**March 19th, 2023 Fourth Sunday in Lent – Email/At Home Missal**

**ZOOM INFORMATION:**

**The ZOOM link for today’s service, which opens at 9.30 am on March 19th, 2023, can be found here:**

**Sunday Worship March 19th, 2023 09:30 am ZOOM room opens; service begins at 10:00 am.**

**Join Zoom Meeting click here:**[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86144723429?pwd=bDM1S2Q5ZVY3eGxhdlhuWG9UOHIvUT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86144723429?pwd=bDM1S2Q5ZVY3eGxhdlhuWG9UOHIvUT09)

**Meeting ID: 861 4472 3429 Passcode: 701596**

**You don’t have to have a computer or internet to connect to any of our church Zoom services; you can also just call in on one of these numbers (long distance charges may apply): (All Canadian numbers). You can also access the ZOOM from your telephone by using the “One tap mobile” option:**

**+17789072071,,86144723429#,,,,\*701596# Canada**

**+17806660144,,86144723429#,,,,\*701596# Canada**

**Dial by your location:**

**+1 778 907 2071 Canada**

**+1 780 666 0144 Canada**

**+1 204 272 7920 Canada
+1 438 809 7799 Canada**

**+1 587 328 1099 Canada**

**+1 647 374 4685 Canada
+1 647 558 0588 Canada**

**Meeting ID: 861 4472 3429 Passcode: 701596**

1. **Find your local number:** [**https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kHrnL3MpQ**](https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kHrnL3MpQ) **…………………….....**

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THIS WEEK:**

**Lenten Discussion Series – Bless the Lent We Actually Have**

**On Zoom, Wednesdays at 7:15PM**

**The ZOOM link for this series opens at 6.45 pm.**

**Join Zoom Meeting click here**:
[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86719040403?pwd=akxCWllYMXYySjUxNUxuUlJzTkxxQT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86719040403?pwd=akxCWllYMXYySjUxNUxuUlJzTkxxQT09)

**Meeting ID: 867 1904 0403 Passcode: 865095**

**March 22 – Blessed Are The Lonely**

**March 29 – Blessed Are Those Who Mourn**

Each session will be about 45 mins. You’re invited to join us for any or all, as you are able and interested. For more information, contact Pastor Laura at pastor@st-peters-cambridge.org

1. **…………………………….**

**Organ Recital Series**

**Today at 3:00 PM**

**Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Wolff Opus VIII Organ**

**Bradley Moggach**

**$10.00 at the door (Students free)**

1. **…………………………………**
2. **Here is the YouTube link for the sermon from this past Sunday’s (March 12th) service:** [**https://youtu.be/3mYRQ8zrVnY**](https://youtu.be/3mYRQ8zrVnY)
3. **……………………….**

**This Easter… Dress up breakfast and brunch with Dettweiler Mennonite Style Breakfast Sausage.  100% pure pork sausage, no filler, no preservatives, and no gluten.  Just real pork with salt, pepper, and a touch of brown sugar, in a natural casing.**

**$6.75 / PKG (Approximately 1 Pound, 12 Breakfast Sausages)**

**Please Place your order by March 26 for April 1/2 pickup @ St. Peter’s**

**Please contact Alex Black at St. Peter’s Preston - 519.653.4721**

1. **………………………………**
2. You can order your own Maple Syrup from St. Peter’s, Preston. Our partner is a 5th generation Woolwich Township farm that has been producing maple syrup for over 100 years. They adhere to the production guidelines issued by the Ontario Maple Syrup Association, which state the number of taps per tree (max. of 2) for best forest management practices. Handling of the sap and syrup is minimized to reduce the chance of contamination. Their syrup is pure with nothing added, only the water has been removed. As of 2018 their maple syrup is certified organic.
3. **1 litre Mason Jars of maple syrup are $23.00.**
4. **Send an email to or** **alexblack@sympatico.ca** **or call the church office at 519-653-4721 to order your own locally produced fresh Maple Syrup.**
5. **……………………………….**

Our friends at Esta Chocolates have two items, perfect for Easter gifts.

