

WINTER WORSHIP

SUNDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2021

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



Gathering Music (*Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen*)

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord my soul, who leads me into life.

Opening

Forty days alone,
a wilderness of thoughts,
tempting and inviting thoughts,
which could so easily have distracted you
from your task, your mission,
your vision.
Yet you emerged, stronger and more attuned
to all that had to be done,
despite a time constraint
that to our eyes would have seemed hopeless.
We too live in stressful times.
Demands are made of our time,
that leave so little
for the important things of life.
We are easily distracted
in the wilderness of our lives,
by every call to go this way or that,
to turn stone to bread
leap from mountains,
and do all that would keep us from the truth.
We listen to the voices of this world,
and ignore the one who endured all this
and so much more,
and emerged triumphant,
that we might not have to suffer so.
Forgive us, Father,
when we get distracted from our task.
Forgive us those times when we try
to be all things to all people,
and lose sight of what you've truly called us to do.

The Confession

All **Forgive those things we have done
which have caused you sadness,
and those things we should have done
that would have brought you joy.
In both we have failed
ourselves and you.
Bring us back to that place
where our journey began,
when we said that we would follow
the way that you first trod.
Lead us to the Cross
and meet us there.**

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. Send your saving power upon all of us who turn to you and seek new life in your name. **Amen.**

Song of Prayer: (*Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen*)

Holy God
Holy and mighty
Holy immortal one
Have mercy, mercy upon us.

A Prayer for the Evening

You chose a people for your own,
to lavish love upon,
raised up prophets, priests, and kings,
to be the nation through which
the Messiah would be revealed to the world,
and through whom your kingdom would come.
You chose this people gathered here
to be your children,
loved and blessed, forgiven
through the one who knew no sin,
the King of Glory, whose crown was made of thorns,
and whose name we raise in worship. **Amen.**

The Word of God

Genesis 9:8–17

I am going to make a solemn promise to you and to everyone who will live after you. This includes the birds and the animals that came out of the boat. I promise every living creature that the earth and those living on it will never again be destroyed by a flood. The rainbow that I have put in the sky will be my sign to you and to every living creature on earth. It will remind you that I will keep this promise forever. When I send clouds over the earth, and a rainbow appears in the sky, I will remember my promise to you and to all other living

creatures. Never again will I let floodwaters destroy all life. When I see the rainbow in the sky, I will always remember the promise that I have made to every living creature. The rainbow will be the sign of that solemn promise.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 25:1–9

I offer you my heart, Lord God,
and I trust you.
Don't make me ashamed
or let enemies defeat me.
Don't disappoint any
of your worshipers,
but disappoint all
deceitful liars.
Show me your paths
and teach me to follow;
Guide me by your truth
and instruct me
You keep me safe,
and I always trust you.
Please, Lord, remember,
you have always
been patient and kind.
Forget each wrong I did
when I was young.
Show how truly kind you are
and remember me.
You are honest and merciful,
and you teach sinners
how to follow your path.

.

1 Peter 3:18–22

Christ died once for our sins. An innocent person died for those who are guilty. Christ did this to bring you to God, when his body was put to death and his spirit was made alive. Christ then preached to the spirits that were being kept in prison. They had disobeyed God while Noah was building the boat, but God had been patient with them. Eight people went into that boat and were brought safely through the flood. Those flood waters were like baptism that now saves you. But baptism is more than just washing your body. It means turning to God with a clear conscience, because Jesus Christ was raised from death. Christ is now in heaven, where he sits at the right side of God. All angels, authorities, and powers are under his control..

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sequence Hymn: (*Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen*)

As I went down to the river to pray,
Studyin' about that good old way,
And who shall wear the starry (robe and) crown,
Good Lord, show me the way,
*O sisters, let's go down,
Let's go down, come on down,
O sisters, let's go down,
Down to the river to pray.*

*O brothers, let's go down...
O fathers, let's go down...
O mothers, let's go down...
O sinners, let's go down...
Down to the river to pray.*

The Holy Gospel:

Priest The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark. (1:9–15)
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

About that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. As soon as Jesus came out of the water, he saw the sky open and the Holy Spirit coming down to him like a dove. A voice from heaven said, "You are my own dear Son, and I am pleased with you." Right away God's Spirit made Jesus go into the desert. He stayed there for forty days while Satan tested him. Jesus was with the wild animals, but angels took care of him. After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee and told the good news that comes from God. He said, "The time has come! God's kingdom will soon be here. Turn back to God and believe the good news!"

Priest The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Message

Affirmation of Faith

**You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.
You are our God. We worship you.**

Prayers of the People

Leader Lord Jesus Christ,
People **Be with us, within us, behind us and before us.**

Leader We bind ourselves, O God, today, to the strong name of the Trinity,
People **And we name you: Three in One, One in Three; and claim our place in your community of love.**

Leader We are embraced, loving God, in the community that is the heart not just of our church, but also in the community that is the very heart of who you are,

People **Three in One; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

Leader Within that great love, we are held and treasured. Lord, hear our prayers this evening;

People **We pray for our hurting world.**

Leader That war-makers will find peace. That the hungry will find food. That refugees will find shelter. That injustice will be answered with all that is right and good.

