

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

Aurora, MN

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 21, 2021

Pastor Greg Anderson

PRELUDE

HEARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

LBW pg. 77

HYMN

“Go to Dark Gethsemane”

LBW # 109

1 Go to dark Gethsemane, You who feel the tempter's pow'r; Your Redeemer's conflict see; Watch with Him one bitter hour; Turn not from His griefs away; Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

2 Follow to the judgment hall; View the Lord of life arraigned; O the worm-wood and the gall! O the pangs His soul sustained! Shun not suff'ring, shame, or loss; Learn of Him to bear the cross.

GREETING

LBW pg. 78

KYRIE

LBW pg. 78

HYMN OF PRAISE

“This is the Feast...”

LBW pg. 81

C: Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

Power and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are his.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia. Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation. Blessing and honor and glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God. For the Lamb Who was slain has begun His reign:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your son, Jesus Christ, our savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy Spirit, one god now and forever. Amen.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:31-34

³¹The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

R: The word of the Lord. C: *Thanks be to God.*

PSALM 51:1-12 (read responsively)

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

²**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.**

³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

⁴**Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

⁵Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

⁶**You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**

⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

⁸**Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**

⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

¹⁰**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**

¹¹Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

¹²**Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

SECOND READING

Hebrews 5:5-10

⁵So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; ⁶as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek." ⁷In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, ¹⁰having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

R: The word of the Lord. **C: *Thanks be to God.***

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

LBW pg. 83

C: *Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.*

GOSPEL INTRODUCTION

LBW pg. 83

C: *Glory to you O lord.*

GOSPEL

John 12:20-33

²⁰Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." ²²Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

²⁷"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." ²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." ³⁰Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ³³He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

GOSPEL RESPONSE

LBW pg. 83

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Sermon 5th Sunday of Lent 2021 John 12.20-33

During this 5th Sunday of Lent I am focusing first on the words of Jeremiah from the 1st reading. These words blend well with the Gospel as Jesus tries to prepare the disciples for His sacrifice to come. Life cannot take place without death first. With my sermon outline I have included the Jeremiah commentary from Henry T. C. Sun from the Luther Seminary *Working Preacher* web page. Please enjoy.

Peace,

Pastor Greg

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"Transformed by Grace"

I. "I will make a new covenant"

- This is the proclamation of Jeremiah to a people living in exile, covenant means promise
- To a people whose ancestors broke the covenant of Moses
- "I was their husband" God's heart was broken

II. Yet God responded with: "I will make a new covenant"

- No matter how much we break God's heart, God responds with love
- "I will be their God and they shall be my people" God's commitment to us
- "I will remember their sin no more" God wipes the slate clean through Christ

III. What then is our response during this 5th Sunday of Lent?

- According to our text from John: "we are called to die" We are to make a choice!

-What do you mean we are called to die?: *"Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it remains just, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life."*

-You must die!, That is the only way the transformation may take place!

-Now you can remain a rotting seed forever, covered in dirt

IV. God is ready to put your old life to death, He is ready to kill your old heart and raise it..

-It begins with our Baptism, Baptized in Grace

-During our life God then works his transformation. Do we need it? Are we perfect?

-Of course we need it! For without it we have nothing

V. Our Gospel text proclaims: *"And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself."*

-These are the greatest words of Grace ever spoken

-Yes our God proclaims "I will make a new covenant"

-and we will be made people of the promise forever through the power of his love

Henry T.C. Sun
Minister of Word and Sacrament
Heritage Presbyterian Church
Benicia, California, United States

"You've got to have heart." – Coach Jimmy McGinty, *The Replacements*.

Some biblical passages are difficult to preach because they are obscure. (That may have been the case with last week's reading from Numbers 21.) Other biblical passages are difficult to preach because they are familiar, and we therefore "know" what the text means before we start preaching it.

That is the problem with today's reading from Jeremiah 31. We "know" that Jeremiah's prophecy looks forward to the New Testament church. We "know" that the new covenant refers to Jesus and his birth, life, death, and resurrection. We "know" therefore that the primary message of this text is to justify the theological conclusion that the New Testament church has replaced ancient Israel in the economy of salvation history. And because Jeremiah 31:31-34 is quoted several times in the New Testament (completely in Hebrews 8:8-12; partially in Romans 11:27; Hebrews 10:16-17; by way of allusion in Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24, and John 6:45), for many Christians this meaning of our text is already and definitively known.