**Easter Cone Bags;** 15 assorted Truffles, wrapped individually, and packaged, ready to share, with family, friends, and colleagues. **$9.00 / Package**

**Easter Bunny Truffles;** 7 Bunny Truffles with Caramel and Milk Chocolate Centres, wrapped individually, and packaged, ready to share, with family, friends, and colleagues. **$5.50 / Package**

**Please contact Alex Black at St. Peter's Preston 519-653-4721**

**…………………………………**

The **annual meeting** will be held in the sanctuary on March 26 following worship. Coffee and tea will be available (no potluck). You are invited to bring a snack or a brown-bag lunch if you wish. Annual reports will be handed out to the congregation on March 12, 2023.

**……………………………….**

**Menno Singers and artistic director Brandon Leis present Rachmaninoff’s All Night Vigil (Vespers)** at Trillium Lutheran Church (22 Willow, Waterloo) on Saturday, April 1 at 7:30pm.

$25 Adults. $5 Children/Students. Tickets available on-line or at the door (cash or credit)  [www.mennosingers.com](http://www.mennosingers.com)

**………………………………**

**Bible Study will be in the Art Room on Mondays at 3:00PM, beginning March 6th.**

**Please join us – all are welcome!**

**…………………………..**

**PASTORAL VISITS: Pastor Laura Sauder is available** for safe visits with social distancing requirements in place, and also for telephone visits. Please reach out to her by calling the church office at 519-653-4721 to arrange a visit.

**……………..……….**

1. **Addison’s Women’s Choir – 40th Anniversary Concert**
2. **Here’s to Song**
3. Saturday, May 6, 2023
4. Special Guests: Siobhan Kerr, Harpist,
5. Cambridge Male Chorus, AWC Alumni & Past
6. Marantha Christian Reformed Church, 94 Elgin Street, South, Cambridge
7. Tickets: Adults $15.00 (under 12 free)
8. **To place an order, please telephone Barbara Berg at 519-653-0885, or by email at** **bergsnest@bell.net**
9. **……………………………..**
10. **………………………………**

**Presiding Pastor: Rev. Laura Sauder**

**Organist & Director of Music: Bradley Moggach**

**Land Acknowledgement:**

***A: With thankful hearts we acknowledge that the land upon which we live and worship here at St Peter’s is the treaty land of the Six Nations, comprising in part the territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral Peoples. This land is covered by treaties such as the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Two Row Wampum Treaty and the Haldimand Treaty of 1784. As we continue to learn more about the truth of our shared history, we desire to grow in Peace, Friendship and Respect, leading ultimately to true reconciliation.***

**Confession & Forgiveness:**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,

who looks upon us in compassion,

forgives our sin,

and heals our lives.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Have mercy, O God,

***C: against you, you alone,***

***we have sinned.***

***In your compassion,***

***cleanse us from our sin***

***and take away our guilt.***

***Create in us a new heart***

***and give us a steadfast spirit.***

***Do not cast us away,***

***but fill us with your Holy Spirit***

***and restore your joy within us.***

***Amen.***

As tender as parent to child,

so deep is God’s compassion for you.

As high as heaven is above earth,

so vast is God’s love for you.

As far as east is from west,

so far God removes your sin from you,

renewing your life through Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love.

***C: Blessed be God forever.***

**Gathering Hymn: ELW # 843 ‘Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness’**

1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness

 with a liberating light;

 praise the One who frees the pris'ners,

 turning blindness into sight.

 Praise the One who preached the gospel,

 healing ev'ry dread disease,

 calming storms and feeding thousands

 with the very bread of peace.

2 Praise the One who blessed the children

 with a strong yet gentle word;

 praise the One who drove out demons

 with a piercing, two-edged sword.

 Praise the One who brings cool water

 to the desert's burning sand;

 from this well comes living water

 quenching thirst in ev'ry land.

3 Praise the one true love incarnate:

 Christ, who suffered in our place;

 Jesus died and rose for many

 that we may know God by grace.

 Let us sing for joy and gladness,

 seeing what our God has done.

 Praise the one redeeming glory;

 praise the One who makes us one.

*(Title: Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness; Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955; Text © 1987 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission*. *Music: J. Wyeth, Repository of Sacred Music, part II, 1813; Public Domain; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Greeting:**

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

***C: And also with you.***

**Kyrie: ELW Setting 4 *(page 147)***

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

For the peace from above,

and for our salvation,

let us pray to the Lord.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

For the peace of the whole world,

for the well-being of the Church of God,

and for the unity of all,

let us pray to the Lord.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

For this holy house,

and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord.

