

Thank you for serving your church in this way and for sharing God's word with your sisters and brothers. A few reminders:

- Practice the readings beforehand.
- Please arrive at least ten minutes before your scheduled service. "A Guide to Pronouncing Biblical Names" book is located in the Pastor's Sacristy, the small room on the right hand side at the front of the Sanctuary. If, after consulting the book, you still need help with any pronunciations, Pastor can help you.
- You may sit in one of the right-side altar chairs until it is time to read, or you may come forward prior to the Prayer of the Day.
- When speaking, please project your voice and make sure you are speaking as loudly and clearly as possible.
- The lessons may be introduced simply by saying,
"The Old Testament Reading is from the number chapter of book."
After the lesson the reader says, "The Word of the Lord." And congregation responds, "Thanks be to God."
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Thank you again for serving. Your contribution to worship is appreciated by all!

INTRODUCTION

Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek the face of the Lord again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."

PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW)

God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READINGS

Genesis 15:1–12, 17–18
Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17—4:1
Luke 13:31–35

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Genesis 15:1–12, 17–18

God promises a childless and doubting Abram that he will have a son, that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and that the land of Canaan will be their inheritance. Abram's trust in God is sealed with a covenant-making ceremony, a sign of God's promise.

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ²But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

⁷Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." ⁸But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" ⁹He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." ¹⁰He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. ¹¹And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹²As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. ¹⁷When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.

☞ The Word of the Lord. ☞ Thanks be to God.

Psalm 27

¹The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?

The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?

²When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh,
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who stumbled and fell.

³Though an army should en- | camp against me,
yet my heart shall not | be afraid;
⁴**and though war should rise | up against me,
yet will I put my | trust in him.**
⁵One thing have I asked of the LORD; one | thing I seek;
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days | of my life;
⁶**to behold the fair beauty | of the LORD
and to seek him | in his temple.**
⁷For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe | in his shelter;
he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling and set me high up- | on a rock.
⁸**Even now he lifts | up my head
above my enemies | round about me.**
⁹Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation with sounds | of great gladness;
I will sing and make music | to the LORD.
¹⁰**Hearken to my voice, O LORD, | when I call;
have mercy on me and | answer me.**
¹¹You speak in my heart and say, | "Seek my face."*
Your face, LORD, | will I seek.
¹²**Hide not your | face from me,
nor turn away your servant | in displeasure.**
¹³You have been my helper; cast me | not away;
do not forsake me, O God of | my salvation.
¹⁴**Though my father and my moth- | er forsake me,
the LORD | will sustain me.**
¹⁵Show me your | way, O LORD;
lead me on a level path, because | of my enemies.
¹⁶**Deliver me not into the hand of my | adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen up against me, and also those | who speak malice.**
¹⁷What if I had not believed that I should see the goodness | of the LORD
in the land | of the living!
¹⁸**Oh, tarry and await the LORD's pleasure; be strong, and he shall com- | fort your heart;
wait patiently | for the LORD.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING: Philippians 3:17—4:1

Although Paul's devotion to Christ has caused him to be persecuted, he does not regret the course he has taken. Writing from prison, he expresses confidence in a glorious future and encourages other Christians to follow in his footsteps.

Chapter 3

¹⁷Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

Chapter 4

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

📖 The Word of the Lord. **🙏** Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 13:31–35

Neither Herod's plotting nor Jerusalem's resistance to maternal love will deter Jesus from his sacrificial mission.

³¹At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." ³²He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' ³⁴Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

³⁵See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

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