But that isn't the message of this text in its ancient (late 7th century BCE) context.

Jeremiah 31 belongs with chapter 30, and these two chapters are often identified as the "Book of Consolation" or the "Book of Comfort" in the Hebrew version of Jeremiah.¹ It is clear that these chapters have the Babylonian Exile in view, but there is some question as to whether the Exile has already happened (as with Second Isaiah) or is still on the temporal horizon. No matter how that historical question is answered, the text clearly envisions the period of time after the Babylonian Exile is over and the Hebrews are returned back to Palestine.²

What will happen then?

The return from exile will issue in a "new covenant" (*berit chadashah*), which according to verse 32 will "not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors." It is often noted that this is the only place in the Hebrew Bible that mentions a "new covenant."³ And this new, future, covenant is being compared to the old, existing, Mosaic covenant which they broke (*heperu*) even though the Lord was their husband (*ba'alti bam*).⁴

This isn't the first time the concept of the broken covenant is broached in Jeremiah; In Jeremiah 11:10, Jeremiah proclaims that "the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken (*heperu*) the covenant that I

made with their ancestors” and in Jeremiah 22:9, the nations affirm that Judah and Jerusalem are no more “because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord their God, and worshiped other gods and served them.”

The old, Mosaic covenant was conditional and transactional, as stated most bluntly in Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26. Both texts promise protection and blessing as the consequence of obedience, but judgment and ultimately exile as the consequence of disobedience. In Jeremiah’s view, and in the view of the other prophets, the exiles of the Northern Kingdom (721 BCE) and the Southern Kingdom (586 BCE) are God’s just punishment for the disobedience and idolatry of God’s chosen people.

But the new covenant that will follow the return from exile **will not** be conditional and transactional, full of rules that can be broken or followed insincerely from a sense of obligation or duty. Instead, we read in verse 33 that “I (that is, the Lord) will put my law (*torati*) within them, and I will write it on their hearts (*libbam*).”⁵ Note that the newness of this covenant is not its **content** but its **internalization**.⁶

Verse 34 gives us the result of this internalization of God’s covenant demands: there will be no need for religious leaders or teachers because everyone will know God “from the least to the greatest,” a Hebrew idiom for universality.⁷ Everyone will know God because God will forgive their iniquities (see also Jeremiah 33:8; 36:3) and not remember their sin anymore. That is a striking reversal from earlier statements by Jeremiah, such as what we find in Jeremiah 14:10 (“now he will *remember* their iniquity and *punish* their sins”).

This section closes with the saying “I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”⁸ The old, Mosaic covenant envisioned a relationship with God that was grounded in God’s act of liberating the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt. That model was taken up by Second Isaiah, who viewed the return from the Babylonian Exile as a new, or second, Exodus.

Jeremiah’s new covenant goes in a different direction. There is no new act of political liberation that is in view here, but simply and only a divine act of forgiveness that in and of itself creates the new covenant that will be written on the hearts of the Hebrew people.⁹ In this new covenant, obedience to God’s Torah, and acting in accordance with God’s will, become part of our internal character and hence something that happens automatically and without conscious thought or effort.

Thus, the people now in exile can look forward to being part of a community of faith that is forgiven as an act of God’s pure grace; whose relationship to God is not formal and transactional, but like that of a married couple in which everything that is done and every word that is spoken supports their partner and their relationship; and where the formal trappings of traditional religious hierarchy are no longer needed.

The Swiss Reformed theologian Karl Barth put it this way: “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts’ (Jeremiah 31:33). This and this alone is the basis of the love which is the fulfillment of the whole Law. And as God does this [God’s] Law, in virtue of which love is expected of [us], is the Law of the Gospel.”¹⁰

HYMN

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

LBW # 107

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,- the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land; a home within a wilderness, a rest upon the way, from the burning of the noontide heat and the burden of the day.