***C: Lord, have mercy.***

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

***C: Amen.***

**Prayer of the Day***:*

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.\****

**Lesson Introduction: *(Pastor Laura)*Psalm 23**

The Bible is filled with images of comfort and promises of God’s presence through life’s most difficult moments. One of the most beautiful and enduring of these passages is the 23rd psalm.

This is a psalm of trust that speaks of God as our divine Shepherd; the one who leads us through danger to security, and who provides us with what we need to see us through the ups and downs of life. Let us listen to the word…

**The Reading: 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.\*

Word of God, Word of Life*.* ***C: Thanks be to God.****\**

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**Children’s Message: (Pastor Laura)**

**Gospel Acclamation: Lenten Acclamation from Setting 4 *(ELW page # 151)***

Return to the Lord, your God,

for he is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.\*

**The Holy Gospel according to John 9:1-11**

***C: Glory to you, O Lord.***

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who was blind from birth. Jesus’ disciples asked, “Rabbi, who sinned so that he was born blind, this man or his parents?”

Jesus answered, “Neither he nor his parents. This happened so that God’s mighty works might be displayed in him. While it’s daytime, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” After he said this, he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and smeared the mud on the man’s eyes. Jesus said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (this word means *sent*). So the man went away and washed. When he returned, he could see.

The man’s neighbors and those who used to see him when he was a beggar said, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?”

Some said, “It is,” and others said, “No, it’s someone who looks like him.”

But the man said, “Yes, it’s me!”

So they asked him, “How are you now able to see?”

He answered, “The man they call Jesus made mud, smeared it on my eyes, and said, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and then I could see.”  *(CEB)*

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

**Sermon**

**Blessed Are Those Who Feel Alone – Psalm 23; John 9:1-11**

Until this week, as I was thinking about our theme of loneliness, I don’t think I’d ever really paid attention to how many songs there are about being lonely.

There’s ‘Only the Lonely’ by Roy Orbison.

‘Are You Lonesome Tonight’ by Elvis.

‘I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry’ by Hank Williams.

The 70s hit, ‘All By Myself’ by Eric Carmen.

The 80s hits, ‘Here I Go Again (On My Own)’ by Whitesnake and ‘Owner of a Lonely Heart’ by Yes.

Loneliness; that feeling that I’m the only one; is a universal experience. And so of course it makes sense that there are countless songs about this theme, across musical genres.

And I think that there’s something powerful listening to these kinds of songs when we’re feeling lonely. Listening to someone else sing about also feeling lonely has the power to make us feel a little less alone. That we’re not alone in our loneliness.

I imagine that the main character in our Bible story today is someone who knew a thing or two about being lonely.

We don’t know many details about his life – this man who has been blind from birth. We do know that unlike so many, he didn’t actually seek Jesus out for healing. Jesus sees him and decides to use him as an opportunity to demonstrate God’s power.

This man is minding his own business when Jesus spits in the dirt, makes some mud, puts it on the man’s eyes, and then tells him to go wash it off in the pool of Siloam.

Needing to wash his face now that it’s covered in mud, the man follows Jesus’ instructions. And when he washes off the mud, he is suddenly able to see for the first time in his life.

He goes back home to share the news with his community only to have his neighbours argue about his true identity. Is this the man they’re used to seeing begging in the road; or is this someone else?

And it’s this moment, after the healing, that I think gives us a glimpse into his aloneness.

When he was blind, most people paid him no mind.

Now that he can see, everyone argues about how this could have been possible rather than just celebrating with him.

And when we read on this story, we see that they even drive him out of the community.

So much for new sight opening a better chapter in this man’s life. He gains his sight, and he ends up rejected by his community. Even more alone than he was before.

Now this story is about a particular kind of loneliness; about someone being made the target or scapegoat of a community’s fear and anger; which is a particularly painful and acute experience of loneliness.

When we look to our own lived experience, the causes for loneliness will vary.

“For some it’s social anxiety, or the burdens we shoulder that keep us locked out from others. Our mental health, caregiving requirements, demanding schedules, or our own sickness or disease. We can feel alone in a room of people, or alone in our marriage or family, or alone because we worry people won’t accept us for who we are.”1

There are perhaps as many reasons for being lonely as there are people in the world. Loneliness is pervasive in our culture because we are much more isolated from one another than we used to be at one time. And the pandemic only made that so much worse.

And the sad part about this is that when we are isolated from others, we’re also cut off from the compassion and help and that others can offer.

