

Restoration



5th Sunday in Lent

March 21, 2021



Ascension Lutheran Church

1105 N. Washington Blvd.

Ogden, UT 84404

801.782.2810

All are welcome!

HOLY VESSELS



A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY

Introduction

In this Lenten “season of recovery” for our physical, communal, mental, intellectual, and environmental health, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken. Beach glass offers us a multifaceted symbol of this transformative process.

GATHER

*People gather around Jesus as his reputation becomes known from town to town.
As we gather virtually or physically, we too are yearning for presence,
for peace, for help.*

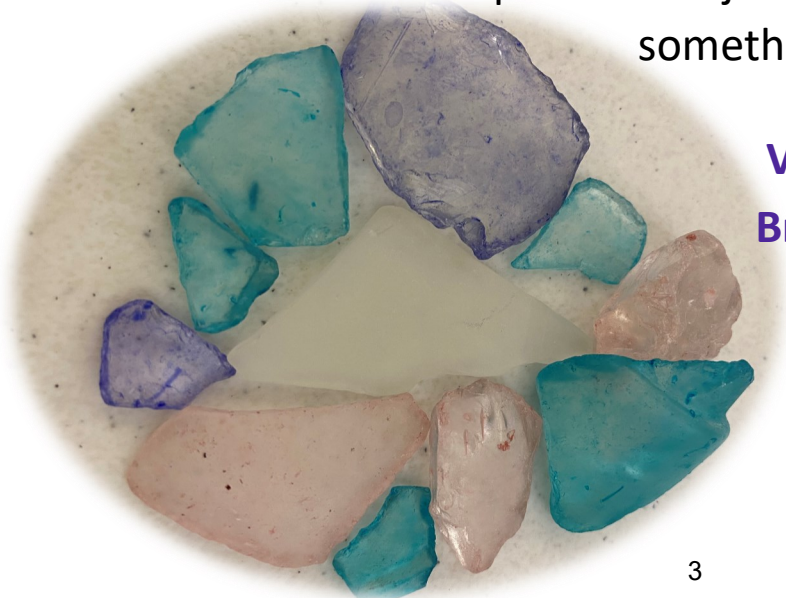
Welcome to Worship

P We continue our Lenten “season of recovery” as we focus on health as essential to our spiritual lives.

**Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come.**

P The demands of following Jesus are great. He shows us that sometimes we must make extraordinary efforts to move in a new direction. As we consider the health of humanity, we cannot ignore the need to heal the very planet that sustains us. We live in increasing chaos of a beleaguered environment and the hoarding of resources. We want to be “saved” by something or someone else, but we discover this week that we are in the boat with the One who shows us our power to turn it around, to calm the storm. We protect the jewel that is our home, restoring something beautiful from scars of the past.

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Open, body and soul
Healer, come.**



APPROACH

People opened their lives to Jesus. We are drawn to the Healer—opening our hearts with honesty about our lives and finding assurance that offers peace.

Prayer of Confession

P Let us acknowledge our need to restore, repair, renew our Holy Vessels, especially this holy container of life on which we live—this very planet.

Let us pray:

Life-giving God,

In the beginning, you created this universe with a phrase, “Let it be...” and the waters and dry land, the sky and the creatures were formed.

You set humanity among these wonders and invited us to care and honor all things.

We have not successfully answered that call.

Seeing the abundance as a feast that would never end, we gorged ourselves, taking more than we could replenish at a rate that could not be sustained.

We are beginning to comprehend the magnitude, beginning to see that things cannot just keep going “as usual” and not have dire consequences.

We are frightened, which is partly why we are slow to accept it.

But we now are witnesses to the forces of a world more broken than when we inherited it:

water, wind, and wave, fire, drought, and earthquake
that signal it is time to pay attention and to make real change.

Too often we think there is nothing we can do—that the change required is too great.

It all feels overwhelming and so we look away,
sometimes even from the small things that could make a difference for our own community.

P Help us, Healer.
Show us our ability to chart a different course.
Forgive our inaction.

Move us to move one step at a time toward greater care for one another.

In this silence, we sense and acknowledge our yearning for wholeness.

