

Wednesday, March 17, 2021:

Fourth Wednesday in Lent:

*I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him,*

*"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before you; I*

*am no longer worthy to be called your son."* Luke 15:18, 19

+ **OPENING CALL TO PRAISE AND PRAYER**

O God, open our lips,

***and our mouths shall proclaim your praise.***

From the rising of the sun to its setting,

***we praise your name, O God.***

+ **REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM**

By Word and water God renews us this day

in the living fountain of God's grace,

and raises us with Christ Jesus

to live a new life in the Spirit.

\* OSL

***Satisfy us in the morning***

***with your steadfast love, O God,***

***that we may sing for joy***

***and be glad all our days.***

+ **MORNING CANTICLE** - *The Second Song of Isaiah*

Seek the Lord while he wills to be found;

call upon him when he draws near.

***Let the wicked forsake their ways***

***and the evil ones their thoughts;***

And let them turn to the Lord,

and he will have compassion,

and to our God, for he will richly pardon.

***For my thoughts are not your thoughts,***

***nor your ways my ways, says the Lord.***

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,

so are my ways higher than your ways,

and my thoughts than your thoughts.

***For as rain and snow fall from the heavens***

***and return not again, but water the earth,***

Bringing forth life and giving growth,

seed for sowing and bread for eating,

***So is my word that goes forth from my mouth;***

***it will not return to me empty;***

But it will accomplish that which I have purposed,

and prosper in that for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:6-11

+ **MORNING PRAYER**

The Holy One\* be with you;  
***And also with you.***

Let us pray:

***Oh God, The Holy Spirit,  
come to us, and among us;  
come as the wind, and cleanse us;  
come as the fire, and burn;  
come as the dew, and refresh;  
convict, convert, and consecrate many hearts and  
lives to our great good and to your greater glory;  
and this we ask for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen***

[UM Book of Worship.]

+ **WORD: Jeremiah 18:1-11** CEV

The LORD told me, <sup>2</sup>“Go to the pottery shop, and when you get there, I will tell you what to say to the people.”

<sup>3</sup> I went there and saw the potter making clay pots on his pottery wheel. <sup>4</sup> And whenever the clay would not take the shape he wanted, he would change his mind and form it into some other shape.

<sup>5</sup> Then the LORD told me to say:

<sup>6</sup> People of Israel, I, the LORD, have power over you, just as a potter has power over clay. <sup>7</sup> If I threaten to uproot and shatter an evil nation <sup>8</sup> and that nation turns from its evil, I will change my mind.

<sup>9</sup> If I promise to make a nation strong, <sup>10</sup> but its people start disobeying me and doing evil, then I will change my mind and not help them at all.

<sup>11</sup> So listen to me, people of Judah and Jerusalem! I have decided to strike you with disaster, and I won't change my mind unless you stop sinning and start living right.

Holy wisdom, holy word.  
***Thanks be to God!***

+ **Psalm 101** CEV

<sup>1</sup> I will sing to you, LORD!

I will celebrate your kindness  
and your justice.

<sup>2</sup> Please help me learn  
to do the right thing,

and I will be honest and fair  
in my own kingdom.

<sup>3</sup> I refuse to be corrupt  
or to take part  
in anything crooked,

<sup>4</sup> and I won't be dishonest  
or deceitful.

<sup>5</sup> Anyone who spreads gossip  
will be silenced,  
and no one who is conceited  
will be my friend.

<sup>6</sup> I will find trustworthy people  
to serve as my advisors,  
and only an honest person  
will serve as an official.

<sup>7</sup> No one who cheats or lies  
will have a position  
in my royal court.

<sup>8</sup> Each morning I will silence  
any lawbreakers I find  
in the countryside  
or in the city of the LORD.

Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and *blessed*,  
one God, now and for-ever, *A-men*.

+SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

+ **WORD:** John 6:27-40 CEV

<sup>27</sup> Don't work for food that spoils. Work for food that gives eternal life. The Son of Man will give you this food, because God the Father has given him the right to do so."

<sup>28</sup> "What exactly does God want us to do?" the people asked.

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "God wants you to have faith in the one he sent."

<sup>30</sup> They replied, "What miracle will you work, so that we can have faith in you? What will you do? <sup>31</sup> For example, when our ancestors were in the desert, they were given manna to eat. It happened just as the Scriptures say, 'God gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

<sup>32</sup> Jesus then told them, "I tell you for certain that Moses wasn't the one who gave you bread from heaven. My Father is the one who gives you the true bread from

heaven. <sup>33</sup> And the bread that God gives is the one who came down from heaven to give life to the world.”

<sup>34</sup> The people said, “Lord, give us this bread and don’t ever stop!”

