

Liturgy
The Fourth Sunday in Lent
Year C

GATHERING

We are gathered to worship the eternal God,
the source of love and life,
who creates and sustains us.

**He has made us new creations in Christ;
the old has passed away;
behold, all things become new!**

*Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.*

*How blessed are those whose hope is in the LORD;
All creation declares the goodness of our God!*

**For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with Him is great power to redeem.**

I waited patiently for the LORD;

And He inclined to me, and heard my cry.

**He brought me up out of a pit of destruction,
out of the miry clay,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my footsteps firm.
He put a new song in my mouth:
Praise to our God;
Many will see and fear,
and will trust in the LORD.**

Let all who seek the LORD rejoice in Him;
let those who love His salvation say continually,
“The LORD be magnified!”

— based on Psalms 124:8, 130:7, 40:1-3, 16

Made Me Glad

I will bless the Lord forever;
I will trust Him at all times.
He has delivered me from all fear;
He has set my feet upon a rock.
And I will not be moved,
And I'll say of the Lord –

Chorus:

You are my Shield, my Strength,
My portion, Deliverer;
My Shelter, Strong Tower,
My very present Help in time of need.

Whom have I in heaven but You?
There's none I desire beside You.
And You have made me glad,
I'll say of the Lord –

CCLI Song #3290709 ©2001 Hillsong Publishing; Miriam Webster..

*LECTIONARY for the fourth Sunday
in Lent, Year C:*

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalm 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

The fourth Sunday in Lent is traditionally devoted to the theme of Healing and Conversion. In much the same way as in the season of Advent, this mid-season Sunday brings a lighter note to our observance of the season. The color, as with the third Sunday of Advent, is changed from purple to rose, and we focus on the joy of the healing and restorative power of Christ. In the Joshua narrative, we find the children of Israel on the cusp of their new life in the land that was promised to Abraham so many centuries before. But before they can begin to possess the land, they must renew the Covenant through the rite of circumcision—which scripture tells us was not observed during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness. When they were healed, God told Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” And they celebrated the Passover, eating some of the produce of the land. And that day, the provision of manna ceased.

The theme of the joy that springs from repentance and reconciliation continues in the psalm, as David writes evocatively of the effects of sin and guilt on his body and soul, and of the gladness and confidence that comes with the Lord's promised forgiveness. In Luke we read one of Jesus' best-known parables, that of the prodigal son—who, when he returns in repentance to his father, is welcomed with open arms and feted with great joy. And in Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church, we read these familiar and encouraging words: Christ died for all, so that we might live for Him. In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself. Since we are in Christ, we are new creations; the old has passed away; all things have be-

INVOCATION

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

Blessed Assurance

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song:
Praising my Savior, all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song:
Praising my Savior, all the day long.

Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blessed;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Refrain

Public domain. Words: Fanny Crosby, 1873.
Hymn tune: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1873.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Let us together profess the faith of the church of all ages
in these words from the second epistle of the Apostle Paul
to the Corinthians:

We believe that Christ died for all,
so that we who live
might no longer live for ourselves,
but for Him who for our sake died
and was raised again.

*Therefore, since we are in Christ,
we are new creations;
the old has passed away;
behold, all things have become new.*

Now all these things are from God,
who reconciled us to Himself through Christ
and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, –
*That is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself,
not counting their trespasses against them, –*

And He has entrusted to us
the word of reconciliation.

*God made Him who knew no sin
to be sin on our behalf,
so that we might become
the righteousness of God in Him.*

– from 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

*come new. These are cause for joy
indeed!*

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Blessed are those
whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

*Blessed are those
whose sin the LORD does not count against them,
and in whose spirit is no deceit.*

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

*For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;
My strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.*

**Then I acknowledged my sin to You
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,"
And You forgave the guilt of my sin.**

Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to You.

– Psalm 32:1-6a

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
**We have sinned against You and against others,
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry, and repent of all our sins.**

[Silence]

For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us,
that we may walk in Your ways in newness of life, and worship You
in spirit and in truth. **Amen.**

Agnus Dei

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

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.
(repeat)

O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
Grant us peace.
O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
Grant us peace, grant us your peace.

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ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The word of the Lord; His promises are trustworthy and true:
I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with My eye upon you.

**You are my hiding place;
You preserve me from trouble;
You surround me with songs of deliverance.**

*Many are the sorrows of the wicked,
but those who trust in the LORD,
lovingkindness will surround them.*

Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones;
and shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.

– from Psalm 32:7-11

*This setting of Agnus Dei is available
in the sheet music catalog as a lead
sheet and scored for voice and piano.
It is also included in the collection,
Singing the Liturgy, Volume 1. You
may hear Agnus Dei in the Audio Me-
dia Studio.*

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/agnus-dei>

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and expressions of devotion and thanksgiving. . .

