

Year B; Fourth Sunday of Lent
Liturgical Elements
Developed for March 10, 2024
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Lectionary Texts

- Numbers 21:4-9
- Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
- Ephesians 2:1-10
- John 3:14-21

OPENING PRAYER (*from Psalm 107*)

God of mercies, when the Israelites were sick through their sinful ways because of their sin, they endured suffering. They loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death. But they cried out to you, LORD, in their trouble. Though they had sinned, you saved them from their distress. You sent your word and healed them; you delivered them from destruction. We come before you a fallen people crying out with our worship and our troubles looking for your word to bring healing, to create wholeness, and to give us purpose. We stand before you to thank you for your steadfast love and your wonderful works to humankind. We offer our thanksgiving offerings of time, talent, and tithe and will tell of your deeds with songs of joy. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so from every corner of this world. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP (*from Psalm 107*)

One: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

All: for his steadfast love endures for ever.

One: Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,

All: those he redeemed from trouble —

One: those he gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

All: Some were sick through their sinful ways, and because of their iniquities endured affliction;

One: they loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death.

All: Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress;

One: he sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction.

All: Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind.

One: And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of his deeds with songs of joy. Let us worship and sing with joy to the Lord, our God!

CALL TO CONFESSION *(from Psalm 107)*

The Psalmist writes that some were sick from their sinful ways and because of their iniquities endured affliction; they drew near to the gates of death. They cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress; he delivered them from destruction. Let us cry out to the Lord and confess our sin in faith that he would, also, deliver us.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(from Ephesians 2)*

Gracious God, Paul writes of the Ephesians that they followed the desires of the flesh and their sensualities and were children of wrath like everyone else. They followed the ruler of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient to you. We have been like the Ephesians; forgive our sin. Have us act out of obedience to you and not obedience to our flesh and our sensualities. As you raised Jesus from the dead, though without sin, raise us up and one day seat us with him in the heavenly places. It is in Jesus that we plead and pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from Ephesians 2)*

God, who is rich in mercy, out of his great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved. God wills to raise us up with Jesus and seat us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Friends, hear and believe this good news.

All: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(from John 3; Ephesians 2)*

Father of mercies, rather than holding us responsible to the Torah — the Law or the Teachings — you, understanding that we could never meet the law, offer us great mercy and grace. You offer that any who believes in the Son of Man may have eternal life. You loved the world so much that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. In thankfulness for this and your many benefits, we give these gifts for your work on earth. Amen.

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