

Mid-week Lenten Services 2021 (2/24/2021)

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 12-13.

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 Genesis.....Genesis 6:5, 8,13, 18-22; 7:12; 8:6; 9:1, 9-17

5The LORD saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.

8But Noah found favor in the sight of the LORD.

13And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the

earth. 18But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind shall come in to you, to keep them alive. 21Also take with you every kind of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them.”

22Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him. 12The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

6At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made

9God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 9“As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, 10and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. 11I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

12God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: 13I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 15I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” 17God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

A Reading from Hebrews.....Hebrews 11:1-3,7

11Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. 3By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible. 7By faith Noah, warned by God about events as yet unseen, respected the warning and built an ark to save his household; by this he condemned the world and became an heir to the righteousness that is in accordance with faith.

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.