'd here may our lives tell Your story,
Shine on me, shine on me. – Refrain

SERMON

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

C: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
And born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

OFFERING

We give our offerings as a sign of our lives offered to God.

PRAYER OF GOD'S PEOPLE

P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Gracious Father, we give You thanks and praise for sending Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, into this world to bear our sins and be our Savior. Under His watchful eye, we live as Your children, protected from all danger and guarded in heart and mind. Hear now the prayers we bring before Your throne of grace. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: watch over us and hear our prayer.

P: O Lord, Your eye is always on Your creation. Grant that our land be fruitful because of Your faithfulness. Bless all those who labor as You give us strength for the fulfillment of our daily callings. Guide the members of our government and all those who lay down their lives to guard and defend us that we be protected from the threats of our adversaries and give thanks to You for Your constant care. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: watch over us and hear our prayer.

P: Healer of the broken, work mightily in the lives of all who experience hardships in their health, [including . . .]. Grant that all who ask for healing mercies lift up their eyes to You, the watchman for our bodies and souls, and find peace in knowing that Your face is shining upon them. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: watch over us and hear our prayer.

P: Into Your loving hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

A CLOSING BLESSING

P: Go with us today, O Lord, and in Your great mercy defend us from the dangers that may come this week. Open our eyes to Your work done in and around us this week.

C: Amen.

CLOSING SONG: “You Are My All in All”

You are my strength when I am weak,
You are the treasure that I seek.
 You are my all in all.
Seeking you as a precious jewel,
Lord, to give up, I’d be a fool,
 You are my all in all.

*Chorus: Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is Your Name
 Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is Your Name*

Taking my sin, my cross, my shame.
Rising again, I bless Your name.
 You are my all in all.
When I fall down, You pick me up.
When I am dry, You fill my cup.
 You are my all in all. Chorus

DISMISSAL

P: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!