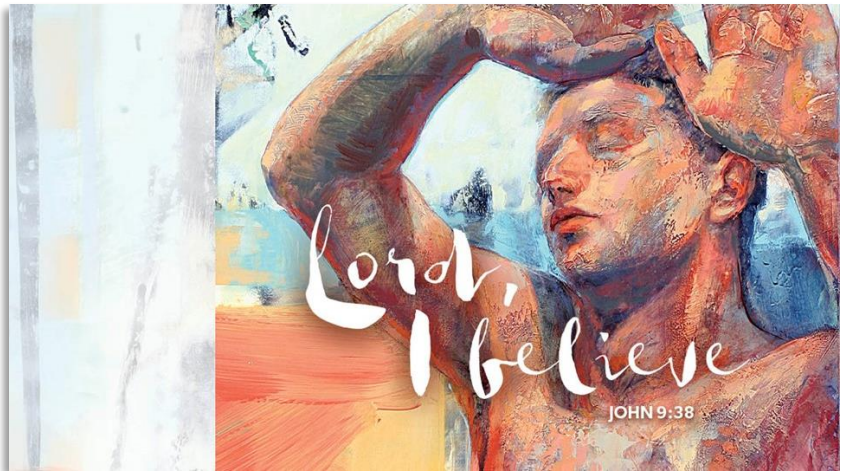




FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

MARCH 19, 2023

9:30 AM



Bethel Lutheran Church

1009 18th Avenue SW

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-761-1543

Email: bethelgf.church@gmail.com

Website: www.bethelmt.org

Pastor Jessie Obrecht

A congregation of the Montana Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Large print bulletins are available, please see the ushers for a copy.

As we gather for worship and prepare our hearts, we would ask that you please silence your cell phones for the duration of the service.

INTRODUCTION

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ELW 631 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling [1,2,4]

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.**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE

ELW S203 Setting 10

1. Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear out solemn prayer.

We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.

2. Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.

3. Have mercy on us, Lord; make sin and shame depart.

Renew us with your saving pow'r; create in us new hearts!

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

ELW S204a Setting 10

1. Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.

Mighty god of all creation, Father of surpassing worth;

we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.

2. Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;

on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.

Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

3. Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;

Holy One in faith we name you, God most, high, yet near to all:

Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.

For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ,
and come among us.

**By your gracious life and death for us,
bring light into the darkness of our hearts,
and anoint us with your Spirit,**

**for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.**

JUBILATE CHOIR

Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone

FIRST READING: 1 SAMUEL 16:1-13

Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the LORD, designating David as the LORD's chosen successor to Saul.

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 23

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I
shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your
staff, they comfort me.**

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of
my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING: EPHESIANS 5:8-14

*Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we
conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our
activity is truly pleasing to God.*

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live
as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is
good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the
Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead
expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people
do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes
visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it
says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

LH 119 Return to God

*Return to God with all your heart, the source of grace and mercy;
Come, seek the tender seek the tender faithfulness of God.*

The holy gospel according to John the ninth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: JOHN 9:1-41

Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.

As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I

do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

The gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE AND SERMON

Pastor Jessie Obrecht

HYMN OF THE DAY

LH 228 Lead Me, Guide Me [1,2]

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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 CHURCH

Merciful God, hear our prayer.

THE PEACE

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

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

ELW 184 Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

*Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all:
unite them with the prayers we offer.
Grace our table with your presence,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. 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.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give our thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,...and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW S207 Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus first taught us:

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.

Invitation to Communion

The Lord's Table is open to believers of all Christian traditions. We believe that Christ comes to us in the bread and cup for the forgiveness of sins and new life. Gluten free wafers are available, please let your server know. Choice of red wine and white grape juice offered.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

ELW 518 We Eat the Bread of Teaching
ELW 542 O Living Bread from Heaven
W&P 134 That We May Be Filled
W&P 139 The Trumpets Sound, The Angels Sing

COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Embodied God,
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors
and touch the world with your love. Amen.

BENEDICTION

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 HYMN

ELW 881 Let All Things Now Living

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve in love.
Thanks be to God.
And all God's children said: **Amen.**

SERVING TODAY

Accompanist Connie Titcomb, piano;
Sara Graft, djembe
Lay Assistant Walt Nuessle

Usher	Earl Terwilliger
Tech	Colter McCarty
Children's Church	Allison Marr and Olivia Violett
Hospitality	Cindy Considine and Tami Grosenick
Counters	Tim Lightbourne and Greg Grosenick

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today at Bethel we celebrate the Fourth Sunday in Lent.

Thank you to **Jeff Skogley and the Jubilate Choir** for singing today.

THIS WEEK

Monday 3/20

- Financial Peace University Class in the Fellowship Hall 6:00 pm

Tuesday 3/21

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am
- Men's Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall 7:00 am

Wednesday 3/22

- Bible Study led by Pastor Jessie on Zoom 10:00 am
- Logos Youth 5:30 pm; High School 6:30 pm

Thursday, 3/23

- Lenten Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall 6:00 pm
- Holden Evening Worship Service in the sanctuary 6:45 pm

Friday 3/24

- Bethel office closed

Saturday 3/25

- Celebration of Life for Doug Kickbusch 1:00 pm reception to follow

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 3/26

- Worship led by Pastor Jessie in-person & live stream 9:30 am

Monday 3/27

- Financial Peace University Class in the Fellowship Hall 6:00 pm

Tuesday 3/28

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am
- Men's Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall 7:00 am

Wednesday 3/29

- Bible Study led by Pastor Jessie on Zoom 10:00 am
- Logos Youth all ages end of year party 5:30 pm

Thursday, 3/30

- Lenten Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall 6:00 pm
- Holden Evening Worship Service in the sanctuary 6:45 pm

Friday 3/31

- Bethel office closed

2023 Mid - Week Lenten Schedule

March 23 –

Supper Host: Men's Breakfast

Cantors: Warren Johnson and Rev. Steve Nelson

March 30th –

Supper Host: Hope Circle

Cantors: Pastor Jessie and Colter McCarty

Holy Week Schedule

April 2nd – Palm Sunday, Pancake Breakfast before and after worship, free will donation to benefit Vacation Bible School

April 6th - Maundy Thursday 7:00 PM

April 7th - Good Friday 7:00 PM -

performed by the Jubilate Choir

April 9th - Easter Sunday 9:00 am and 11:00 am

in the sanctuary

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