Silence is kept for reflection

**Vessels, holy and whole
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Open, body and soul
Healer, come.**



Assurance

P I invite you to imagine a warmth begin to arise within the core of your body. It may help to keep your eyes closed. This warm orb of light is deep within you, a flame always there and ready when you need it. This warm glow begins to emerge from the recesses of your inner being and it fills you with determination and courage. It floods your whole body until your skin is glowing with it, radiating outward. You feel strong.

Know this: Jesus asks us to do hard things, to make changes, *knowing* we are capable.

No. Matter. What.

We *can* change in order to heal this jewel planet called home.

The calm of Christ in the storm is available.

For you, for me, for all.

Take a deep breath in to let this truth fill you...
and breathe out with the relief of assurance.

Peace

P I invite you to imagine the warmth that surrounds you extending to those who may be next to you in close proximity.
Imagine it extending beyond your walls to the neighborhood...
the wider community...
the church...
and seeing it spread like the rising sun,
let it expand to all the world.
Let this be our peace. Amen.

I invite you to open your eyes.
The peace of Christ is with you.

All And also with you.



Opening Song

Touch the Earth Lightly

Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

We who endanger, who create hunger,
agents of death for all creatures that live,
we who would foster clouds of disaster—
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

Let there be greening, birth from the burning,
water that blesses, and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.

God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,
using us gently, and making us one.

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BELIEVE

People were fortified by Jesus' words and deeds that revealed care for all—especially those marginalized. We strengthen our belief in the possibility for renewed health and vigor for all.

A Contemporary Word

We don't inherit the earth from our ancestors,
we borrow it from our children.

—David Brower—

An Ancient Word

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mathew, the 8th chapter.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. A scribe then approached and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Another of his disciples said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

Matthew 8: 18-27

P The Gospel of our Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pr. Debra Jimenez

Apostles' Creed

P Let us join together with one voice confessing our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**



**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**



ASK

People who were healed by Jesus were not afraid to ask. And so we come before the Holy One, making our petitions and desires known, trusting the work of the Spirit.

Prayers of Intercession

L Healer of our every ill,
especially our fractured creation,
we come before you to make our petitions known.
Hear our cries for healing of body, mind, and spirit.
We know that already you are at work among us,
showing us the way to recovery from the toxicities and grief of our time.
You remind us that that you are in the boat with us in the midst of difficult times.
We give you thanks for this path of following you,
even when you call us to crossover from one way of life to another.
We pray especially for all who are impacted most by dwindling resources.
We pray that we will continue to learn and see and know
how our actions affect others, not just ourselves.
We give thanks for the wake up calls that our young people are sounding
and we pray for the fortitude to move this journey forward alongside them.

L We give thanks for the courage of activists and educators who help us wake up to this storm and to see that we have it within our power to calm that storm, to restore the earth's wholeness.

We ask for courage and encouragement to re-evaluate how we as a church can join this effort now and into the future.

And so we lift our prayers spoken and unspoken to you, O Lord, as you hear the cries of our hearts.

Lord, in your mercy.

All You hear our prayer.

Song of Preparation

Make Us Holy, Make Us Whole

In your love, make us whole.

May we rest in your compassion.

Calm the lost, weary soul
in the warmth of your love.

May your peace fill our hearts.

May we know the love of Jesus.

By your grace, you console.

Make us holy, make us whole.



CCLI Song # 3315976

Mark Friedman

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KNOW

The parting words Jesus gave to those he healed were often as much balm as the healing act itself. We hear the words of encouragement from the One who makes beauty from brokenness.

Holy Communion

P Our God is with you!

All And also with you!

P Lift up your hearts

All We lift them up to our God.

P Let us give thanks to our Sovereign God

All It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
In the beginning you breathed life into raw materials,
creating and animating containers of beauty and goodness.
We, your Holy Vessels, were fired in the kiln of love
until we shined with your light.
Susceptible to shattering, we find ourselves broken,
unable at times to remember your promise of repair.
You remind us time and again that, though broken,
we are held in your presence
and made whole by your grace.

