

HYMN OF THE DAY*"Will You Come and Follow Me"***ELW #798**

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name? Will you go where you don't know and never be the same? Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known, will you let my life be grown in you & you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name? Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same? Will you risk the hostile stare, should your life attract or scare? Will you let me answer pray'r in you & you in me?

Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name? Will you set the pris'ners free and never be the same? Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen, and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

Will you love the you you hide if I but call your name? Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same? Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around, through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name. Let me turn and follow you and never be the same. In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show. Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

APOSTLES' CREED**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH** L) Lord in your Mercy C) **Hear our Prayer****SHARING THE PEACE:** L) *"The peace of Christ be with you all"* C) **And also with you.****OFFERING/OFFERTORY***"Give Thanks"**Words and Music by Henry Smith ©1978, Arrg. © 1992 Integrity's Hosanna! Music. CLI # 1616198*

Give thanks with a grateful heart. Give thanks to the Holy One.

Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his son. *Repeat*

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. *Repeat**(end with)* Give thanks.**LORD'S PRAYER****BLESSING & BENEDICTION****SENDING HYMN***"God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind"***ELW #400**

God of tempest, God of whirlwind as on Pentecost descend!

Drive us out from sheltered comfort; past these walls your people send!

Sweep us into costly service, there with Christ to bear the cross, there with Christ to bear the cross!

God of blazing, God of burning, all that blocks your purpose, purge!

Through your church, Christ's living Body, let your flaming Spirit surge!

Where deceit conceals injustice, kindle us to speak your truth, kindle us to speak your truth!

God of earthquake, God of thunder, shake us loose from lethargy!

Break the chains of sin asunder, for earth's healing set us free!

Crumble walls that still divide us; make us one in Christ our Lord, make us one in Christ our Lord!

God of passion, God unsleeping, stir in us love's restlessness!

Where the people cry in anguish, may we share your heart's distress.

Rouse us from content with evil; claim us for your kingdom's work, claim us for your kingdom's work!

THE DISMISSALL) Go in peace. Share your bread. **All) Thanks be to God.**

Benton & Willow Creek Lutheran Churches

Second Sunday in Lent - February 25th, 2024*Guest Pastor: Alan Blankenfeld Organist: Lisa Rave***WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS****CALL TO WORSHIP – Psalm 22:23-31**

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's line, give glory. Stand in awe of the LORD, all you offspring of Israel.

²⁴**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither is the LORD's face hidden from them; but when they cry out, the LORD hears them.**

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly; I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied, Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; all the families of nations shall bow before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD, who rules over the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.

³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the LORD, whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

GATHERING HYMN: "When I Survey The Wondrous Cross" ELW #803

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the death of Christ, my God;
all the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did ever such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Holy God,

We confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free. We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold. We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up. We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred. For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.

Here is a flood of grace: Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Kyrie Setting Ten - "Have Mercy on Us"

pg. 203 ELW

Hymn of Praise - "Glory be to God"

pg. 204a ELW

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you." ¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

L) Word of God, Word of Life. All) Thanks be to God.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Romans 4:13-25

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. ¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many

nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. *L) Word of God, Word of Life. All) Thanks be to God.*

CHILDREN'S INVITATION SONG: "Jesus Loves The Little Children"

Jesus loves the little children, All the children of the world.

Red and yellow, black and white, They are precious in His sight.

Jesus loves the little children of the world.

CHILDREN'S WORD

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil" ELW #512

Lord, let my heart be good soil, open to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is understood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone away.

When my heart is cold, warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

GOSPEL Mark 8:31-38

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." ³⁴He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

L) Word of God, Word of Life All) Thanks be to God.

SERMON - Pastor Alan Blankenfeld