

Year B; Third Sunday of Lent
Liturgical Elements
Developed for March 3, 2024
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Lectionary Texts

- Exodus 20:1-17
- Psalm 19
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
- John 2:13-22

OPENING PRAYER (*from Psalm 19*)

Holy God, the heavens tell of your glory, and the firmament proclaims your handiwork. Your law is perfect and revives our souls. Your decrees are sure and bring wisdom to the simple. Your precepts are right and rejoice our hearts; your commandments are clear and enlighten our eyes. Fear of you, O LORD, is pure and endures forever. Your ordinances are both true and righteous. Your law is to be desired more than gold — even find gold. They are sweeter to us than honey — even drippings of the honeycomb. Keeping your law comes with great reward. But who can detect our errors? Clear us from the faults that are hidden from us — that only you can see. Protect us from those who are rude and disrespectful; clear our minds of them as we begin worship this day. With your work, we can be blameless and innocent of great transgressions. As we worship this day before you, let our words and meditations be acceptable to you, O LORD, for you are our rock and redeemer. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP *(from Psalm 19)*

One: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

All: Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

One: The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple;

All: the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes;

One: the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring for ever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

All: More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.

One: Moreover are your servants warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

All: But who can detect their errors? Clear us from hidden faults.

One: Keep back your servants also from the rude and disrespectful; do not let them have dominion over us. Then we shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.

All: Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, O LORD, our rock and our redeemer. Let us worship God!

CALL TO CONFESSION *(from Psalm 19)*

The Psalmist writes his hope that the words of his mouth and the meditations of his heart be acceptable to God, but our words and meditations are not always according to God's law and intentions. Let us confess where we have gone astray and sinned.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(from Psalm 19)*

Merciful, God, we are often quick to call on you for our supplications and for our intercessions for friends and family. We can do this despite that our words in other times and our silent meditations can tear down or dishonor other people or your creation and purposes. Forgive our inappropriate words and thoughts and continue to mold us into the people you intend us to be. Transform the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts to be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from 1 Corinthians 1)*

The message of scripture is clear. The message about the cross may be foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those who are being saved, it is the power of God. The world does not know God through wisdom because God chose to use simple humans such as us to make his proclamation. We proclaim Christ crucified, and his gift of crucifixion brings salvation. Friends, hear and believe this good news.

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

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(from Psalm 19)*

The Psalmist writes that your law is perfect, O Lord. It revives our souls. The decrees of the Lord are sure and make wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right and rejoice our hearts. The commandment of the Lord is clear and enlightens our eyes. In thankfulness for your law and your teachings, we offer these gifts from what you have given us in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

Elements in this document are based on the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV). Some portions are direct quotes; though, quotation marks and designations are usually left out for ease of use in bulletins and other worship resources. Usually, the Call to Worship is based upon the Psalm of the day and follows that Psalm very closely but modifying it for a leader vs. congregation responsive setting if necessary. Other elements usually deviate more significantly from the text. While they may quote very short sections, they are generally written in the theme of the text. Elements usually designate the book and chapter from which they are derived.

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