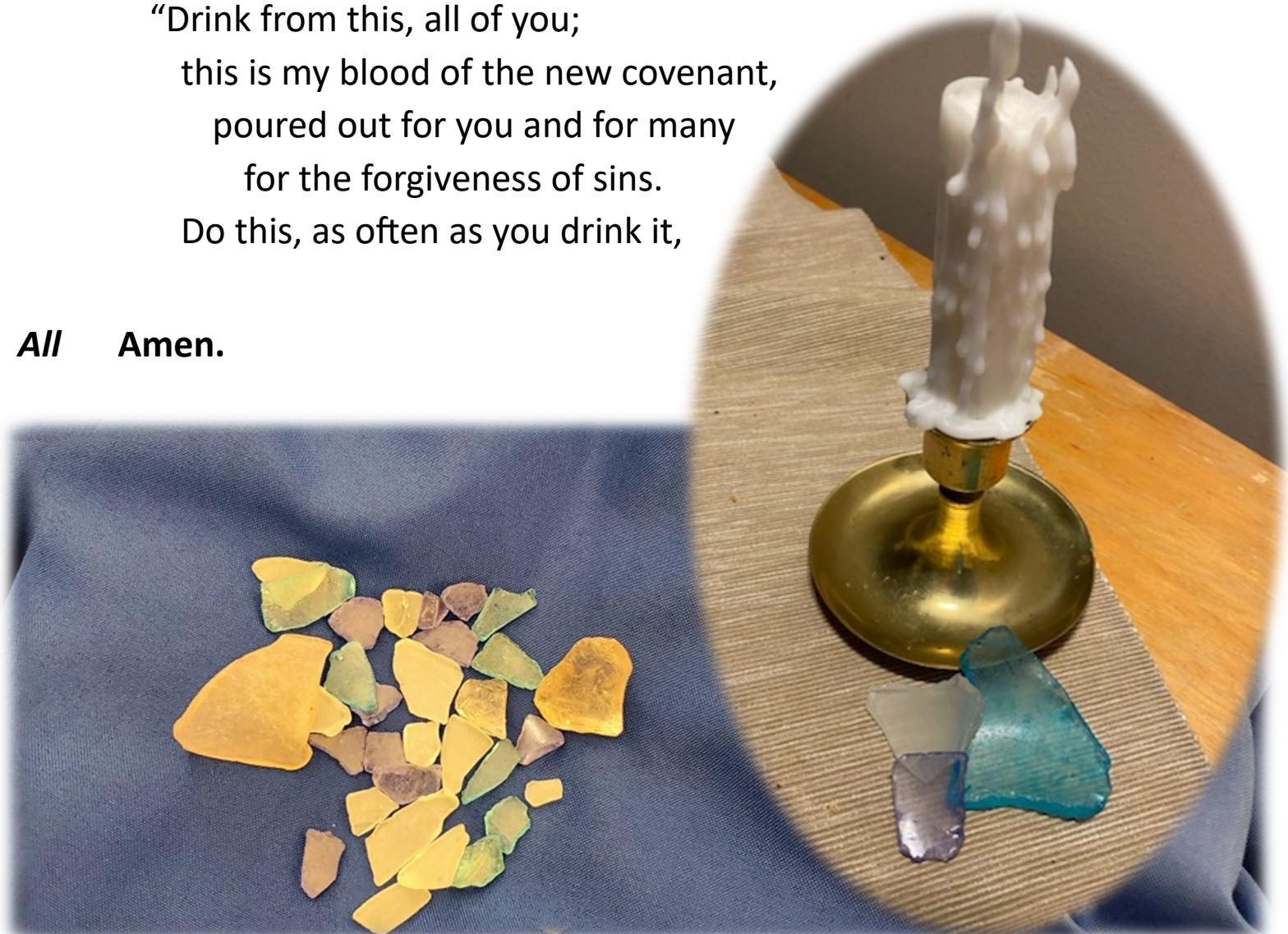


When Jesus ascended,
he promised to be with us always.
In the power of your Word and Holy Spirit,
we are not alone.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,

