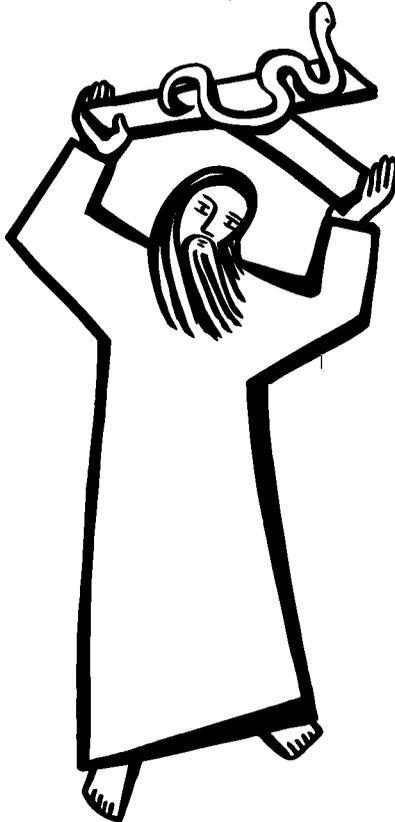


ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lewistown, Montana

March 14, 2021



Welcome to worship today!

In this season of pandemic, our congregation is following the guidelines of the Central Montana Health District and the Montana Synod.

If you have or recently had a fever, cough, or shortness of breath please do not worship in the church today.

Due to the rising number of active COVID cases in Fergus County **face coverings are required throughout the worship service.**

If any of these conditions is not possible for you, our worship services are available online: Zion Website: <http://www.zionlewisownelca.com/worship/video-services>

YouTube Channel: Zion Lutheran Church, Lewistown, MT

Zion Lutheran Church (ELCA)

February 14, 2021 Fourth Sunday in Lent

Introduction to the day

The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

MINISTRY OF ZION

*KYRIE

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the peace from above,
and for our salvation,
let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P 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.**

P For this holy house,
and for all who offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

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

C **Amen.**

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P In the name of the Father,
and of the † Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C **Amen.**

***GREETING**

P 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.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Let us pray.

C **O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**
Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Numbers 21:4-9

Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.

A reading from Numbers.

⁴From Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (Spoken responsively)

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the | LORD is good,
for God's mercy en- | dures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the | LORD proclaim
that God redeemed them from the hand | of the foe,**

³gathering them in | from the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and | from the south.

¹⁷**Some were fools and took re- | bellious paths;
through their sins they | were afflicted.**

¹⁸They loathed all man- | ner of food
and drew near | to death's door.

¹⁹**Then in their trouble they cried | to the LORD
and you delivered them from | their distress.**

²⁰You sent forth your | word and healed them
and rescued them | from the grave.

²¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your | steadfast love
and your wonderful works | for all people.**

²²Let them offer sacrifices | of thanksgiving
and tell of your deeds with | shouts of joy.

Second Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10

While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God's grace at work in our lives.

A reading from Ephesians

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.*

GOSPEL: John 3:14-21

To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.

P The holy gospel according to John.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁴Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

MUSICAL OFFERING

*CREED

P With the whole church let us 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 INTERCESSION

P Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

(Response to the petitions)

P Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

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

C **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

Create in Me a Clean Heart

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.*

***OFFERING PRAYER**

P Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P We give you thanks, Father,
through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son,
whom you sent in this end of the ages
to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.
He is your Word, inseparable from you,
through whom you created all things,
and in whom you take delight.

He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb.
He there took on our nature and our lot
and was shown forth as your Son,
born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.

He, our Lord Jesus, fulfilled all your will
and won for you a holy people;
he stretched out his hands in suffering
order to free from suffering those who trust you.

He is the one who, handed over to a death he freely accepted,
in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one,
to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous,
to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection,
taking bread and giving thanks to you, said:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way 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.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection,
we take this bread and cup,
giving you thanks that you have made us worthy
to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your church;
gather into one all who share this bread and wine;
fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth,
that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ;
through whom all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father,
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever.

C Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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

**P Jesus draws the whole world to himself.
Come to this meal and be fed.**

COMMUNION SONG

Lamb of God

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.*

COMMUNION

Please remain seated, communion will be brought to you.

***TABLE BLESSING**

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Let us pray.

Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***BLESSING**

P You are what God made you to be:
created in Christ Jesus for good works,
chosen as holy and beloved,
freed to serve your neighbor.

God bless you ✝ that you may be a blessing,
in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

C **Amen.**

***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Share the good news.

C **Thanks be to God.**

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Serving Us:

Pr. Lynne Ogren

Pianist: Rhonda Kepner

Ushers: Dale & Gail Kurns

Lector: Stacie, Abbie & Ashlen Arntzen

Communion Assistant: Brad, Stacie & Aleia Arntzen

Disciples: All the Baptized

Welcome! Before worship, you are invited to read and reflect.

Ongoing Prayer Concerns: Jessie Stewart, Kathie Bailey, Woody Westburg

Homebound Members: LaVerna Conard, Mary Westburg, DeAnn Paulson, Dorothy Adcock, Don Pfau, Marv Mathison, Marvin Beck

Social Concern of the Month: Intermountain is a nationally recognized nonprofit providing hope and healing to children, youth, and families in need of improved mental and behavioral health. In support of this important ministry, we invite you to contribute to their work as an additional offering this month. Please mark your check Intermountain. **You can also pick up a coin can** to collect “Change for Children” throughout the month. For more information on Intermountain, check out their website: www.intermountain.org

Week of 03/15 – 03/21

Mon	7:00pm	Church Council Meeting
Tues	10:00am	Church Staff Meeting
Wed	6:45am	Men's Bible Study
	12:00pm	Men Over Lunch at the Elk's
	1:00pm	Lenten Worship
	3:30pm	B.L.A.S.T.
	3:45pm	Confirmation
	7:00pm	Lenten Discussion Via Zoom
Thrus	9:00am	Quilting
Sun	9:30am	Worship
	10:30am	Communion Instruction

Serving on Staff:

Secretary & BLAST Director: Falan Aanenson

Bookkeeper: Lynn Franz

Custodians: Kent & Nina Yunker

Website: www.zionlewistownelca.com

Phone: 538-5082

E-Mail: zionelca@midrivers.com

YouTube: Zion Lutheran Church Lewistown MT.

Facebook: Zion Lutheran Church Lewistown