

Salem-Sauk Valley Lutheran Parish
Order of Sunday Worship- First Sunday in Lent– February 18th, 2024
At Salem Lutheran Church

Prelude

Emily Larson, Musician

Welcome/Announcements

Invocation:

P: We gather in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

Opening Prayer:

P: O Lord, our Maker, Redeemer, and Comforter, we are assembled in Your presence to hear Your holy Word. We pray that You would open our hearts by Your Holy Spirit, that through the preaching of Your Word we may be taught to repent of our sins, to believe on Jesus in life and in death, and grow day by day in grace and holiness. Hear us for Christ's sake. **C: Amen.**

Hymn:

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

Praise #41

Confession of Sin:

P: Let us bow before the Lord and confess our sins.

C: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Therefore, we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Kyrie:

“Gathered in your Peace we Pray”

1. Gathered in your peace, we pray: **Grant your mercy, holy Lord.**

For our shattered world, this day: **Grant your mercy, holy Lord.**

Give us peace upon our way: **Grant your mercy, holy Lord.**

2. For the Church, your wounded Bride: **Grant your mercy, Jesus Christ.**

Heal, restore her to your side: **Grant your mercy, Jesus Christ.**

Take away her sin and pride: **Grant your mercy, Jesus Christ.**

3. For your people, saved by grace: **Grant your mercy, holy God.**

Make of us one holy race: **Grant your mercy, holy God.**

'Til we see you face to face: **Grant your mercy, holy God.**

Absolution:

P: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us, and has given his only Son to die for us, and for his sake God forgives all our sins. To those who believe in his name he gives power to become the children of God, and has promised them his Holy Spirit. Those who believe and are baptized shall be saved. Grant this Lord unto us all.

C: Amen.

Gloria:

P: Glory be to God in the highest.

C: And on earth peace, good will toward men.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray together.

C: Holy God, heavenly Father, in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Psalm-50:1-6

First Reading- Genesis 9:8-17

Second Reading- 1 Peter 3:18-22

Gospel Reading- Mark 1:9-15

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: God be praised for his glad tidings!

Apostles Creed

C: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty from whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Children's Message – "Jesus Loves Me"

Offering and Offertory: *We give Thee but Thine own, whate'er the gift might be. All that we have is Thine alone, a trust O Lord from Thee.*

Hymn:

"Amazing Grace"

Praise #293

Sermon

Pastor Lexy Carson

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.

When you see a fresh batch of cookies, the temptation is to grab one and eat one or ten. You don't really need the cookie or cookies but they are just so tempting and appealing to the eye.

We were at this theological conference a couple weeks ago and one night at supper this pastor saw on the menu the option for a dessert sampler, the temptation was too strong, three desserts? He had to have it and he did.

This is often what we think of as temptations, something that catches our eye, or or nose or ears that puts a little sparkle in our eyes that makes us think yes, absolutely that is what I want. And often we think of temptations as something that is clearly wrong, not the right choice. Like eating a dessert sampler for a meal or running through that yellow light because it was close and you were in a hurry or just going a couple miles over the speed limit. Clearly not the right thing to do but it is oh so tempting.

The thing with temptation though is it is not always as clear to see as speeding or what you eat. Temptations are often sneakier than that, disguised in ways that make it seem like it is okay.

For example, when God told Abraham to sacrifice his son Issac, the temptation for Abraham was to say no God. I have waited decades of my life longing for this son and you want me to sacrifice him? The temptation is not say absolutely not because to obey God appears far worse than disobeying him. The temptation to not listen to God, seems like the right choice, the moral choice.

When we think of temptations, we think of the bad things we ought not to do. But the idea that not protecting your child, could be sin, a temptation to disobey God makes no sense at all to us. How many times throughout Scripture do we not like what God does? In our first reading from Genesis, we hear of God's covenant with Noah and his family but the rest of the world was swept away in a great and mighty flood. We are tempted to tone it down, it really wasn't that bad, but it was, the whole earth was flooded, everyone killed except Noah and his family.

We have hard time grappling that our kind and loving God would do something like this, that he would ask what he did of Abraham or that he would flood the world. And that's truly the greatest temptation in our lives, it's cookies, or speed limits or dessert samplers. The greatest temptation is unbelief, to imagine we get to decide what God does or doesn't do. That we get to choose when we want to obey and listen. The greatest temptation is to think we are better at being God, than he is.

And this is always what Satan is appealing to, always what he is prying into, tempting you into. We when we think of our Gospel passage for today, we usually think of the longer narrative that we get in Matthew or Luke where we get to hear the specific temptations that the devil entices Jesus with but here in Mark we don't we just hear he was in the wilderness for forty days tempted by Satan. Which is fine because regardless of exactly what Satan enticed him with whether it was to eat or fall from a cliff to prove He's God at the heart of every temptation by the devil is the same, to not believe God. To choose the opposite of God. To choose yourself, to choose him to choose literally anything or anyone other than God himself.

