

*Liturgy*  
The Third Sunday in Lent  
Year B

GATHERING

The heavens declare the glory of God;  
and the firmament proclaims His handiwork.

**Day to day pours forth speech;  
night to night reveals knowledge.**

They have no speech, they use no words;  
no sound is heard from them.

**Yet their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.**

The law of the LORD is perfect,  
restoring the soul;

*The testimony of the LORD is sure,  
making wise the simple.*

The precepts of the LORD are right,  
rejoicing the heart;

*The commandment of the LORD is pure,  
enlightening the eyes.*

The fear of the LORD is clean,  
enduring forever.

*The judgments of the LORD are true;  
they are righteous altogether.*

They are more desirable than gold,  
yes, than much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey  
and the drippings of the honeycomb.

*By them Your servant is warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.*

Make Your face shine on Your servants,  
and teach us Your ways.

**Your statutes are my heritage forever;  
they are the joy of my heart.**

**I have inclined my heart to keep your decrees forever,  
even to the end.**

— from Psalms 19:1-11 and 119:111-112, 135

*Praise the Lord! Ye Heav'ns, Adore Him*

Praise the Lord! ye heavens, adore Him;  
Praise Him, angels in the height.  
Sun and moon, rejoice before Him;  
Praise Him, all ye stars of light.  
Praise the Lord, for He hath spoken;  
Worlds His mighty voice obeyed.  
Laws which never shall be broken  
For their guidance He hath made.

*LECTIONARY for the third Sunday in  
Lent, Year B:*

*Exodus 20:1-17*

*Psalm 19*

*1 Corinthians 1:18-25*

*John 2:13-22*

*We come now to the third Sunday of our Lenten journey, the Sunday when the Church traditionally attends to the theme of God's call to repentance. In this second year of the three-year cycle in the Revised Common Lectionary, we are studying and reflecting on the ways in which we see the Old Testament covenants between God and His people reflected in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. Today, we look at the Ten Commandments in the context of Covenant. Covenant relationship is reflected in the beginning of Exodus 20 with God's words: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me." God's law and covenant goodness and faithfulness are evident in creation, as Psalm 19 attests. And both the gospel and epistle passages show ways in which Jesus came not to abolish the law, but to fulfill it (Mt 5:17). In this season of Lent, when we seek fervently to be more like Christ—to take on His image and be conformed to His likeness—this third Sunday in Lent focuses our hearts and minds on what it means to worship God only, having no other gods before Him.*

*Music for Ellen's setting of Praise the Lord! Ye Heav'ns, Adore Him is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet. The tune is the familiar HOLY MANNA, perhaps better known with the lyrics "Brethren, we have met to worship ..." This joyous hymn is one of those that reflect and declare the whole sweep of God's Story, and is a wonderful accompaniment to Psalm 19.*

*Here's a link:*

<https://clearestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/praise-lord-ye-heavns-adore-him>

Praise the Lord, for He is glorious;  
Never shall His promise fail.  
God hath made His saints victorious;  
Sin and death shall not prevail.  
Praise the God of our salvation;  
Hosts on high, His power proclaim.  
Heaven and earth and all creation,  
Laud and magnify His Name.

Worship, honor, glory, blessing,  
Lord, we offer unto Thee.  
Young and old, Thy praise expressing,  
In glad homage bend the knee.  
All the saints in heaven adore Thee;  
We would bow before Thy throne.  
As Thine angels serve before Thee,  
So on earth Thy will be done.

Worship, honor, glory, blessing,  
Lord, we offer unto Thee.  
Young and old, Thy praise expressing,  
In glad homage bend the knee.

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2012 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.  
Text: anonymous (vs. 1 and 2), collected and published by Thomas Coram, 1796;  
Edward Osler (vs. 3), 1836. Hymn tune: HOLY MANNA  
(William Moore, *The Columbian Harmony*, 1825)

#### INVOCATION

Prayers of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving for God's presence

#### *.Holy God, We Praise Thy Name*

Holy God, we praise Thy name;  
Lord of all, we bow before Thee!  
All on earth Thy scepter claim,  
All in Heaven above adore Thee;  
Infinite Thy vast domain,  
Everlasting is Thy reign.

