

ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH -- THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT -- MARCH 5, 2023

READINGS: GENESIS 12:1-4A; PSALM 121; ROMANS 4:1-5, 13-17; JOHN 3:1-17

WE WELCOME CAROLYN THIBIDEAU AS OUR ORGANIST THIS MORNING;
AND STEPHANIE DEAN, SOPRANO

Organ: Chorale Prelude – Dietrich Buxtehude

THE WORD OF GOD

Hymn 636: How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints of the Lord

Bless the Lord, who forgives all our sins. God's mercy endures for ever.

As we prepare to worship, let us call to mind our sins, and the infinite mercy of God. (*silence*)

Almighty God; Long-suffering and of great goodness: I confess to you, I confess with my whole heart, my neglect and forgetfulness of your commandments, my wrong doing, thinking, and speaking; the hurts I have done to others, and the good I have left undone. O God, forgive me, for I have sinned against you; and raise me to newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Cantor *All*

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Cantor *All*

Chris - te e - lei - son. Chris - te e - lei - son.

Cantor *All* Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.

May God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins, and bring you to everlasting life. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

The opening lesson is the story of God's call to Abraham to leave his own country and become the father of a great nation. This story calls us to venture forth in faith.

The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot, his nephew, went with him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 121 is a song of trust in the Lord, the unsleeping guardian of Israel. The cantor sings the refrain; all repeat, and sing as indicated:

Antiphon



My help comes from the LORD, the mak - er of heav - en and earth.

I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come? My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth. **R.** He will not let your foot be moved and he who watches over you will not fall asleep. Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep; **R.** The Lord himself watches over you; the Lord is your shade at your right hand, So that the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. **R.** The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; it is he who shall keep you safe. The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth for evermore. **R.**

A Reading from Paul's Epistle to the Romans

In this passage, Paul describes Abraham as an individual who through faith found a right relationship with God. He is the ancestor of all who trust in the Lord.

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") —in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Tract: Psalm 106, Tone II: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever. Who can declare the mighty acts of the LORD or show forth all his praise? Happy are those who act with justice and always do what is right! Remember me, O LORD, with the favor you have for your people, and visit me with your saving help; That I may see the prosperity of your elect and be glad with the gladness of your people, that I may glory with your inheritance.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon -- The Rev. Michael L. Bradley, rector

What do we believe?

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 to the dead. 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 catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

God of the covenant, you call us to be fruitful servants of your creation, and to offer our lives as the foundation of your realm. We lay before you the desires of our hearts, that the fulfillment of those desires may transform all those we pray for. The response to our petitions is, "Lord, have mercy."

Prayers are offered for the Church, the world; for all people in need or want, and for those who have died.

The people are invited to offer aloud their own petitions and prayers.

Holy Communion

All are welcome to receive Holy Communion. The bread is received in the palm of the right hand; the wine by either sipping from the chalice or dipping the bread in the wine. Kindly let the celebrant know if you would prefer a blessing instead and in addition to receiving Communion.

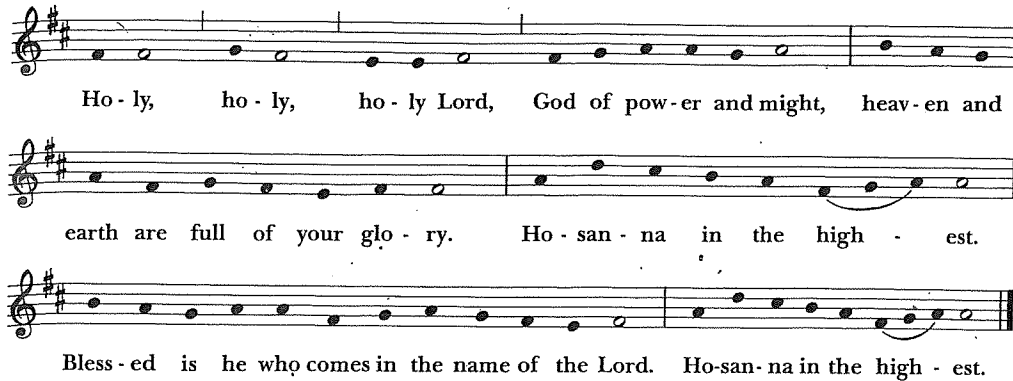
Offertory: "Arioso" -- Gordon Young

Hymn 448: O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

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

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by your Word and Sacraments, they may come to the fullness of grace which you have prepared for those who love you. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:



*The celebrant continues with the Prayer of Consecration, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen, and Lord's Prayer
After the breaking of the bread:*

May God's peace be with you always. **And also with you.**

Behold, the Lamb of God. Behold Him who takes away the sins of the world.
Happy are they who are called to his supper.

After all have received Communion, please stand and pray together:

God of wisdom; May the light of the eternal Word, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, guide us to your glory.
We thank you for these holy mysteries, food for our Lenten journey, and a foretaste of your heavenly banquet.
Bring us to share in the life that is to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Grant, Almighty God, that your people may recognize their weakness and put their whole trust in your strength, so
that they may rejoice forever in the protection of your loving providence; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us depart in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn 473, Lift High the Cross, the Love of God Proclaim

Organ: Psalm XIX – Benedetto Marcello

We share the light of Christ by loving and serving our neighbors in the world.
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