And Satan is really good at it. He's craftier than any other creature in the Garden. He's so good at in fact that we often don't even realize he's doing it. Just like with Abraham, Satan tempted him to say no protect your child, come on God wouldn't really ask that of you? And how tempting and easy is that?

Maybe you do not even spend much time thinking about Satan because he seems like something written Scripture but my life really seems okay, there's nothing terribly wrong in my life I mean sure I can look out and see shootings and say well clearly Satan is at work over there but not here not in Osakis.

I had a professor of mine say, "wherever we build a church, satan builds a chapel." Satan isn't just off working somewhere else where the chaos and evil seems to be. He's prowling around right outside our door, there's his chapel right out there. Where there is a promise from God, where there is faith, that is where the devil is going to attack. No doubt about. As soon as you walk out the doors he's going to be there ready to tempt, are you sure God is for you? It sure

doesn't look like it? I mean you have a lot on your plate? You're carrying a heavy burden, why would God do that to you if he cared about you, if he loved you, if you were really his?

That is the greatest temptation the devil appeals to, to not believe God's word, to not believe you are his, to not believe in the faith he gives. That is what Satan tempted Christ with, and what he will tempt you with every day of your life. Wouldn't it just be easier to be your own God? To just believe in yourself instead? To have faith in yourself instead of God?

So how do we possibly counter temptation and the devil himself? Before Christ was cast out into the wilderness, by the Holy Spirit itself, by God himself. He was baptized and he was given a promise. God spoke to him as a voice from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." And this word of promise, that he was beloved and God's own child was his greatest defense to counter temptation and the devil himself. Because immediately he was cast into the wilderness and he clung to the promise God gave him amidst every temptation, as he hungered and suffered he had nothing else to cling not even a slice of bread or a place to lay his head, he had this promise from God in his baptism to hold him steady against every driving temptation of Satan.

So what does this mean for you? Like I said before Satan's chapel is right outside and he is constantly at working tempting you every single day of your life and he's so good at his job he often just has to stand back and watch us tangle ourselves in our own temptations and sin. So how do you get untangled from these temptations how do you silence the devil?

You cling to the same promise that Christ did. In your baptism, you were given the same promise that you were baptized into the Father, Son and Holy Spirit exactly like they were all united at Christ's baptism and you were given the same promise that you are God's beloved, because in your baptism, you were given the gifts of the kingdom, you became an heir so that when God looks at you he sees his own son Jesus because in those baptismal waters you were marked with the sign of the cross and sealed by his promise forever.

So when the devil comes prowling, as he most certainly will, you have a promise to cling to. While the devil will always attack and go where faith is, the outcomes of the battle is already certain. This one who thinks he can tempt Jesus, is in an unevenly matched battle.

When you go out and face your own wilderness, you have a baptismal promise to cling to. While baptism does not give the power to withstand temptation, after all the devil is surely strong that us on our own, and we know full well we succumb to temptation all time. God gives a word, before the wilderness even happens, a promise that will withstand anything. That Jesus is in battle with Satan, demons and the forces of darkness for you and the outcome is already certain. Christ will win.

Temptation. Not as simple as it may seem and certainly even more impossible to withstand. And yet, we have a promise to cling to amidst it all. Amidst the darkness of the wilderness we face, in the uncertainties, in the grief, even in those ordinary times, amidst all you will face in your life - you have promise in your baptism, in Christ's baptism to hold fast to. That God says you are his no matter what. While baptism doesn't mean life will be easy or perfect or even without temptations, baptism does mean you are never alone, you are never without hope. Baptism means the wilderness will not get the last word, your baptism means the kingdom of God is

yours, the good news is yours, no temptation or trick or the devils will be able to take that away from you.

The peace of Christ which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Hymn:

“Day by Day”

Praise #370

Prayer of the Church: Each prayer will end: Lord, in your mercy. **C: *Hear our prayer.***

Holy Communion

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

P: Lift up your hearts to the Lord.

C: *We lift up our hearts unto the Lord.*

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: *It is meet and right so to do.* P: It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give praise to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God through Jesus Christ our Lord. You call your people to repent of sin and prepare for the joy of the paschal feast, Renews us in faith and holiness and bring us into the fullness of your grace and truth that belongs to the children of God. Therefore, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name; evermore praising you and singing:

C: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.*

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Invitation/Distribution

Thanksgiving-

P: The Lord be with you. **C: *And also with you.***

P: Let us give thanks and pray: We thank you Lord God almighty that you have refreshed us with these gifts; and we ask you, in your mercy, to strengthen us through these same gifts in faith toward you and in fervent love for one another; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

C: *Amen.*

Benediction

P: Now may the Lord bless us and keep us. May the Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us. May the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us and give us his peace.

C: *Amen, Amen, Amen.*

Doxology

C: *Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Dismissal: P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **C: *Thanks be to God! Postlude***