Thou art King of glory, Christ:  
Son of God, yet born of Mary;  
For us sinners sacrificed,  
And to death a tributary.  
First to break the bars of death,  
Thou has opened Heaven to faith.

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2012 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.  
Words: Attrib. to Ignaz Franz, 1774; based on the ancient hymn TE DEUM (fourth century);  
transl. Clarence A. Walworth, 1853. Hymn tune: GROSSER GOTT, 1774.

*This half-verse ending uses the text of the first part of verse 3, but set to the tune and harmony of the second part. Try singing it a bit slower to underscore our willingness to worship and bow to God alone.*

*Music for Ellen's setting of Holy God, We Praise Thy Name is available in the Hymn Settings section of the music catalog as a lead sheet. (It is also available as vocal line with piano accompaniment and as a choral arrangement by request.) This hymn is one whose verses may be chosen and used as doxologies or prayers in a variety of contexts.*

*You'll see suggestions for use and sample lead sheets in the hymn commentary in the Music Room:*

<https://clerestornotes.com/live/sheetmusic/holy-god-we-praise-thy-name>

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing,  
but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

*For since, in the wisdom of God,  
the world through its wisdom did not know Him,  
God was pleased, through the foolishness of what was preached,  
to save those who believe.*

**We proclaim Christ crucified,  
a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,  
but to those whom God has called,  
both Jews and Greeks,  
Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**

For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom,  
and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

*God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise;  
God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;*

God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not,  
to reduce to nothing things that are,

*So that no one might boast in the presence of God.*

**He is the source of our life in Christ Jesus,  
who became for us wisdom from God –  
that is, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption –  
in order that, as it is written,  
“Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”**

– from 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

## PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

But who can discern their own errors?

**Cleanse me from hidden faults.**

Keep Your servants from willful sins;

**Let them not rule over me.**

**Then I will be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.**

Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts

be pleasing to You, O LORD, our Rock and our Redeemer.

– from Psalm 19:12-14

[Silent confessions]

Almighty God,  
**to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets  
are hidden: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your  
Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy  
Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

[Silence]

*Psalm 19*

May the words of my mouth,  
And the meditations of my heart  
Be pleasing to You, pleasing to You.  
(repeat)

You're my Rock and my Redeemer,  
You're the reason that I sing;  
I desire to be a blessing in Your eyes.  
Ev'ry hour, ev'ry moment,  
Lord, I want to be Your servant;  
I desire to be a blessing in Your eyes  
In Your eyes.

CCLI Song #1773823 ©1995 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing; Terry Butler

*This traditional prayer of confession, sometimes called the “Collect for Purity,” dates back at least as far as the mid-sixteenth-century Book of Common Prayer. Its origin is traced back to the eleventh-century Leofric Missal (liturgical book).*

*Another sung prayer based on Psalm 19 is May the Words of My Heart (CCLI Song #3232310 ©2000 Thankyou Music. Tim Hughes, Rob Hill)*

*As alternatives for Psalm 19, you may want to choose any of the songs that begin with “Purify my heart, ...”*

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

This is God's covenant promise to His people:

"I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.

I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

And they shall all know Me,

for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more."

— Jeremiah 31:33-34

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

## TIME OF OFFERING

Words and prayers of thanksgiving and devotion

*Oh God of Mine*

Oh God of mine, I'll have no idols;  
Oh God of mine, come lead the way;  
Oh God of mine, I'm greatly humbled,  
This sinner's heart, You came to save.

Oh God of mine, through storm and trial;  
Oh God of mine, through death and grave;  
Oh God of mine, in resurrection.  
Your scars display my soul's refrain.

Oh God of mine, Who holds all nations;  
Oh God of mine, Who saves the day;  
Oh God of mine, Your grace sufficient,  
Your tender mercies new by morn.

Oh God of mine, forever faithful;  
Oh God of mine, forever stay;  
Oh God of mine, forever after,  
These eyes upon Your face will gaze. (Repeat twice)

Oh God of mine, I'll have no idols;  
Oh God of mine, come lead the way;  
Oh God of mine, I'm greatly humbled,  
This sinner's heart, You came to save. (Repeat twice)

Rita Springer. ©2004 Kindred Joy Music

## THE WORD

Exodus 20:1-17

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Psalm 19

John 2:13-22

## THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

The Lord be with you!