People **We pray for all who suffer.**

Leader For those we love dearly. For those we barely know. For those whose suffering, we have ignored. Be present in the healing touch of all hands that help the sick and suffering. And send your Spirit to comfort and protect all who need you.

People **We pray for all who struggle.**

Leader For those who cannot see a way through broken relationships, difficult financial realities, emotional darkness, and deep, deep loneliness. May we find you even in the most helpless places. And may we, your people, be present also in those places, bringing Good News and hope to all who are longing for the true life that only you can provide.

People **We pray for all who are joyful.**

Leader We rejoice at the promise of new life, and the goodness of each new day. We celebrate the movement through milestones: births, graduations, new jobs, new relationships; and the hopes that they bring. We remember those moments of blessing in our own lives and we thank you for the opportunity to use our lives to your glory, to live lives that are full and worthy of your calling.

We lift up to you, Lord, the prayers that you've placed on our hearts in our own words at this time...

We will intentionally PAUSE for the community present to share their requests, thanksgivings, desires, hopes & joys either out loud or silently.

We bind ourselves, O God, today, to the strong name of the Trinity.

People **And we name you: Three in One, One in Three: and claim our place in your community of love.**

Leader Lord Jesus Christ

People **Be with us, within us, behind us, before us. Amen.**

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

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Music at the Offertory: (*Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen*)

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save.

I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord. Is it I Lord?

I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go Lord, if you lead me.

I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them,
Whom shall I send? *Refrain*

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send? *Refrain*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

All thanks and praise
are yours at all times and in all places,
our true and loving God;
through Jesus Christ, your eternal Word,
the Wisdom from on high by whom you
created all things.
You laid the foundations of the world
and enclosed the sea when it burst out from the womb;
You brought forth all creatures of the earth
and gave breath to humankind.
Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing,
all you create is a sign of hope for our journey;
And so as the morning stars sing your praises
we join the heavenly beings and all creation
as we shout with joy:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one
who comes in the
name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all,
your Word has never been silent;
you called a people to yourself,
as a light to the nations,
you delivered them from bondage
and led them to a land of promise.
Of your grace, you gave Jesus
to be human, to share our life,
to proclaim the coming of your holy reign
and give himself for us, a fragrant offering.
Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
you have freed us from sin,
brought us into your life,
reconciled us to you,
and restored us to the glory you intend for us.

We thank you that on the night before he
died for us Jesus took bread,
and when he had given thanks to you,
he broke it, gave it to his friends and said:
“Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”
After supper Jesus took the cup of wine,
said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said:
“Drink this, all of you:
this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood,
poured out for you and for all
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”
And so, remembering all that was done for us:
the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension,
longing for Christ’s coming in glory,
and presenting to you these gifts
your earth has formed and human
hands have made,
we acclaim you, O Christ:

**Dying, you destroyed our death.
Rising, you restored our life.
Christ Jesus, come in glory!**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these gifts of bread and wine
that they may be to us
the Body and Blood of your Christ.
Grant that we, burning with your Spirit’s power,
may be a people of hope, justice and love.

Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ,
and in the fullness of time gather us
with all your people
into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
we worship you our God and Creator
in voices of unending praise.

Blessed are you now and for ever. **AMEN.**

Lord's Prayer (*Celebrant and People*)

**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 for ever. Amen.**

The Celebrant continues

We break this bread
to share in the Body of Christ.
**We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.**

Music during Eucharist: (*Sung by the music team; the congregation is invited to listen*)

*One bread, one body, One Lord of all,
One cup of blessing which we bless.
And we, though many, throughout the earth,
We are one body in this one Lord.*

Gentile or Jew, Servant or free,
Woman or man, No more. *Refrain*

Many the gifts, Many the works,
One in the Lord, Of all. *Refrain*

Grain for the fields, Scattered and grown,
Gathered to one, For all. *Refrain*

Post-Communion Prayer (*Celebrant and People*)

**Loving God,
we give you thanks
for restoring us in your image
and nourishing us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.
Now send us forth
a people forgiven, healed, renewed;
that we may proclaim your love to the world
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Night Prayer

Lord,
It is night.

The night is for stillness.
Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.
What has been done has been done;
What has not been done has not been done;
Let it be.

The night is dark.
Let our fears of the darkness of the world
And in our lives rest in you.

The night is quiet.
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
All dear to us,
And all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.
Let us look expectantly to a new day,
New joys,
New possibilities.

In your name we pray. **AMEN**

Blessing

Life is short, and we do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel with us. So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind, and the blessing of God be with you always. **AMEN.**

Closing Song

Give thanks with a grateful heart;
Give thanks to the Holy One;
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son.

And now let the weak say, "I am strong,"
Let the poor say, "I am rich,
Because of what the Lord has done for us".

Dismissal



ST. JAMES PARISH

25 South Third Street ♦ Wilmington, NC 28401 ♦ (910) 763-1628 ♦ parish@stjamesp.org

[f](https://www.facebook.com/stjamesp) @stjamesp [i](https://www.instagram.com/stjamesparish) @stjamesparish

STJAMESP.ORG