Upon that cross of Jesus, mine eye at times can see the very dying form of One, who suffered there for me: and from my smitten heart, with tears, two wonders I confess,- the wonder of his glorious love, and my own worthlessness.

APOSTLES’ CREED

We believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. We 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 into hell. 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. We 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 INTERCESSION

P: Hear us, O God. **C:** *Your mercy is great.*

THE PEACE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LBW pg. 91

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

LBW pg. 95

SENDING HYMN

"As the Sun with Longer Journey"

WOV # 655

As the sun with longer journey melts the winter's snow and ice, with its slowly growing radiance warms the seed beneath the earth, May the sun of Christ's uprising gently bring our hearts to life.

Through the days of waiting, watching, In the desert of our sin, Searching on the far horizon for a sign of cloud or wind, We await the healing waters of our Savior's victory.

DISMISSAL

LBW pg. 95

Prayer Concerns

Charlotte and Ken Carlson, Marie Anderson, Louise Ellingson, Glorene Clark, Herb Moore, Bill Utley, Marilyn Koschak, Susan (Paula Skelton's sister), Tom Lehtinen, Ruby Okstad (218-749-2866), Barb Swanson

*****NOTICE*****

We will begin “in person worship” on Sunday, March 28th, at
10:30 a.m.

Annual Meeting will be March 28th immediately following
worship.

Bandage Rolling will begin on April 6th at 8:30 a.m.

Bible Study ~ We will be starting a weekly Bible Study on Wednesdays, led by Pastor Anderson, beginning April 14st @ 1:00 p.m.

Members of Our Savior's Lutheran,
Plea for Help for Barb Swanson
On Sunday, Feb. 28th, 2021 the apartment building
where our church member and dear friend Barb
Swanson lived burned! Barb was able to get out of the
burning building with only the clothes on her back.
Barb is safe and is temporarily staying with her son in
Virginia and looking to find a new apartment.
Barb has lost everything in the fire and did not have
renters insurance.
A group of women from our church with Barbs input
have put together a list of needs and are asking for
donations to help rebuild her life. The items can be
either new or used in clean and good condition;
**possibly you know people who may have
some of the needed items who would like
to help Barb.**

Please call Jan Moore or Deb Maki to choose items on
the list that will help rebuild Barbs life; Barb does not
want more than she needs and we don't want
duplicate items when so many things are needed.

Please bring your gifts to the church, a gift table will be
set up in the fellowship hall ready for you to drop off
your gifts; please include a gift card so Barb will be
able to thank you. If you have larger furniture items do
not deliver them to the church call Deb Maki as
arrangements will have to be made once Barb finds an
apartment.

**Money donations can also be given for Barb we prefer
you include them with your church offering and label it
as a designated gift for Barb Swanson, the church
treasurer will forward your gifts on to Barb weekly, the
designated gifts will show up on your quarterly giving
statement.**

Thank You Everyone For responding to this plea to
rebuild Barb's life, thank you for doing God's Work
with your hearts, hands and abilities! May God Bless
you!

KITCHEN

Set of 4 light-weight melmaline dishes

4 glasses, 4 coffee mugs

Silverware

Kitchen Utensils: spatulas, serving spoons, vegetable
peeler, can opener, measuring cups

Set of pots and pans with covers
Fry pans (small, medium, large with covers)
Small Blue Enamel Roaster (the blue speckled one)
Set of kitchen knives
2 cookie sheets 1 cake pan
~~Juice pitcher~~
~~Colander/strainer~~
Cutting Board
Set of light weight mixing bowls
Set of storage bowls
Hand electric mixer
Toaster, 2-slice
Coffee Pot 2 cup
Microwave
Crockpot
Cutting board
Sink strainer
~~Tall Kitchen, Garbage Can and garbage bags~~
Pot Holders (4)
4 dish towels, 4 dish cloths

KITCHEN

Small table
2 kitchen wood captains arm chairs (specific for Bar's health and comfort)

SUPPLIES

Scissors
Baggies, tinfoil, plastic wrap, paper towels, toilet paper
Laundry basket, Laundry soap, hand soap, dish soap