**And also with you!**

Lift up your hearts.

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!**

*The Lord's Prayer* (spoken)

**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 debts  
As we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom,  
And the power, and the glory,  
Forever. Amen**

*Lord, Have Mercy*

Jesus, I've forgotten the words that You have spoken,  
Promises that burned within my heart have now grown dim.  
With a doubting heart I follow the paths of earthly wisdom;  
Forgive me for my unbelief, renew the fire again.

*Chorus:*

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy on me.  
Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy;  
Lord, have mercy on me.

I have built an altar where I've worshipped things of man;  
I have taken journeys that have drawn me far from You.  
Now I am returning to Your mercies ever flowing;  
Pardon my transgressions, help me love You again.

*Chorus*

I have longed to know You, and all Your tender mercies,  
Like a river of forgiveness, ever flowing without end.  
So I bow my heart before You in the goodness of Your presence,  
Your grace forever shining like a beacon in the night.

*Chorus*

CCLI Song #2989578 ©2000 Integrity's Hosanna! Music; Steve Merkel.

*I Will Bow to You*

Lord, I will bow to You,  
To no other God  
But You alone.  
Lord, I will worship You,  
Nothing hands have made,  
But You alone.

I will lay down my idols,  
Thrones I have made,  
All that has taken my heart.  
Lord, I will bow to You,  
To no other God  
But You alone.

CCLI Song #3262139 ©2001 Integrity's Praise! Music; Pete Episcopo.

SENDING FORTH  
The Life of the Body

*Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him (reprise)*

Worship, honor, glory, blessing,  
Lord, we offer unto Thee.  
Young and old, Thy praise expressing,  
In glad homage bend the knee.  
All the saints in heaven adore Thee;  
We would bow before Thy throne.  
As Thine angels serve before Thee,  
So on earth Thy will be done.

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(William Moore, *The Columbian Harmony*, 1825)

Benediction:

Brothers and sisters, as you go forth into the world  
to live out your baptisms, loving and serving the Lord,  
be encouraged to observe a holy Lent,  
walking in Christ's own footsteps and taking on His likeness.  
And as you continue your Lenten journey,  
putting things off or taking things on, as the Holy Spirit leads,  
do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus—  
as we, His covenant people,  
follow Him on the way to the cross.

**Amen. Thanks be to God!**

*A thought about worship from the Ancient Fathers –*

“There are some who, like worms wallowing in marshes and mud, feed on foolish and useless pleasures. People are like pigs. For pigs, it is said, like mud better than pure water. Let us not, then, be enslaved or become like pigs. Instead, as true children of the light, let us raise our eyes and look at light, lest the Lord discover us to be superficial. Therefore, let us repent and move from ignorance to knowledge, from foolishness to wisdom, from self-indulgence to self-restraint, from unrighteousness to righteousness, from godlessness to God. By striving toward God, one shows noble daring. The enjoyment of many good things is within the reach of those who love righteousness and who pursue eternal life, especially those things which God alludes to in Isaiah. He says, ‘There is an inheritance for those who serve the Lord.’ Noble and desirable is this inheritance, not gold, not silver, not clothing, that the moths destroy, nor things of earth that robbers attack because they are dazzled by worldly wealth. Instead, it is the treasure of salvation which we must hurry to by becoming lovers of the Word. Then praiseworthy works will descend to us and fly with us on the wing of truth. This is the inheritance God grants us with His eternal covenant, conveying the everlasting gift of grace. Consequently, our loving Father—the true Father—never stops urging, admonishing, training, or loving us.”  
– Clement of Alexandria

**Lectionary for next week:** Numbers 21:4-9;  
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22;  
Ephesians 2:1-10;  
John 3:14-21

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*We close the service with the final verse of our Gathering hymn, to send us on our way with a song of worship and devotion on our lips and in our hearts.*

*You will remember that our usual closing of the benediction, “Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!” is missing. That is because it’s customary during Lent to refrain from saying “Alleluia!” In a sense, we fast from this exuberant expression of praise, which makes it all the more meaningful and glorious when we declare on Resurrection Sunday, “Christ is risen, Alleluia!”*