

## GREETING

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

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage. **Amen.**

**Holy One, we confess that we have wandered far from you: we have not trusted your promises, we have ignored your prophets in our own day, we have squandered our inheritance of grace, we have failed to recognize you in our midst. Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you. Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbor. Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love. In † Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven. God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN "*COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING*" .....#807

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## FIRST READING: Joshua 5:9-12

<sup>9</sup>The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day. <sup>10</sup>While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. <sup>11</sup>On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. <sup>12</sup>The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 32

<sup>1</sup>Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

<sup>2</sup>**Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,  
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

<sup>3</sup>While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,  
because of my groaning all day long.

<sup>4</sup>**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;  
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

<sup>5</sup>Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

<sup>6</sup>**Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;  
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

<sup>7</sup>You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;  
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

<sup>8</sup>**I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;  
I will guide you with my eye.**

<sup>9</sup>Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”

<sup>10</sup>**Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

<sup>11</sup>Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

<sup>16</sup>From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. <sup>17</sup>So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup>that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. <sup>20</sup>So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE 15:1-3, 11B-32

**Glory to you, O Lord.** <sup>1</sup>Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” <sup>3</sup>So he told them this parable: <sup>11b</sup>“There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate. <sup>25</sup>“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the

fatted calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “SOFTLY AND TENDERLY JESUS IS CALLING” .....#608

## APOSTLES CREED

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need. (*A brief silence.*) Jesus formed the disciples in the ways of extravagant mercy and profound welcome. Lead your church to be a community marked by forgiveness, hospitality, and celebration. Send us to transform a world plagued by fear and condemnation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You make the land to produce a harvest that sustains your entire creation. Equip farmers and farm workers who till the soil. Nourish the earth with ample rainfall and abundant sunshine. Heal grounds tainted by pollution or misuse. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Countries are divided and leaders often harbor grudges. Reconcile nations that experience conflict. Act quickly to bring an end to war. Anoint peacemakers trained in the art of diplomacy and foster a spirit of collaboration among political rivals. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your people cry for help in times of distress. Resolve disagreements among family members. Save those experiencing financial hardship. Hear our prayers for those who are sick or grieving (*especially*). Console us with the promise that everything can become new. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your love comes to us when a table is set and a feast is prepared. Bless the feeding ministries of this congregation. Bring an end to hunger in our community and around the world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

The one who was dead is alive again. We give thanks for those who have died, confident that steadfast love surrounds them. Shelter them in your love until we are gathered at your heavenly banquet. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## PEACE

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

## OFFERING

### OFFERTORY SONG "GIVE THANKS"

**Give thanks with a grateful heart. Give thanks to the holy one. Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ His Son. And now let the weak say I am strong. Let the poor say I am rich; because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks. Give thanks.**

### OFFERING PRAYER

Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation. Now we gather at your

feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

#### GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy... life in you, now and forever. **Amen.**

#### LORD'S PRAYER

#### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is food and drink for the journey. Take and be filled.

COMMUNION HYMN "*AMAZING GRACE, HOW SWEET THE SOUND*" .....#779

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life.

Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need. **Amen.**

#### BLESSING

You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey.

Almighty God, motherly, majestic, and mighty, ✠ bless you this day and always. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG "*WHAT WONDROUS LOVE IS THIS*" .....#666

#### RINGING OF THE BELLS

#### 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. Jesus meets you on the way. **Thanks be to God.**

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

***Starting NEXT WEEK,  
Sunday, April 3,  
BLC's worship service will begin at 9:00 a.m.***

The Bethlehem cross will once again be decorated with lily blooms on Easter morning. If you wish to sponsor a bloom in memory or honor of a loved one, they are \$5. Sign up on the shelf outside of the office and place your \$5 in the finance secretary's box (bottom right corner) with a note what it is for.