

THE WORD OF GOD

(Sunday Take-home Insert – Fourth Sunday in Lent IRCL)

Collect

Presider: The Lord is with you.

Assembly: **And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray together:

God of the desert,

Your light pierces the darkest night:

Draw us into the depths of Siloam,

Consecrating us to you alone;

Dispel the blinding darkness of appearances,

Opening our eyes to see into the heart;

Deliver us into Christ,

Transforming us into children of the Light. Amen.

A period of silence for reflection follows each lesson and the sermon. Allow your attention to drop in and down and rest upon your breath. When distractions arise – such as thoughts and sounds and smells – simply notice and return to the breath.

Hebrew Scriptures

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Reader: A reading from the Prophet Samuel.

YHWH said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve for Saul since I rejected him as ruler of Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and be on your way. For I am sending you to Jesse in Bethlehem, for I have chosen my ruler from among his children.” But Samuel replied, “How can I go? For if Saul learns about it, I will be murdered.” YHWH replied, “Take a heifer with you: I am sending you to Jesse. Tell him that you came to offer a sacrifice to YHWH, and invite Jesse to the sacrifice. Then I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me my selection.” Samuel did what YHWH said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met Samuel. They asked, “Do you come in peace?” Samuel said, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to YHWH. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his children and invited them to the sacrifice. When they arrived, and Samuel saw Eliab, and said to himself, “Surely, God’s anointed stands here before YHWH.” But YHWH said to Samuel, “Pay no attention to appearance and height; I have rejected him. YHWH does not see as mortals see; mortals see only appearances but YHWH sees into the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab to pass before Samuel, who said, “No. YHWH has not chosen this one.” Next came Shammah, but Samuel said, “Not this one either.” Seven sons were presented to Samuel by Jesse, who said, “YHWH has not chosen any of these.” Samuel asked, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest” Jesse said, “but he is tending the sheep.” Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not begin the sacrificial banquet until the lad arrives.” So they sent for the boy, a ruddy youth with bright eyes, and

handsome to behold. YHWH said, "Rise and anoint this one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed the boy in the presence of his brothers, and from that day forward the Spirit of YHWH came upon David and was with him. Then Samuel set out on his way to Ramah.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 23: Shepherd Me, O God (M. Haugen)

The Epistle

Ephesians 5:8-14

Reader: A reading from Paul's letter to the community at Ephesus.

There was a time when you were darkness, but now you are light in Christ. Live as children of the light. Light produces every kind of goodness, justice and truth. Be correct in your judgment of what pleases our Savior. Take no part in deeds done in darkness, which bear no fruit; rather, expose them. It's shameful even to mention the things these people do in secret; but when such deeds are exposed and seen in the light of day, everything that becomes visible is light. That's why we read, "Awake, O sleeper, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn (see hymn board)

We stand as able.

The Gospel

John 9:1-41

Deacon: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

Assembly: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

As Jesus walked along, he saw someone who had been blind from birth. The disciples asked Jesus, "Rabbi, was it this individual's sin that caused the blindness, or that of the parents?" "Neither," answered Jesus, "It wasn't because of anyone's sin – not this person's, nor the parents'. Rather, it was to let God's works shine forth in this person. We must do the deeds of the One who sent me while it is still day – for night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." With that, Jesus spat on the ground, made mud with his saliva and smeared the blind one's eyes with the mud. Then Jesus said, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" – "Siloam" means "sent." So the person went off to wash, and came back able to see. Neighbors and those who had been accustomed to seeing the blind beggar began to ask, "Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?" Some said yes; others said no – the one who had been healed simply looked like the beggar. But the individual in question said, "No – it was me." The people then asked,

“Then how were your eyes opened?” The answer came, “The one they call Jesus made mud and smeared it on my eyes, and told me to go to Siloam and wash. When I went and washed, I was able to see.” “Where is Jesus?” they asked. The person replied, “I have no idea.” They took the one who had been born blind to the Pharisees. It had been on a Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud paste and opened this one’s eyes. The Pharisees asked how the individual could see. They were told, “Jesus put mud on my eyes. I washed it off, and now I can see.” This prompted some Pharisees to say, “This Jesus cannot be from God, because he doesn’t keep the Sabbath.” Others argued, “But how could a sinner perform signs like these?” They were sharply divided. Then they addressed the blind person again: “Since it was your eyes he opened, what do you have to say about this Jesus?” “He’s a prophet,” came the reply. The Temple authorities refused to believe that this one had been blind and had begun to see, until they summoned the parents. “Is this your child?” they asked, “and if so, do you attest that your child was blind at birth? How do you account for the fact that now your child can see?” The parents answered, “We know this is our child, blind from birth. But how our child can see now, or who opened those blind eyes, we have no idea. But don’t ask us – our child is old enough to speak without us!” The parents answered this way because they were afraid of the Temple authorities, who had already agreed among themselves that anyone who acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. That was why they said, “Our child is of age and should be asked directly.” A second time they summoned the one who had been born blind and said, “Give God the glory instead; we know that this Jesus is a sinner.” “I don’t know whether he is a sinner or not,” the individual answered. “All I know is that I used to be blind, and now I can see.” They persisted, “Just what did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” “I already told you, but you won’t listen to me,” came the answer. “Why do you want to hear it all over again? Don’t tell me you want to become disciples of Jesus too!” They retorted scornfully, “You’re the one who is Jesus’ disciple. We’re disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses, but we have no idea where this Jesus comes from.” The other retorted: “Well, this is news! You don’t know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes! We know that God doesn’t hear sinners, but that if people are devout and obey God’s will, God listens to them. It is unheard of that anyone ever gave sight to a person blind from birth. If this one were not from God, he could never have done such a thing!” “What!” they exclaimed. “You’re steeped in sin from birth, and you’re giving us lectures?” With that they threw the person out. When Jesus heard of the expulsion, he sought out the healed one and asked, “Do you believe in the Chosen One?” The other answered, “Who is this One, that I may believe?” “You’re looking at him,” Jesus replied. “The Chosen One is speaking to you now.” The healed one said, “Yes, I believe,” and worshiped Jesus. And Jesus said, “I came into this world to execute justice – to make the sightless see and the seeing blind.” Some of the Pharisees who were nearby heard this and said, “You’re not calling us blind, are you?” To which Jesus replied, “If you were blind, there would be no sin in that. But since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