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green.
The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel;
By faith I know but ne'er can tell.
His beauty doth all things excel;
By faith I know but ne'er can tell:
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought.
For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive.
This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Which makes my soul in hast to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Words: from *Divine Hymns or Spiritual Songs*, compiled by Joshua Smith, New Hampshire, 1784.
First published in London by "R. H." in 1761. Tune: Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987), 1967.

THE WORD

Joshua 5:9-12

Psalms 32

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

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 (sung)

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heav'n.
Provide each day our daily needs;
Forgive our sins
As we forgive others' wrongs;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
Forever and ever;
And Thine is the power,
Forever and ever;
And Thine is the glory,
Now and forever,
Amen, amen, amen.

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Redeemer, Saviour, Friend

I know You had me on Your mind
When You climbed up on that hill,
For You saw me with eternal eyes,
While I was yet in sin:
Redeemer, Saviour, Friend.

Every stripe upon Your battered back,
Every thorn that pierced Your brow,
Every nail drove deep through guiltless hands
Said that Your love knows no end:
Redeemer, Saviour, Friend.

Chorus

Oh, Redeemer, redeem my heart again;
Saviour, come and shelter me from sin.
You're familiar with my weakness,
Devoted to the end.
Redeemer, Saviour, Friend,

So the grace You pour upon my life
Will return to You in praise,
And I'll gladly lay down all my crowns
For the name by which I'm saved:
Redeemer, Saviour, Friend.

Chorus

CCLI Song #2831523; ©1999 Integrity's Hosanna! Music;
Chris Springer and Darrell Evans

Music for The Lord's Prayer is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet and scored for voice and piano. It is also available in the music collection, Singing the Liturgy, Volume 1. You can hear The Lord's Prayer in the Audio Media Studio.

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/lords-prayer>

*Another song suggestion for Table this week, depending on your particular teaching emphasis:
Just As I Am (I Come Broken To Be Mended) (CCLI Song #5635850 ©2009 CCTB Music | First Hand Revelation Music | Universal Music – Brentwood Benson Publishing. Original hymn: public domain. Words: Charlotte Elliott, 1835. Tune: WOODWORTH; William B. Bradbury, 1849. Additional words and music (Chorus and verse 3): Travis Cottrell, David Moffitt, Sue C. Smith.)*

SENDING FORTH
The Life of the Body

May the Mind of Christ, My Savior

May the mind of Christ, my Savior,
Live in me from day to day,
By His love and power controlling all I do and say.

May the love of Jesus fill me,
As the waters fill the sea;
Him exalting, self abasing, this is victory.

May I run the race before me,
Strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus as I onward go.

Words: Kate B. Wilkinson, 1912. Hymn tune: ST. LEONARDS, Arthur Barham-Gould, 1925.
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Benediction:

Brothers and sisters, as you go forth from this place,
do so remembering that God alone is your Refuge and Strength,
He who brings joy and newness to life. In His eternal faithfulness
He saves, sustains, enables, and encourages you.

Amen.

Now may the Lord direct your hearts
into God's love and Christ's perseverance,
as you walk in Christ's own footsteps,
taking on His likeness,
in this journey of Lent.

**We remember, and we go with grateful hearts
into the world to love and serve the Lord.
Amen. Thanks be to God.**

A thought about worship from the Ancient Fathers –

“If a single sin is so awful that you think it's safer not even to aim for a holy life, how much more awful it is for an entire life to practice sin, and remain absolutely ignorant of the purer way! How can you, in your indulgent life, obey the Crucified? . . . How can you obey Paul when he urges you to ‘present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,’ when you are ‘conformed to this world,’ and not transformed by renewing your mind? How can you do this when you aren't ‘walking’ in this ‘newness of life,’ but still pursue the routine of ‘the old man?’ . . . Does all this seem insignificant to you— being crucified with Christ, presenting yourself as a sacrifice to God, becoming a priest to the most high God, making yourself worthy for the Almighty to look upon? What greater blessings can we imagine for you, if you make light of the consequences of these things? For the consequence of being crucified with Christ is that we will live with Him, be glorified with Him, and reign with Him. . . . Therefore, we want you also to become crucified with Christ, a holy priest standing before God, and a completely pure offering. Prepare yourself for God's coming by holiness. Then you too will have a pure heart to see God with.”
– Gregory of Nyssa

Lectionary for next week: Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

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URL: <https://www.clerestorynotes.com>

This beautiful sung prayer of sending is a wonderful way of reminding us that we walk this Lenten journey with Christ, in His footsteps. Ellen's setting of this hymn is available in the Music Catalog (Hymn Settings) as a lead sheet. Please see the full content description in the Music Room for other suggested uses of this hymn.

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/may-mind-christ-my-savior>

You will have noticed 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!”