

GREETING: **Gathered in Christ.** We serve with grace.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace. **Amen.**

Let us acknowledge before God and one another our need for repentance and God’s mercy. *Silence is kept for reflection.* Holy God, **we confess to you our faults and failings. Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word; we take for ourselves instead of giving to others; we spoil rather than steward your creation; we cause hurt though you call us to heal; we choose fear over compassion. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, as we seek to follow in your way of life. Amen.**

Hear the good news: God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that all may receive life. This promise is for you! God embraces you with divine mercy, † forgives you in Christ’s name, and revives you in the Spirit’s power. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG “*All Glory, Laud, and Honor*”.....#344

PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Sovereign God, you have established your rule in the human heart through the servanthood of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, keep us in the joyful procession of those who with their tongues confess Jesus as Lord and with their lives praise him as Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 50:4-9a

<sup>4</sup>The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. <sup>5</sup>The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. <sup>6</sup>I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. <sup>7</sup>The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; <sup>8</sup>he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. <sup>9a</sup>It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty? The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 31:9-16

<sup>9</sup>Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in trouble;  
my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.

**10For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing;  
my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are consumed.**

<sup>11</sup>I am the scorn of all my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors, a dismay to my acquaintances; when they see me in the street they avoid me.

**12Like the dead I am forgotten, out of mind; I am as useless as a broken pot.**

<sup>13</sup>For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around; they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.

**14But as for me, I have trusted in you, O LORD. I have said,  
“You are my God.**

<sup>15</sup>My times are in your hand;

rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

**16Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.”**

SECOND READING: PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, <sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 27:11-54

**Glory to you, O Lord.** <sup>11</sup>Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You say so.” <sup>12</sup>But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. <sup>13</sup>Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?” <sup>14</sup>But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. <sup>15</sup>Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup>At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. <sup>17</sup>So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?” <sup>18</sup>For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. <sup>19</sup>While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.” <sup>20</sup>Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. <sup>21</sup>The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” <sup>22</sup>Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” All of them said, “Let him be crucified!” <sup>23</sup>Then he asked, “Why, what evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!” <sup>24</sup>So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed

his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." <sup>25</sup>Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" <sup>26</sup>So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. <sup>27</sup>Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. <sup>28</sup>They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup>and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>30</sup>They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup>After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. <sup>32</sup>As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. <sup>33</sup>And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), <sup>34</sup>they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. <sup>35</sup>And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; <sup>36</sup>then they sat down there and kept watch over him. <sup>37</sup>Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." <sup>38</sup>Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. <sup>39</sup>Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads <sup>40</sup>and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." <sup>41</sup>In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, <sup>42</sup>"He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup>He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" <sup>44</sup>The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way. <sup>45</sup>From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>46</sup>And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" <sup>47</sup>When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." <sup>48</sup>At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup>But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." <sup>50</sup>Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. <sup>51</sup>At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup>The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. <sup>53</sup>After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup>Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!" The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *"My Song is Love Unknown"* .....#343

APOSTLES CREED

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Save your church, O God. Enable us to boldly confess in every time and place that Jesus Christ is Lord. With the humility of a servant, equip congregations, synods, and other ministry settings to proclaim your extravagant love for all.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Save your creation, O God. Every living being you have made has purpose. Give us renewed appreciation of farm animals who labor in the fields, service animals who accompany their human companions, and beloved pets who live alongside us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Save the peoples of the earth, O God. Restore dignity to those who are scorned and persecuted for their religious beliefs or political activism, and deliver them from the hand of their enemies. Bring peace to places where conflict runs deep.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Save those who cry to you in any need, O God. Watch over all who are incarcerated or awaiting trial, and stand with those who are unjustly accused. Be present with those feeling isolated, lonely, or fearful (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Save us in your love, O God. Guide the work of church musicians, pastors, choirs, readers, deacons, technicians, acolytes, and all who assist in worship. Sustain them in their leadership as they accompany congregations through this Holy Week. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Save us at the last, O God. We give you thanks for your saints of old who embodied your servant love. As you came to their aid, so deliver us in times of trial, that every knee would bend in praise to you. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

PEACE: The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## OFFERTORY SONG "GIVE THANKS"

OFFERING PRAYER: God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. **Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING: God, the giver of love, † Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG "Ride On, Ride On In Majesty" .....#346

SONG OF PEACE

**My peace I give unto you. It's a peace that the world cannot give. It's a peace that the world cannot understand; peace to know; peace to live. My peace I give unto you.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Easter Breakfast*

Plan to join fellow BLC members and friends for breakfast on Easter morning, starting at 8:00 a.m. There is a sign-up sheet on the shelf outside the offices for those who wish to bring something. All are welcome!

*Lily Blooms*

If you wish to purchase a lily bloom to adorn the cross on Easter Sunday, please sign up on the shelf outside the office. We ask you give a \$5 donation for each bloom you wish to sponsor. Please note the blooms are artificial and there will not be anything for you to take home with him following the Easter service.