Which is why I’m so thankful that in this story, Jesus seeks the man out a second time.

Because he had been blind at the time, the man didn’t know what the person who healed him looked like. But Jesus comes and finds him. Jesus makes sure he knows that he isn’t forgotten; that he isn’t alone; and that he knows this gift of healing wasn’t just about physical sight – but about spiritual sight too.

We don’t ever find out if the man was reconciled with his community – or whether he even wanted to be reconciled with them. But we do know that when he meets Jesus again for real this time, he worships him.

Whether he returns home again or not, he now knows he always has a home with Jesus.

And this same promise made to each one of us.

Even when we are isolated from others – for whatever reason; even when we feel alone; we can trust that are in fact never truly alone. For we always have a home with God.

God, our Good Shepherd, has promised to be with us in every moment of life. To walk with us; to share in our laughter and in our tears. To hold us close in our times of hurt; to lead us along safe paths.

As Christ’s beloved community, as the church, the hope is that we can be this same kind of home for one another. To be a place when fears can be shared, hurts can be held, and joys can be celebrated. A place where we can be ourselves and loved for it. A place where we can belong.

We don’t always get it right as the church. Sometimes we hurt and disappoint one another here too. But we strive to live honestly together; to talk things out; to create space where it’s safe to be vulnerable and open with one another.

If you are feeling lonely today, see if you can be brave and reach out to someone to say hi. Chances are they’ll appreciate connecting with you too.

Or if there’s someone who’s been on your mind; who you’ve been meaning to reach out to; maybe today is the day to finally make that connection.

Because we were never meant to do this alone. We need one another to help bear the burdens and to share the joys, both big and small.

There will always be times in life when we feel alone. But we can trust that our God, who is faithful and steadfast, is always with us.

This is why we can say, blessed are those feel alone. Because no matter how lonely you may feel, you can be sure that God never ever leaves your side.

AMEN.

1 Kate Bowler. “Bless the Lent We Actually Have Sermon Guide,” page 14.

**Hymn of the Day: ELW # 782 ‘My Shepherd, You Supply My Need’**

1 My Shepherd, you supply my need;

 most holy is your name.

 In pastures fresh you make me feed,

 beside the living stream.

 You bring my wand'ring spirit back

 when I forsake your ways,

 and lead me, for your mercy's sake,

 in paths of truth and grace.

2 When I walk through the shades of death,

 your presence is my stay;

 one word of your supporting breath

 drives all my fears away.

 Your hand, in sight of all my foes,

 does still my table spread;

 my cup with blessings overflows,

 your oil anoints my head.

3 The sure provisions of my God

 attend me all my days;

 oh, may your house be my abode

 and all my work be praise.

 Here would I find a settled rest,

 while others go and come;

 no more a stranger or a guest,

 but like a child at home.

 *(Title: My Shepherd, You Supply My Needs; Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt., based on Psalm 23; Public Domain; Music: North American Traditional; Public Domain; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Prayers of Intercession:**

A: Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Draw the circle ever wider, and make your beloved community a place where everyone can find a home. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty of the breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

Powerful God, guide the work of heads of state and elected officials. Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve (Especially we pray for Bill, Don, Tammy, Alice, Don, Lynn, Bryan, Nansea, Helen, Sharon, Donald, Creena, Shirley, Maya, Karen, Clara, Carol, Jeff, Aaron, Mackenzie, Rhett, Linda, Pat, Jan, Ken, Lena, Brian, John, Anne, Pastor Neil, the family of Katherina, and those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts….. ). Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with hunger for justice. Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

God of Holy Ground, we pray for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Move us to lament and repent. Open our hearts, bodies, minds and souls to the cries of your people. Transform us by your presence. Drive us into action for the dismantling of racism in relationships, communities, institutions and societies. Bless us with companions who support us, challenge us and help us keeping

going. Merciful God, **C: receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.\***

**Share the peace of Christ:**

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

***C: And also with you.*\***

Our worship continues with the offering of our gifts.

**Offering**

**Offertory Music: ELW # 481 ‘Come to the Table’**

Come to the table of mercy,

prepared with the wine and the bread.

All who are hungry and thirsty,

come, and your souls will be fed.

Come at the Lord's invitation;

receive from his nail-scarred hand.

Eat of the bread of salvation;

drink of the blood of the Lamb.