BATHROOM

Bathroom rug, waste basket
Hairbrush and comb
Hand mirror, tooth brush, tooth paste, bar soap
4 Towels, 4 hand towels, 4 wash cloths
Toilet brush

BED ROOM

~~Twin Bed and mattress~~
Bed Table
Bed Lamp
Alarm clock
Twin Blanket
~~Twin sheets and pillow case Twin mattress pad~~

LIVING ROOM

Sofa –Love Seat
Chair or recliner chair
Lamp
End table/coffee table
~~Vacuum cleaner~~

The Executive Council is requesting that members let them know if they have started or completed the covid vaccine. Please Call Debbie Maki at 218-290-1471 or call the church at 218-229-3214 and leave a message. Thank you.

Plan for “In Person” Worship

Upon returning to “in person” worship the following will be necessary:

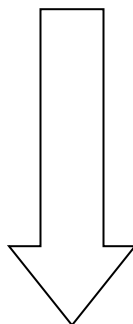
1. The use of masks or other facial covering will be required.
2. Maintain social /physical distancing. Visiting must be done outside of the building.
3. Hand sanitizer will be used as people enter and leave the building. Hand sanitizing stations will be available inside front and rear entrances.
4. The minister will not greet you before or after worship.
5. When entering the building, please do so by households, maintaining 6 feet from the next person or household and go directly to a pew. Rows will be designated for seating. Every other row will be blocked off.
6. Bulletins will be located in the Narthex, and be picked up by each individual and be taken home after the service. Do not leave the bulletins in church.
7. There will be no hymnals, communion cards and pencils in the pew area. Therefore, no singing of hymns or liturgy. During the service, there will be no sharing of the Peace.
8. The offertory plate will be in the Narthex.
9. On Communion Sundays, located in the Narthex, will be individually pre-packaged communion elements. Take one for each member of your household. You will be directed when to partake of the elements.
10. When you are dismissed, ushers will indicate, by pew, when you will exit. Use hand sanitizer and go directly out of the building. The Fellowship Hall will not be used.
11. Bathroom use. Hand sanitizer and sanitized wipes will be located in the bathrooms. After use of the bathroom, you will need to sanitize door handles, flush lever and sink faucets. It is suggested that young children be accompanied by a parent.
12. If you do not feel well or possibly have a fever, please stay home.
13. If you are at higher risk, over age 65 or with underlying health risks, please consider staying at home.

These suggestions have been compiled from the NEMN Synod, the Wisconsin Council of Churches, the CDC, and the University of Minnesota Department of Epidemiology.

The Committee for Safety During Worship
Our Saviors Lutheran Church

MARH IS FOOD SHELF MONTH

Please consider helping your neighbors in need. There is a box located in the narthex for donations. 😊



STRETCH YOUR DONATION

GIVE MORE BY MAKING A CASH DONATION TO YOUR LOCAL FOOD SHELF.
 Financial donations go further due to access to food banks and discount purchasing programs, allowing food shelves to purchase items most needed in their community.

YOUR \$10 FOOD DONATION

vs.

YOUR \$10 FINANCIAL DONATION

MN Food Share

follow us @mnfoodshare

[Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [Facebook](#)

Illustration by Katherine M. G. for MN Food Share. www.mnfoodshare.org

You may designate funds to our local Food Shelf with your regular giving. The church will forward your monetary giving to the Food Shelf.



FILL A BAG FOR OUR LOCAL FOOD SHELF

Respond to food insecurity in our community by filling a grocery bag with much needed food and household items for our local food shelf.

Often needed items:

- Proteins - canned meat, fish, and beans, nuts & nut butters
- Fresh/dried herbs & spices
- White, wild, & brown rice varieties
- Gluten-free flours & flour blends (ex. coconut, oat, rice, almond, tapioca, chickpea, sorghum, cassava, amaranth, buckwheat, teff)
- Personal care items - shampoo/soap, deodorant, toothpaste, feminine hygiene, diapers, toilet paper
- Household supplies - laundry & dish detergent, kitchen & bathroom cleaners, paper towels