

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Geneva

English-Speaking Congregation
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Pastor: Rev. Andrew Willis
Organist & Interim Worship Leader: Regine Kummer

Ash Wednesday + 17 February 2021

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: *Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland*

Later in the service you will be invited to stand before a window that you can open.

You might want to make sure this is possible during the Prelude.

Also, you will need a little bit of detergent and a candle, which you might use further into Lent.

Welcome

Prelude

Regine Kummer

Opening Words

Like parched leaves awaiting the rain,
like a body carefully cleansed after its last breath,
like a carpenter freed from the dust of the day,
like a child giggling after a bath,
we worship the God of life and death,
washing our sins away.
We are washed not like a blackboard wiped bare,
but like a window letting in the light
reflecting how we are seen through the eyes of Jesus Christ,
what we were meant to be,
what promises lift us high,
what Spirit carries us through the night.

Hymn

Again we keep this solemn fast

Attributed to Gregory the Great

Klug's Geistliche Lieder 1543: Germany



1. A - gain we keep this sol - emn fast, a gift of faith from a - ges past,
2. The law and pro - phets from of old in fig - ured ways this Lent fore - told,
3. More spar - ing, there - fore, let us make the words we speak, the food we take,
4. Let us a - void each harm - ful way that lures the care - less mind a - stray;
5. We pray, O bless - ed Three - in - One, our God while end - less a - ges run,



this Lent which binds us lov - ing - ly to faith and hope and char - i - ty.
which Christ, all a - ges' Sov - ereign Guide, in these last days has sanc - ti - fied.
our sleep, our laugh - ter, ev - ery sense, learn peace through ho - ly pen - i - tence.
by watch - ful prayer our spir - its free from schem - ing of the En - e - my.
that this, our Lent of for - ty days, may bring us growth and give you praise.

"ex more docti mystico" English © Peter J. Scagnelli.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, "Where is their God?""

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Response

Lumière de Dieu

Communauté de Grandchamp: Switzerland



Lu - miè - re de Dieu, in - on - de la ter - re, vi - si - te nos cœurs et de-meure a - vec nous.
 Come light, light of God, give light to cre - a - tion, en-light-en our hearts and re-main with your world.

© Communauté de Grandchamp.

Epistle Reading

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, 'At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.' See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything from God.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Lumière de Dieu

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The Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 6.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ‘Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ‘So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Andy Willis

Hymn

Eternal Lord of love, behold your church

Thomas H. Cain

Trente quatre pseumes de David, Geneva

1. E - ter - nal Lord of love, be - hold your church walk - ing once more the pil - grim way of Lent,
 2. So dai - ly dy - ing to the way of self, so dai - ly liv - ing in your way of love,
 3. If dead in you, so in you we a - rise, you the first - born of all the faith - ful dead;

led by your cloud by day, by night your fire, moved by your love and
 we walk the road, Lord Je - sus, that you trod, know - ing our - selves bap -
 and as through ston - y ground the green shoots break, glo - rious in spring - time

toward your pre - sence bent: far off yet here -- the goal of all de - sire.
 tized in - to your death: so we are dead and live with you in God.
 dress of leaf and flower, so in - to life and glo - ry shall we wake.

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 again 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. Amen.*

Call to Prayer

*At this point you are invited to leave the screen for a few moments and stand before a window in your home.
You will need to hear but not see the screen.*

Prayer of Confession

from Psalm 51

Prayers of Intercession

God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The Passing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

Words of Grace

Gathering of Gifts

Give me a clean heart

Margaret J. Douroux: USA

Give me a clean heart so I may serve you. Lord, fix my heart so that I may be used by
 you. For I'm not wor - thy of all these bless - ings. Give me a clean heart and I'll fol-low you.
 1. I'm not ask - ing for the rich - es of the land. I'm not
 2. Some - times I am up and some-times I am down. Some-times
 ask - ing for the proud to know my name. Please give me, Lord, a clean heart, that
 I am al - most lev - el to the ground.
 I may fol - low you. Give me a clean heart, a clean heart and I will fol-low you.