<sup>35</sup> Jesus replied:

I am the bread that gives life! No one who comes to me will ever be hungry. No one who has faith in me will ever be thirsty. <sup>36</sup> I have told you already that you have seen me and still do not have faith in me. <sup>37</sup> Everything and everyone that the Father has given me will come to me, and I won’t turn any of them away.

<sup>38</sup> I didn’t come from heaven to do what I want! I came to do what the Father wants me to do. He sent me, <sup>39</sup> and he wants to make certain that none of the ones he has given me will be lost. Instead, he wants me to raise them to life on the last day. <sup>40</sup> My Father wants everyone who sees the Son to have faith in him and to have eternal life. Then I will raise them to life on the last day.

Holy wisdom, holy word.  
**Thanks be to God!**

+SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

## + CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

We bless you, Adonai, God of *Israel*,  
for you come to visit us and ransom us from *bondage*.  
You have brought forth a strong *De-liverer*  
in the house of your child *David*.

**This is what your holy prophets an-nounced:  
deliverance from enemies  
and from the hand of all who hate *us*;  
mercy a-mong our *ancestors*,  
and remembrance of your ho-ly *covenant*.**

This is the promise

you swore to our an-cestor, *Abraham*,  
to make us un-a-*fraid*,  
to rescue us from our *enemies*,  
to serve before you, holy and just,  
all the days of our *lives*.

**And this, my little child,  
shall be called prophet of the Most *High*,  
going before you, Adonai, to pre-pare your *paths*,  
making your people know *de-liverance*  
by the forgiveness of their *sins*.**

**Through your merciful compassions, God our *God*,  
the dawn from on high shall *visit us*,  
to shine on those kept in dungeons and the**

**shadows of death**

**and to guide our feet onto the path of peace.**

Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and *blessed*,  
one God, now and for-ever, *A-men*.

**+ THE APOSTLE'S CREED**

***I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.***

***And in Jesus Christ, his 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;  
the third day he rose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty.***

***From there he shall 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.***

**+ COMMEMORATION: PATRICK**

Born during the final years of Roman Britain (c. 390), Patrick enjoyed an upbringing of social privilege. This ended violently. At sixteen, Patrick was seized by Irish raiders on a plundering spree along the west coast of England. He was sold and put to work as a shepherd-slave on Ireland's Atlantic coast. Here, the orphan found his God: "the Lord opened the understanding of my unbelieving heart. [He] protected me . . . and strengthened me as a father comforts his son."

Toward the end of his life, Patrick wrote the autobiographical Confession. It discloses a man of small scholarship but great evangelistic passion and a moving identification with the Irish people. Such sympathy is an example for all mission. In Ireland, "the outcast" and former slave found home if not rest. Patrick ends his book by referring all achievement to God: he begs that "whosoever deigns to look at . . . this writing which Patrick, a sinner, unlearned, has composed in Ireland" shall conclude that "if I did or showed forth anything however small according to God's good pleasure . . . it was the gift of God."

\* For All the Saints

+SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

+ **COLLECT: PATRICK**

Strong Word of God, by whom the world was created, in whom the world is redeemed, always send forth heralds like Patrick, to bear the good news, that your saving way may be made known in every place and time, in every land and to every people, for your sake and for the sake of the world. **Amen.**

\* For All the Saints

+ **PRAYERS**

The Holy One be with you,  
**and also with you.**

Let us pray: *(stop and pray for those on your heart today)*

+ PRAYER FOR THE MISSION of the CHURCH

***Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.***

+ PRAYERS FOR TOWNS and RURAL AREAS

Lord Christ, when you came among us, you proclaimed the kingdom of God in villages, towns, and lonely places: Grant that your presence and power may be known throughout this land. Have mercy upon all of us who live and work in rural areas especially here in Atlantic County; and grant that all the people of our nation may give thanks to you for food and drink and all other bodily necessities of life, respect those who labor to produce them, and honor the land and the water from which these good things come. All this we ask in your holy Name. **Amen.**

+ PRAYER: Wednesday The Fourth Week Of Lent

***O Lord our God, you sustained your ancient people in the wilderness with bread from heaven: Feed now your pilgrim flock with the food that endures to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.***

+ COLLECT OF THE WEEK

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to

the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

+ PRAYER OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

***Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world, knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. 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.***

+ **CONCLUDING PRAYER**

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father,  
You have brought us in safety to this new day:  
preserve us with your mighty power,  
that we may not fall into sin,  
nor be overcome by adversity;  
and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

+ **BLESSING**

I pray that God, the source of all hope, will infuse our lives with an abundance of joy and peace in the midst of our faith, so that our hope will overflow through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Romans 15:13 *THE VOICE*

## Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at  
Elwood United Methodist Church

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