

Fourth Sunday In Lent (14th March, 2021)

Pastor Peter Ghalayini

M: For by grace you have been saved through faith,

All: **and this is not your own doing;**

M: it is the gift of God - not the result of works,

All: **so that no one may boast.**

M: In the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Opening Hymn – My song is love unknown LH62

1. **My song is love unknown,
My Saviour's love to me,
Love to the loveless shown,
That they might lovely be.
O who am I,
That for my sake
My Lord should take
Frail flesh, and die?**
2. **He came from his blest throne
salvation to bestow,
but men made strange, and none
the longed-for Christ would know.
But O my friend,
my friend indeed,
who at my need,
his life did spend.**
3. **Sometimes they strew His way,
And His sweet praises sing;
Resounding all the day
Hosannas to their king.
Then 'Crucify!'
Is all their breath,**

**And for His death
They thirst and cry.**

**4. They rise, and needs will have
My dear Lord made away;
A murderer they save,
The prince of life they slay.
Yet cheerful He
To suffering goes,
That He His foes
From thence might free.**

**5. Here might I stay and sing,
No story so divine;
Never was love, dear king,
Never was grief like Thine!
This is my friend,
In whose sweet praise
I all my days
Could gladly spend.**

*Music: John Nicholson Ireland 1879-1962 (TiS 341) Words: Samuel
Crossman (1624-1683). In the public domain*

M: Friends in Christ:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Therefore let us confess our sins to God our Father and ask him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us;

**C: We confess to you, almighty God,
before the whole company of heaven, and to each other,
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, by our own fault.
Have mercy on us, for Jesus' sake, forgive us all our sins,
and bring us to eternal life.
Amen.**

M: As a called and ordained servant of the Word I announce the grace of God to all of you. On behalf of my Lord Jesus Christ, and by his command, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

M: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
Lord have mercy,

All: Lord have mercy,

M: his mercy endures for ever.
Christ have mercy,

All: Christ have mercy.

M: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
Lord have mercy,

All: Lord have mercy.

M: The Lord be with you,

All: And also with you.

M: Let us pray for faith in Jesus our Saviour.

**All: Loving Father,
when we were captive
in the darkness of sin and death,
your Son rescued us
and brought us back to you.
Teach us to trust in him
and to live as your people.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.**

Amen.

First Reading – Numbers 21:4-9

The snake of bronze in the desert

⁴ The Israelites traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; ⁵ they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

⁶ Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. ⁷ The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the

people. ⁸The Lord said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 107:1-3,17-22 (*Spoken responsively*)

M: ¹Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

All: **his love endures forever.**

M: ²Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story—
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,

All: ³**those he gathered from the lands,
from east and west, from north and south.**

M: ¹⁷Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered
affliction because of their iniquities.

All: ¹⁸**They loathed all food
and drew near the gates of death.**

M: ¹⁹Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress.

All: ²⁰**He sent out his word and healed them;
he rescued them from the grave.**

M: ²¹Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his
wonderful deeds for mankind.

All: ²²**Let them sacrifice thank offerings
and tell of his works with songs of joy.**

Second Reading – Ephesians 2:1-10

Saved by grace through faith

¹As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³All of us also lived among them at one

time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions— it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

M: Jesus said: Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

All: **that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.**

Gospel Reading – John 3:14-21

(Spoken) **Glory to you, O Lord,**

Jesus brings life and light to the world

¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.” ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: (Spoken) Praise to you, O Christ

**Thank you, Lord Jesus,
for dying on the cross so that we might live.
Help us to believe in you and live in your light.**

Amen.

Gospel Hymn – To God be the glory LHS 793

- 1. To God be the glory,
great things he hath done!
So loved he the world that he
gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in!**

Refrain:

***Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father,
through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory,
great things he hath done!***

- 2. O perfect redemption,
the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God!
The vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus
a pardon receives:**

Refrain:

***Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father,
through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory,
great things he hath done!***

3. **Great things he hath taught us,
great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing
through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our rapture,
when Jesus we see:**

Refrain:

***Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father,
through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory,
great things he hath done!***

<p><i>Music: William Howard Doane 1832-1916; Words: Frances Jane van Alstyne 1820-1915 In the public domain</i></p>

Sermon

All: **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, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again
from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God,
the Father almighty,
from thence he will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian church,**

the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Offering Hymn – How great Thou art *LHS 881*

1. O Lord my God,
when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds
Thy hand hath made,
I see the stars,
I hear the mighty thunder,
Thy power throughout
the universe displayed:

Refrain:

*Then sings my soul,
my Saviour, God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
Then sings my soul,
my Saviour God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!*

2. And when I think that God,
his Son not sparing,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross
my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin:

Refrain:

*Then sings my soul,
my Saviour, God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
Then sings my soul,
my Saviour God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!*

3. And when I think that God,
his Son not sparing,

sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross
my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin:

Refrain:

*Then sings my soul,
my Saviour, God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
Then sings my soul,
my Saviour God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!*

4. When Christ shall come,
with shout of acclamation,
and take me home,
what joy shall fill my heart!
Then shall I bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim:
'My God, how great Thou art!'

Refrain:

*Then sings my soul,
my Saviour, God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
Then sings my soul,
my Saviour God, to Thee:
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!*

*Music: Swedish folk tune arr. Stuart K. Hine
1899-;*

*Words: O store Gud, Carl Boberg 1859-1940, Tr.
Stuart K. Hine 1899-*

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M: Let us pray:

Thank you, heavenly Father,
for giving your Son so that we can have eternal life.
Strengthen our faith in him.
Guide us to live in the light of Christ,
and to give ourselves in love to other people.

All: **Amen.**

Prayer of the church

M: Lord, teach us to pray:

All: **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.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

M: May Christ our crucified Saviour draw you to himself, so that you may find in him the assurance of sins forgiven and the gift of eternal life;
Go in peace, and live in the light of Christ.

All: **Thanks be to God.
Amen.**

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favour,
† and give you peace.

All: **Amen.**

Closing Hymn – Amazing grace LHS 851

**1. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me!**

I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

2. 'Twas grace that taught
my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!
3. Through many dangers,
toil, and snares
I have already come:
'tis grace has brought me
safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.
4. When we've been here
ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun.
5. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

John Newton 1725-1807
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