

## Mid-week Lenten Services 2021 (3/17/2021)

Welcome to our midweek virtual Lenten devotional for 2021. The theme this year is, “What is Faith?”, a series focusing on the biblical figures of Noah, Abraham, Moses, the Israelites and finally Jesus as the “Perfecter and Pioneer” of our faith. Our primary scripture text is Hebrews 11-12.

A reminder that our congregation is meeting for in-person Sunday worship only, Sunday mornings at 8 and 10:30 am. Sunday Church School for all ages begins at 9:15 am. Although we have returned to in-person Sunday worship, a video recording of our Sunday service is still available from our website and Facebook page.

All mid-week Lenten Services are virtual.

Let us begin.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,+ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Dialogue**

P Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways, by the prophets,  
C **but in these last days God has spoken to us by the Son.**  
P The Son is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being  
C **the Son sustains all things by the Word.**  
P Since we have confidence by the new and living way opened for us by Jesus,  
C **let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith.**

### **Opening Prayer**

P Let us pray. O God our deliverer, you led your people of old through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide now the people of your church, that, following our Savior, we may walk through the wilderness of this world toward the glory of the world to come; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

C **Amen**

### **A Reading from the Psalms.....Psalm 91**

1 You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,  
2 will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.”

3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence;

4 he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

5You will not fear the terror of the night, or the arrow that flies by day,

6or the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or the destruction that wastes at noonday.

7A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

8You will only look with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked.

9Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place,

10no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

11For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

12On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

13You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

14Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name.

15When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them.

16With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

**A Reading from Hebrews.....Hebrews 11:1, 40**

1Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 29By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. 30By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. 31By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

32And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— 33who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. 36Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by

the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented — 38of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. 39Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

## Reflection

### The Prayers

P Faithful God, shower the world with your lovingkindness,

**C that all may know your peace.**

P Open our eyes to the needs of our neighbors,

**C that all may know your love.**

P Comfort the sick and dying,

**C that all may know your mercy.**

P Guide our leaders in the way of truth,

**C that all may know your justice.**

P Focus our hearts on the way of the cross,

**C that all may have faith in you.**

P Let us pray in the words of Martin Luther:

**C Behold Lord, and empty vessel that needs to be filled.**

**My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me.**

**I am cold in love, warm me and make me fervent, that my love may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and I am unable to trust you altogether.**

**O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you.**

**In you I have sealed the treasure of all I have. I am poor; you are rich and came to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me, there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore, I will remain with you, of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give.**

**Amen**

P Finally, let us pray with the words our Savior gave us:

**C 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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**The Blessing**

**P** The God of peace,  
who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus,  
the great shepherd of the sheep,  
make you complete in everything good  
so that you may do God's will,  
through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.  
**C** Amen.