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Pastor Joseph Dillon
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Worship
March 14, 2021

GATHERING

PRELUDE – “God So Loved the World”

Erin/Kristan

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

OPENING HYMN – “Rain Down”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Come, people of God, and worship the Christ.

Reader: Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven; whose sin is covered.

Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit, there is no deceit.

Let us come and worship the Christ who forgives sin.

A BRIEF CONFESSION

Pastor: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of Christ.

(A moment of silence)

Congregation: Holy God, we pray for your forgiveness of all of our sins: For our self-centered living, and our failure to walk with humility and compassion; for longing to have what is not ours; for the misuse of human relationships, and for our unwillingness to see the face of Christ in others. For our hurtful words that condemn, and divide us one from another. For our unwillingness to share the gifts that You have given us. For our idleness in witnessing to the Love and Grace of Jesus Christ in all that we do and say, Holy God, holy and mighty, have forgiveness for us in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Pastor: We are forgiven by our God through the Risen Christ, and He calls us to be the beloved community of Christ, living out His justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace. Amen.

GREETING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also, with you.

P: Be filled with the spirit of God today.

C: We worship to open our hearts for God's blessings.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Reading

Numbers 21:4-9

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.' Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.' So, Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Reader: Here what the spirit is saying to us.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Psalm 107: 1-3,17-22

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,
those he redeemed from trouble
and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

Some were sick through their sinful ways,
and because of their iniquities endured affliction;
they loathed any kind of food,
and they drew near to the gates of death.

Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress;
he sent out his word and healed them,
and delivered them from destruction.

Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,
and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

Reader: Here what the spirit is saying to us.

Response: Thanks be to God.

PSALM RESPONSE – “God Shepherds the Poor”

GOSPEL READING

John 3:14-21

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. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.’

Reader: Here what the spirit is saying to us.

Response: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY – “Amazing Grace”

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Pastor: Let join in professing our faith:

Congregation: We believe in God the Creator of all, known to us through perfect love, and who called us forth as a people of faith.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Word became flesh, crucified and resurrected, our Savior from sin, our peace, and Lord of the church.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, poured out on all believers, our source of inspiration and power.

We respond to Christ in faith as the church, the community sustained by the Spirit, called to proclaim and witness to the kingdom of God. Amen.

(Based on the “Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective: 1995)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: As we are guided by the Spirit, let us offer our prayers for the Church, for the nation, for our world, and for all in need.

(A brief silence)

Pastor: Lord, during this season of Lent, give us a new awareness of your presence throughout our journey to the Cross. Aid us as we struggle in these days of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, and help us to see in the coming of the vaccines, hope that someday soon, that this time of heartache, sorrow and fear will end. Lord in your mercy, (all) hear our prayer.

Congregation: Holy God, Creator of all things, give us wisdom to use the gifts of your creation wisely. Enable us to grow the crops and animals so that the food that comes from You will feed all people, especially in these times, those who hunger because of lost employment, those who suffer hunger because of war and turmoil in their nations and all others in need. Lord in your mercy, (all) hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord, we pray for those who lead the nations and factions of the world, that they would listen to your voice that speaks of justice and the rule of law for all people. We pray for the safety of all those who protect us on the streets of our cities, our firefighters, police officers, EMTs and others, that they would return home to their families safely this day. We pray also for our military personnel around the world who place themselves in harm's way each day, as well as our health care workers who must make difficult decisions of life and death each day. Lord in your mercy, (all) hear our prayer.

Congregation: We give you thanks for the scientists and others who have worked on the vaccines that are now protecting so many of us, yet at the same time we pray for those who mourn the deaths of their loved ones. We ask you Lord, to surround them with your arms of comfort and compassion. We pray for those who are ill of body, mind, or spirit here at Bethany and all others who are in need of your hands of healing and wholeness. Lord in your mercy, (all) hear our prayer.

Pastor: Listen to each of us Lord, as we come to you in this moment of silent prayer. It is into Your hands, great and compassionate God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of all blessings, giver of all good gifts; day by day you shower us with what we need to live and prosper. With glad and generous hearts and in a response to thanksgiving, we return a portion of our wealth. May what we give be a symbol of our gratitude and a blessing of your love for those who may be helped through our offering. Amen.

MEAL

Communion Dialogue

P: For the spiritual hunger in our lives, Jesus said:

C: Eat this bread.

P: For the spiritual longing to have fellowship with God, Jesus said:

C: Drink this cup.

P: Jesus is the Bread of life, the risen Lord.

C: In him there is no hunger, in him there is no thirst.

P: On the night he was betrayed ...

Communion Invitation

P: Come to God's table; be fed and satisfied.

C: We come to feed our spirit and be in the presence of God.

Communion Music – “You Are the Light”

Erin

Communion Blessing

P: Let us pray:

C: Radiant God, may your Word take flesh in us that we may be your holy people. May this meal empower us to better be your loving servants. AMEN.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ fill you with every good blessing. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN – “Christ the Life of All the Living”

DISMISSAL

Paster: Go in Peace...to live and serve in the way of the cross.

Response: Thanks be to God.

(To watch the videotaped version of the worship service, click the link below)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCt8qX94ICK-omDHSc71en4w>