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

Even if we have not done right, gracious God,
you never treat us as if we were failures, broken and dirty,
but wash us clean, able to start again,
able to let in the light.

*We thank you that you have given us this acceptable time
to accept your love,
so that in Christ, we might become your righteousness.*

Sung Response

La ténèbre n'est point ténèbre

Jacques Berthier: Taizé, France

La té - nè - bre n'est point té - nè - bre de-vant toi: la nuit com-me le jour est lu - miè - re.
Our dark-ness is nev - er dark-ness in your sight: the deep-est night is clear as the day - light.

The musical score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Music J. Berthier © Ateliers et Presses de Taizé, 71250 Taizé-Communauté, France.

Even if we do not comprehend why all the afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings,
imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger,
you do not leave us on our own,
*but by your Spirit, wash over us and in us
the gifts of purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit,
genuine love, truthful speech, and your power,
so whatever is ahead we see through the promise that we are yours.*

Sung Response

La ténèbre n'est point ténèbre

Jacques Berthier: Taizé, France

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What we would most want to keep secret, you would shout from the rooftops.
What we would like to parade, you call us to keep secret.
With you we no longer need to worry about status or place, or doubt where we belong.
The glass that had become marked and streaked
is wiped in the cleansing ashes of your mercy until it gleams.
With you is our reward,
the treasures that moth and rust cannot destroy,
that no thief can steal and re-deploy.
*Blessed are you, God, our mother and father,
for the promise of lives abundant,
beaming, if even through a glass imperfect, the light that leads to freedom
through your Beloved, Jesus Christ.
Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.*

Sending Prayer

Benediction

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Regine Kummer

* * *

Thank you to those assisting with leadership in today’s worship service:

Reader: Riza Le Geyt
Musicians: Corin Jorgenson, Regine Kummer, Koko Taylor
Videography: Ray Woodcock
Liturgist: Terry MacArthur

This Week’s Schedule: *

Thursday, 18 Feb.	12h00	Centering Prayer
Sunday, 21 Feb.	10h00	Church school
	11h00	Worship on the First Sunday in Lent
	12h15	Coffee hour
<i>Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9h00–17h00; Fridays, noon–16h00</i>		

**(all activities take place online, unless otherwise noted)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to the Season of Lent

For centuries, Christians have set aside the season of Lent as a time for reflection, prayer, and fasting, as preparation for being immersed again in the central story of the cross and the empty tomb. This year we will be observing the season dispersed in our homes rather than gathered in the sanctuary. Nonetheless, we will still walk a common path.

We will be working with windows this season. Windows are where light and fresh air make their way into an otherwise dark and stuffy room; they are channels of grace and possibility. They also happen to be where we are spending much of our time these days—in our own homes, looking out. How might we let in a little extra light and air this season? How might we pay attention to signs of promise right where we are?

We’ll be looking for windows of grace in our biblical readings and our worship services this season. You’re also invited to designate a window in your own home as a place for reflection and wonder. Our worship continues on the First Sunday of Lent, 21 February.

Small Group Study for Lent and Beyond: *We Make the Road by Walking*

This Lent, members of the congregation will meet for weekly online gatherings to discuss [We Make the Road by Walking](#), by Brian McLaren. The book is an invitation to renewed engagement with the Christian faith. It's composed of 52 brief chapters (one for each week of the year) and is divided into four quarters: Alive in the Story of Creation, Alive in the Adventure of Jesus, Alive in a Global Uprising, and Alive in the Spirit. We'll take it a quarter at a time—so you don't need to sign up for a whole year, just the first quarter, which will cover the season of Lent and Easter.

Groups will meet online using Zoom at a variety of times. Whether you're relatively new to the Christian faith and looking for an introduction or have been around a while and are looking to go deeper, this book and the conversation with others should be an enriching experience. All are welcome to join—if you'd like to sign up, please [use this form](#).