*(Title: Come to the Table; Text:* *Claire Cloninger, b. 1942; Text © 1991 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP) c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695; Juniper Landing Music (admin. Word Music); and Word Music (ASCAP). All rights reserved. Used by permission. Music: Martin J. Nystrom, b. 1956; © 1991 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP) c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695; Juniper Landing Music (admin. Word Music); and Word Music (ASCAP). All rights reserved. Used by permission. Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

**Offering Prayer:**

A: 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.\*

**You are invited to prepare your table with bread and wine, or crackers and juice, whatever is available to you, so that you may participate in the meal.**

**Meal: Click here for the communion liturgy from worship on YouTube:**

[**https://youtu.be/kmZJQiBM8QY**](https://youtu.be/kmZJQiBM8QY)

**ELW Setting 4: ‘Dialogue…’ (page 152)**

The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you. (Sung)**

Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

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

**ELW Setting 4: ‘Preface…’**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, *(sung)*

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts

and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,

that, renewed in the gift of baptism,

we may come to the fullness of your grace.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**ELW Setting 4: ‘Holy, Holy, Holy…’ *(page 153) (sung)***

***Holy, holy, holy Lord,***

***Lord God of pow’r 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.***

On the night before he died,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

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

**The Lord’s Prayer:**

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

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.

**Communion:**

This is Christ’s table. All are welcome here to receive God’s good gifts of love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness.

I invite those at home, and those in the building communing by fellowship cup, to take your bread or cracker as we say together, “The body of Christ, given for us.”

And, as we take our cup we say, “The blood of Christ, shed for us.”

**Communion Music: ELW # 779 ‘Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound’**

1 Amazing grace! how sweet the sound

 that saved a wretch like me!

 I once was lost, but now am found;

 was blind, but now I see.

2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,

 and grace my fears relieved;

 how precious did that grace appear

 the hour I first believed!

3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares

 I have already come;

 'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,

 and grace will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me;

 his word my hope secures;

 he will my shield and portion be

 as long as life endures.

5 When we've been there ten thousand years,

 bright shining as the sun,

 we've no less days to sing God's praise

 than when we'd first begun.

*(Title: Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound; Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt., sts. 1-4; anonymous, st. 5; Public Domain; Music: W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835; arr.Edwin O .Excell, 1851-1921, alt. Public Domain; Reprinted and Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-727610. All rights reserved.)*

L: May the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen you, and keep you, in his grace.

***C: Amen.***

**ELW Setting 1: ‘Now Lord you let your servant…’ *(page 113) (sung)***

Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:

your word has been fulfilled.

My own eyes have seen the salvation

which you have prepared

in the sight of ev’ry people:

a light to reveal you to the nations

and the glory of your people Israel.

Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace.\*

**Prayer after Communion:**

A: 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.\*

**Blessing: “A Blessing for When You Suffer Alone”**

I see you there, suffering alone,

with the illness or pain that lingers

though friends do not,

—or cannot.

You, in isolation,

locked in, or locked out.

You, the caregivers

struggling in the certainty

that there is not enough

strength, time or resources.

You who counsel others in their trauma,

but suffer deeply from your own.

You who are grieving losses,

too many to name,

too complex or unbecoming to speak aloud.

Blessed are you, dear one.

Searching for someone to understand,

see your wounds and your hope for healing.

You are seen, as you walk that hard

and lonely road.

Blessed are you because your loneliness

speaks a deep truth:

you were never meant to do this alone.

God, comfort us, guide us,

that our hope for more—

a prayer which will be answered—

might be protected too.

Amen.\*\*

**Sending Hymn: ELW # 334 ‘Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery’ *(verses 1-3, & Lent 4)***

1. Tree of Life and awesome myst'ry,

in your death we are reborn;

though you die in all of hist'ry,

still you rise with ev'ry morn,

still you rise with ev'ry morn.

2. We remember truth once spoken,

love passed on through act and word;

ev'ry person lost and broken

wears the body of our Lord,

wears the body of our Lord.

3. Christ, you lead and we shall follow,

stumbling though our steps may be;

one with you in joy and sorrow,

we the river, you the sea,

we the river, you the sea.

Lent 4

Give us eyes to see you clearly;

make us children of your light.

Give us hearts to live more nearly

as your gospel shining bright.

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**Dismissal:**

A: Go in peace. Serve in Love.

***C: Thanks be to God.\****

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