

March 13th Worship – Second Sunday in Lent
Introduction to the Day

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 God’s face 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.”

Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of God,
who makes a way in the wilderness,
walks with us,
and guides us in our pilgrimage.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,
we confess that we have wandered far from you:
we have not trusted your promises,
we have ignored your prophets in our own day,
we have squandered our inheritance of grace,
we have failed to recognize you in our midst.
Have mercy on us!

Forgive us and turn us again to you.

Teach us to follow in your ways,
assure us again of your love,
and help us to love our neighbor.

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
the Word draws near to you,
and all who call out to God shall be saved.
In Jesus, God comes to you again and again
and gathers you under wings of love.
In † Jesus’ name, your sins are forgiven.
God journeys with you and teaches you how to live
in love.

Amen.

Gathering Song “How Great is Our God”

Prayer of the Day

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.
Amen.

Lesson – Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

¹After 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.”

Children’s Message

Gospel – Luke 13:31-35

³¹At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus,] “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.’”

Message

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

Our Sunday morning theme for the season of Lent has us taking a deeper look at what our Mission Statement actually means.

Last week we explored the question of what it actually means to be a neighborhood church, and how that term has evolved from when Good Shepherd was planted in the middle of a neighborhood, to what our neighborhood means now. We know that our “neighborhood” has expanded to much more than the streets that come out of 1120 Cedar St, but now goes beyond the boundaries of the city of Eau Claire, and can reach folks all around the globe with worship now being available on the internet.

This week, we skip over a very important part of our Mission Statement, the word “EACH” and look at what it means to be known. And, we ask the question again, as we did last week, what does that even mean?

Have you ever wondered about that question? What does it mean to be known?

We see someone in the grocery store that we have met before, “Hey, I know you!”

We meet someone intriguing and think to ourselves, “I would like to get to know them.”

But, do we actually know and understand in God terms, what it means to be known?

In Genesis, God comes to Abram and promises him a great nation. God knew Abraham. God knew Abraham’s past. There were questionable details of his story (and that is putting it very lightly, but not making light of it) that made Abram feel unworthy.

But God came to Abram.

You see, Abram and Sarai were unable to make children together. And not being able to have children was something that was not a good thing, as there was much value in having a child, especially a son, to carry on your name.

But God, knowing that, came to Abram.

Now, to combat this inability to bear children, Sarai gives Abram her servant to bear Abram’s child. Abram is ashamed. God surely knows this about his story. How could God come to him of all people and promise a great nation to be born from him.

And again, God came to Abram.

Throughout all of it, God remained faithful to Abram, who later became Abraham, the father of generations.

The thing about being fully known, is that it is actually hard to believe. For Abram, that God would come to him OF ALL PEOPLE and promise a great nation, it took everything in his power (and he literally tried) not to flat out tell God that God was wrong.

It is so difficult to come to grips with being fully known by God our creator, because the only person that knows us better than ourselves is, indeed, God.

Yet, God continues to show up. God continues to entrust God's world and the command to love God's people, to us.

God doesn't say to us, "sorry, I know those nitty gritty details about you, I'm going to let someone else handle this." In fact. God says the exact opposite.

And, Jesus, in our Gospel text shows us what that unconditional love looks like. Staring down his pending death, Jesus pauses, Looking upon Jerusalem, whom he would also weep for in some Palm Sunday Gospel accounts, and mourns for them.

Knowing what he knows about them, "the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it," it is still his desire to care for them. "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings."

We tell ourselves, knowing what we know about ourselves, that a God who knows more than that could not possibly love us, and yet Jesus in our Gospel text, speaking of Jerusalem whom he wanted to show that love to, "and you were not willing!"

It remains God's expressed desire to show us that unconditional love, in spite of everything we'd rather God not know.

So, what then do we as a church with a mission statement claiming to be a place where each is known?

- 1) We remind ourselves, again and again and again, that we are counted among those loved unconditionally.
- 2) We realize that the person that we may be a bit skeptical about. The person whose story we may know more about than others. Or, the person whose story we have filled in the blanks for. They, too, are loved unconditionally by that same God. Our creator.

It is our mission as a church to make that unconditional love known among God's people. It's why God, in Jesus Christ, giving the disciples the great commission to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them all that I have commanded you," gives us, God's faithful people, in spite of everything there is to know about us, gives that same command.

Thanks be to God. Amen

Song of the Day **"Amazing Grace/My Chains are Gone"**

Apostle's Creed

Prayers

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

You gather the church into a community of mercy and grace. Unify Christians around the globe in efforts to proclaim good news even in the face of opposition and to protect those whose lives are imperiled by the gospel. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You create the entire universe and call it good. Hinder those who would cause further destruction to our planet's fragile ecosystems, and augment the calls of those who advocate for thoughtful stewardship of the earth's resources. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You raise up leaders committed to love and justice. Nurture in those who govern patience to receive criticism, openness to new ideas, and courage to change course when needed for the sake of the common good. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You hear us when we cry to you. Attend to those expecting a child, and console those who have experienced miscarriage. Comfort veterans enduring post-traumatic stress. Shield those endangered by domestic violence. Uphold those who are ill or grieving (*especially Peyton, Kathy, Matt, Bob and Joanne, Jim and Sandy, Bob, Joe, Bill and Bonnie, David, Cassie, Keith and JoJo, Frank and Heather, Sherm and Mary*). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You kindle faith that moves us into action. Guide children and adults preparing for baptism or confirmation. Empower Sunday school teachers, confirmation leaders, and parents who share their faith with younger generations. Give us all a renewed sense of vocation. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You welcome us into your heavenly realm. We give thanks for those whose labors on earth are ended and who now rest with you. On the final day, gather all of us, with them, in your loving arms. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

Extravagant God,
you have blessed us with the fullness of creation.

Now we gather at your feast
where you offer us the food that satisfies.

Take and use what we offer here, come among us,
and feed us with the body and blood of Christ,
in whose name we pray.

Amen.

Words of Institution – We invite you to find bread and wine or juice and partake in this Holy Meal.

(Holding the bread) In the night in which we was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and broke it, gave thanks and gave it for all to eat saying, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

(Holding the cup) Again after supper he took the cup, and after giving thanks he 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 sins. So often as you do this, remember me."

Once you've taken the elements say, Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life. Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Sending Song **"All the People Said Amen"**

Blessing

You are children of God,
anointed with the oil of gladness
and strengthened for the journey.
Almighty God,
motherly, majestic, and mighty,
✠ bless you this day and always.
Amen.

Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.

Thanks be to God.

Announcements

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead on Saturday night!

Lent

Our theme for Lent this year is "In spite of..."

In spite of all of the reasons we might give ourselves for NOT being worthy of what comes at Easter, it still happens. So, let's talk about it.

Join us each Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. in person or online.

Easter lilies

If you are interested in helping to beautify the Sanctuary for Easter worship, and to provide flowers for either your home or a shut-in, please fill out the form and return it to the church office by Sunday, March 20.

We will be purchasing all the flowers from one source. Cost is \$10. We ask that your payment for the flowers accompany your request. Checks should be made payable to Good Shepherd.

Holy Week at Good Shepherd



Palm Sunday
Shout Hosanna
9 am - April 10



Maundy Thursday
Love and Forgiveness
6:30 pm - April 14



Good Friday
7 Last Words
6:30 pm - April 15