Deacon: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

The readings are taken from *The Inclusive Hebrew Scriptures Vol. I, II, and III* and *The Inclusive New Testament* with © permission from: Priests for Equality/Quixote Center, P.O. Box 5206 Hyattsville, MD 20782 301-699-0042. Collect is by Kevin G. Thew Forrester.

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WELCOME!

We welcome all visitors and guests this morning. After the service, you are invited to the Great Room on the lower level (accessible by stairs or elevator) for coffee and conversation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hospitalization Contacts:

Kai Carrigan		249-9829	kairri@chartermi.net
Marcia Franz		226-2830	mqlake@yahoo.com
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Ministry Support Team

Communications

Meg Goodrich	Communications Coordinator	226-8920	mgoodrich@charter.net
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Liturgy

Bob Railey	Worship Coordinator	226-9617	rmrailey@excite.com
Vince Reed	Worship Coordinator	228-7333	vincentreed@gmail.com

Mutual (Pastoral) Care

Marcia Franz	Mutual Care Coordinator	226-2830	mqlake@yahoo.com
Coralie Hambleton	Mutual Care Coordinator	869-2046	cvhamblet@hotmail.com

Outreach (All Are Welcome)

Kai Carrigan	Outreach Coordinator	249-9829	kairri@chartermi.net
Pat Micklow	Outreach Coordinator	249-3479	dunetop@chartermi.net

Stewardship

Al Raymond	Stewardship Coordinator	249-3534	alrayusma@charter.net
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TODAY'S HOSPITALITY AND WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

Presider:	Kevin Thew Forrester
Preacher:	Kevin Thew Forrester
Deacon:	Coralie Hambleton
Organist:	Jan Brodersen
First Reader:	Cathy Cole
Second Reader:	Tom Feller
Prayers of the People:	Vince Reed
Chalice Bearers:	Pat Micklow and Larry Shell
Ushers:	Jim Jajich and Kay Payant
Server:	Faith Cole

Altar Guild:	Bertha Loehde and Jacquy Shellenbarger
Nursery Attendant:	
Coffee Hour Hosts:	Vince Reed and Jayne Yelland
Evening Prayer Officiant:	Larry Shell
Children's Ministry:	Jim Edwards, Cathy Greer Cole, and Nancy Railey
Eucharistic Visitors:	Kai Carrigan to MGH Bob Railey to Valente, Ishpeming (Betsy Barnwell, Robina Payant & Jayne Yelland) and to Warner Creek, Palmer (Bill Mudge) and Marcia Franz to Roberta Bolitho

THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

Sunday	2 nd	Holy Eucharist: Fourth Week of Lent Parish Forum: Statement of Affirmation	10:30am After Service
Tuesday	4 th	Morning Meditation Evening Meditation Inter-Spiritual Dialogue (Healing Arts Center) Altar Guild	8:00am 5:30pm 7:00pm 7:00pm
Wednesday	5 th	Welcomer Meeting Norlite Eucharistic Visitors Evening Prayer Choir Practice	11:00am 2:30pm 5:30pm 7:00pm
Thursday	6 th	Morning Meditation	8:00am

PARISH FORUM ON "STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATION"

Today after church, in the chapel, we will have the (postponed) conversation about the most recent of our introductions of modern language liturgical texts: On Sundays throughout the Epiphany and Lenten seasons, we have been using the "Affirmation of Faith" from New Zealand's 1989 Prayer Book in place of the traditional Nicene Creed; some of us who officiate at Evening Prayer have been using it for about a year. Following a very short presentation comparing the theologies and world-views implied by traditional and modern liturgical texts, the gathering will be open to questions and observations regarding our experience with this text and with others that have been introduced at St. Paul's over the past several years.

SPRING QUARTER SCHEDULE NOW POSTED FOR SIGN-UP/AVAILABILITY

The April through June sign-up/availability listing is posted on the "sign-up bulletin board" (hallway by restrooms) for those who serve in a wide variety of roles on Sundays. You may use the schedule to sign-up for specific dates and/or indicate which Sundays you should not be scheduled. You may use the roster lists to increase/decrease your participation in any of these activities. I am especially looking for additional coffee hour hosts. The schedule will remain posted through March 16. Spring Quarter schedules will be distributed beginning March 22. If you have any questions contact Bob Railey.

DONATION ENVELOPES FOR EASTER FLOWERS NOW AVAILABLE

Envelopes for Easter flower donations (with space for memorial and/or thanksgiving notations) are available in the pews and at the usher stations during the remaining Sundays of Lent. March 16

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(Palm Sunday) is the final date for making such donations. Please indicate clearly whether your donation is a memorial, a thanksgiving, or for some other purpose.

FOOD BANK DONATIONS

The Food Bank items for March are: boxed cereal (kid friendly or otherwise), 1/2 gallon cans of juice, and 14.5 oz cans of fruit (fruit cocktail, peaches, pears, etc.) As always, other items are welcomed. Monetary donations can be made by writing "Food Donation" on the memo line of your check or marking the envelope the same when donating cash - both can be placed in the collection plate on any Sunday. Questions about Hunger Ministry? Call Larry Shell: 250-8214 or e-mail him at larry@shell-family.com