



# CHURCH ON THE AVENUE

St. Luke's, Hampden

**Third Sunday in Lent**

**March 7, 2021**

## **WELCOME & INSTRUCTION**

*Participants are invited to respond with the text in bold type.*

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,  
the keeper of the covenant,  
the source of steadfast love,  
our rock and our redeemer.  
**Amen.**

God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Fountain of living water,  
**pour out your mercy over us.**  
**Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free.**  
**Rebuild what we have ruined**  
**and mend what we have torn.**  
**Wash us in your cleansing flood.**  
**Make us alive in the Spirit**  
**to follow in the way of Jesus,**  
**as healers and restorers of the world you so love.**  
**Amen.**

Beloved, God's word never fails.  
The promise rests on grace:  
by the saving love of Jesus Christ,  
the wisdom and power of God,  
your sins are ✙ forgiven, and God remembers them no more.  
Journey in the way of Jesus.  
**Amen.**

## **GREETING**

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

**And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only 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 | Exodus 20:1-17**

*After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.*

<sup>1</sup>God spoke all these words:

<sup>2</sup>I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; <sup>3</sup>you shall have no other gods before me.

<sup>4</sup>You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup>You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, <sup>6</sup>but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup>You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup>Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work. <sup>10</sup>But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. <sup>11</sup>For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

<sup>12</sup>Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

<sup>13</sup>You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup>You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup>You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup>You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Holy Wisdom. Holy Word. **Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalms 19**

*The commandment of the Lord gives light to the eyes. (Ps. 19:8)*

<sup>1</sup>The heavens declare the glory of God,

and the sky proclaims its maker's handiwork.  
**2One day tells its tale to another,  
and one night imparts knowledge to another.**  
3Although they have no words or language,  
and their voices are not heard,  
**4their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the  
world,**  
where **God has pitched a tent for the sun.**  
5It comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;  
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.  
**6It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of  
it again;**  
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.  
7The teaching of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul;  
the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.  
**8The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart;  
the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.**  
9The fear of the Lord is clean and endures forever;  
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.  
**10More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold,  
sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.**  
11By them also is your servant enlightened,  
and in keeping them there is great reward.  
**12Who can detect one's own offenses?  
Cleanse me from my secret faults.**  
13Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over  
me;  
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.  
**14Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in  
your sight,  
O Lord, my strength and | my redeemer.**

### **THE GOSPEL | John 2:13-22**

God is with you! **And also with you!**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus attacks the commercialization of religion by driving merchants out of the temple. When challenged, he responds mysteriously, with the first prediction of his own death and resurrection. In the midst of a seemingly stable religious center, Jesus suggests that the center itself has changed.*

13The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. 15Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 16He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" 17His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." 18The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" 19Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and

will you raise it up in three days?” 21But he was speaking of the temple of his body. 22After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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

## MESSAGE |

### BREAKOUT QUESTIONS

- Three weeks into Lent, what has gotten in the way of being present with God this season? How have these things impacted you?
- What - or who - guides your attention back toward God and Christ? How do these things or people anchor you?

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.  
**A brief silence.**

There is no God before you. Purify the faith of your church, that your people place their trust in nothing beside you. Your name is holy. Guide your church, that in every situation your people's words and actions honor your name. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

The heavens declare your glory. Renew your creation. Provide leaders in the struggle for clean air and water; protect creatures and crops that rely on healthy ecosystems; give all people the willingness to repent when our way of life pollutes the earth and skies. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Your foolishness is wiser than human wisdom. Fill leaders with the foolishness of your peace and mercy. Your law defends the vulnerable. Work through legislators, judicial systems, and systems of law enforcement to protect the wellbeing and freedom of all (especially). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Your weakness is stronger than human strength. Protect those who are vulnerable and give courage to all who are suffering (especially). Defend victims of crime and bring redemption to those who have harmed others. Give sabbath rest to all who labor. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You call us to proclaim Christ crucified. Give clarity to this congregation and our leaders, so that we might follow Christ beyond our own habits and comfort. Clear out anything in our common life that would obscure the gospel or that serves our own interests. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

The cross of Christ is your power for all who are being saved. Thank you for (Perpetua, Felicity, and) all the martyrs whose witness reveals the power of the cross. Give us the same trust in life and in death. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread;  
and forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us;  
save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**2020 Offering Statements** Since the postal service has been experiencing extreme delays, please let Pastor Jim know if you should need a copy more urgently.

[churchontheavenue@gmail.com](mailto:churchontheavenue@gmail.com)

**Lenten Evening Prayer, Wednesdays 7:00pm** Join us again for Holden Evening Prayer on Wednesdays in Lent. The musical service is contemplative and stirring. We will plan to gather online via the church website.

**Thank you** for your continued generosity and for sustaining our ministry during this strange and difficult time! You can provide offering or make a special gift at anytime through the church's giving portal. Links can be found in the e-newsletter and on the church website at <http://www.churchontheavenuehampden.org>.

## **BENEDICTION**

God is with you! **And also with you!**

May God bless you and keep you.

May God's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May God look upon you with favor and give you peace,  
in the name of the Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**