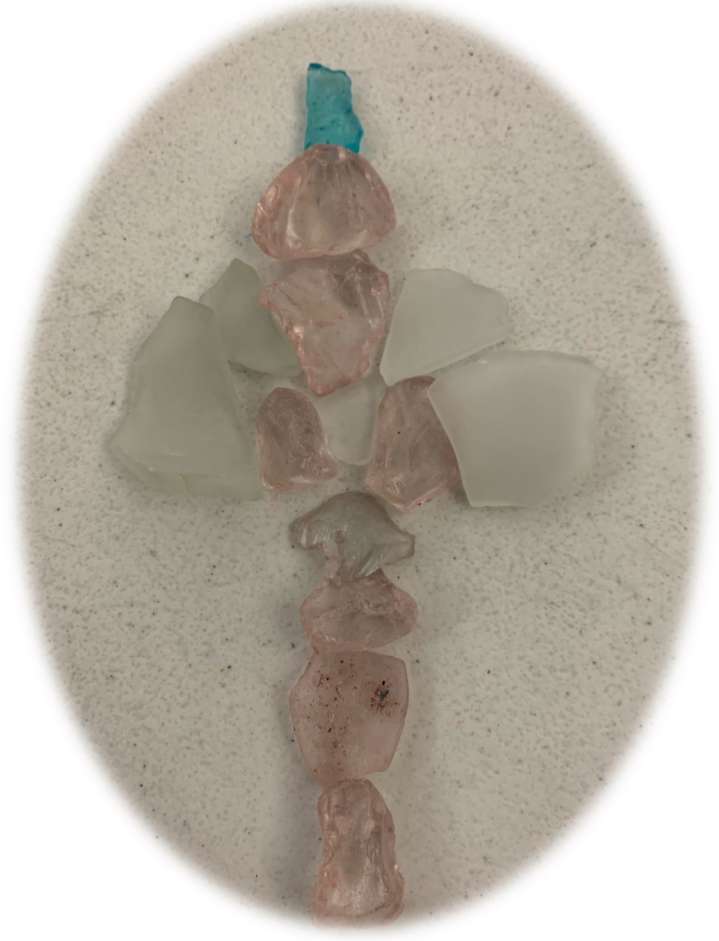
All Amen.



The Lord's Prayer

P Joining with all who are being transformed, let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us.

All 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 Invitation and The Meal

P Beloved: here is bread; here is wine. Here is Jesus.
Come and be fed.

Sharing the Meal

Post Communion Blessing

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All Amen

RESPOND

*Scriptural accounts of healing often end with responses from the “crowd” of witnesses.
How will we proceed into the brokenness of this world and respond as
the Body of Christ?*

Stewardship of Life & Ministry Announcements

Sending Song

On the Beach, the Waves of Waters

1. On the beach, the waves of waters crash upon the sparkling sand.
Parents with their sons and daughters stroll and chatter, hand in hand.
Several people, watching, gazing, spot some dolphins swimming free.
God, your world is so amazing! Thank you for the wondrous sea.
2. Later on, the storm clouds gather, rolling in upon the shore.
Lightning crashes, people scatter as the rains begin to pour.
There is music in the thunder! Soon the storms will pass on by.
God, we thank you for the wonder of the ever-changing sky.
3. In our homes and on vacation, God, your love is every place.
You have made this good creation; You have filled your world with grace.
Sea and land reflect your glory; beauty lights your sky above.
God, creation sings the story of your ever-constant love.

Biblical Reference: Psalms 104, 148

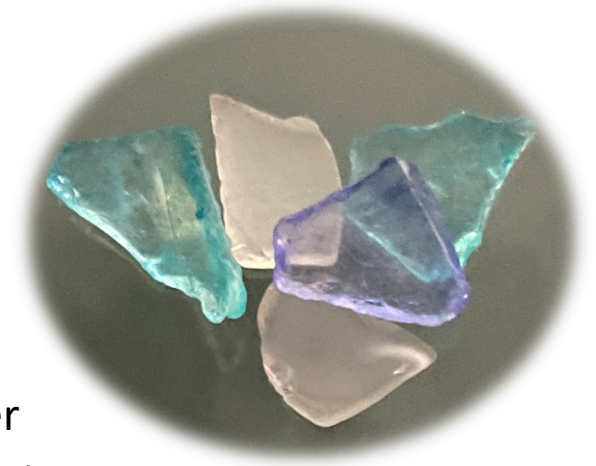
Tune: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824 ("Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee") Public Domain

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Blessing

P Now go with confidence that we can face the storm with Jesus in the boat, recovering our depth of love for all and our joy of living in this world.

May the words of Jesus ring in your ears:
“follow me.”



And may the Spirit hover, move, and deliver
salve to your soul ✝ and a spring in your step.

All Amen.

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Holy Vessels

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