

# FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Look Out! Look Up to Jesus

From Death to Life

March 14, 2021

## AS WE GATHER



Look out! There were snakes biting the Israelites, sent by God as punishment for complaining about the manna, that miraculous food He gave on the way to the Promised Land. But look up! See the bronze serpent Moses put on a pole. Everyone who looked up at the serpent will live. The serpent was a type of Christ, a parallel symbol in the Bible. We, too, have snakes—our discontent with God’s daily blessings and lack of faith in His promises. But as we look up in faith to Jesus, the Christ on the cross, we shall be saved. That faith is a gift of God in His grace. Jesus is the center of the gracious Good News. We are God’s workmanship, and now He holds the door open as we walk through, looking up to Jesus. Before coming to faith, we were dead in trespasses and sins. But while we were dead and helpless, God made us alive! In the Epistle, Paul writes that God saved us “being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us.” But we have not simply been made physically well, like the Israelites in the Old Testament Reading, but we have been given eternal life. The central reason is that “by grace you have been saved through faith.” We are His workmanship and in the light of Christ, it is obvious that the credit for whatever works we do must go to our gracious God. We are together with Christ and already, as it were, “with Him in the heavenly places.” Now that’s really living!

### **PRAYERS OF PREPARATION:**

**O God of Comfort and God of Challenge, as we journey through our time of Lent, our time in deserts and low places, we come to you this afternoon the way the Israelites did, full of complaints and dissatisfaction. Nothing is enough; we do not recognize your blessing at work in our day to day lives. Forgive us when we become so comfortable that we moan and groan about the most insignificant details of our lives. In our complaints, challenge us as you did the Israelites, to consider the bigger picture of oppression, injustice, and inequality around us.**

Forgive us when we close our eyes for fear of what you might show us; keep sending loving and compassionate leaders to open our eyes until we see what you see in our world.

**WELCOME:**

Friends of God, believe this –God loved the world, God loves the world, we are the beloved! May the truth of this great love story, shine through our worship today, and renew our sense of calling. So come, with your tiredness, your frustrations and your discouragements; come with your doubts, your fears, and your longings; come, to discover yet again how Jesus reveals God’s love and mercy. Come, in friendship to God and to each other, and in friendship to the world, to listen for God’s Word to us, to offer our prayers, and to renew our calling. Friends of God, let us worship! Welcome!

**SOLO**

**Ms. Angela Henderson**

**INVOCATION**

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

**OPENING SENTENCES** *Numbers 21:9; Ephesians 2:4–5; John 3:16*

**Pastor:** Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone,

**People:** **he would look at the bronze serpent and live.**

**Pastor:** But God, . . . even when we were dead in our trespasses,

**People:** **made us alive together with Christ.**

**Pastor:** For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son,

**People:** **that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**

**✠ WORD ✠**

## KYRIE

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, who saved us while we were still sinners,  
**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, once lifted upon the tree of the cross,  
**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,  
**People: have mercy on us and grant us Your peace. Amen.**

## SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.  
**People: And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, while we were still dead in sin, You came as one of us to die for us and bring us to eternal life.

**People: Give us strength of faith to look up to You each day of our sojourn until we see You face-to-face in eternity;**

Pastor: for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**     *Numbers 21:4–9*     (Israelites who look up to the bronze serpent live.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

**SOLO** Ms. Angela Henderson

**GRADUAL** *Hebrews 12:2*

Leader: O come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

**EPISTLE** *Ephesians 2:1–10* (We are saved by grace.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE** *John 3:16*

Leader: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son,  
People: **that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** *John 3:14–21* (All who look up to Jesus on the cross will be saved.)

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third chapter.  
People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**SOLO**

**Ms. Angela Henderson**

**SERMON**

**SOLO**

**Ms. Angela Henderson**

**(We Bring Our Tithes and Offering To The Lord)**

**APOSTLE 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. 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.

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

Leader: Let us pray for the Church here and around the world and for all people in their various circumstances.

When the Israelites became impatient, they spoke against God and against Moses. Let us pray for all who are in positions of authority in our nation and others, that God would give them wisdom to seek ways to meet the needs of their citizens, providing for equal justice

and stability for everyone within their borders. And let us pray for police and armed forces, that God would protect them as they maintain security and peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: Many people follow the course of this world carrying out their desires, by nature children of wrath. Let us pray for people who influence our culture and society but without faith in our Savior, that God would open their eyes to look up to Christ on the cross, working faith in their hearts, and making them alive together with Christ. And let us pray for lay and clergy leaders of the Church here and around the world, that God would give them strength and opportunity to spread the Gospel with joy. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: When the Israelites were in the wilderness without food and water, God provided manna. Let us pray for all who lack adequate food, clothing, and shelter, that He would provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to channel the resources He provides to where they are most needed. And let us pray that all who manage God's bounty, serving Him so that it moves from mine to tool, from farm to table, from warehouse to storefront, and from street to home. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: The psalmist remembered that when "they cried to the LORD in their trouble, . . . He delivered them from their distress." Let us pray for all who are troubled in body, mind, or spirit, both those near and dear to us, [*especially* . . .], and those known only to God, that He would bring about healing, relief, comfort, and peace as fits His gracious plans for them. And let us pray for ourselves and all who care for the sick and dying, that we serve our gracious God using the gifts He provides. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray.

People: **Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9–13*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BENEDICTION** *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: 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 favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

**SOLO** **Ms. Angela Henderson (Amazing Grace)**

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 Thru many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come; 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

4 When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun.

**DISMISSAL** *Ephesians 2:10*

Pastor: You are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Therefore, go in peace as you serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

***LISTEN TO THE MESSAGE FROM GOD’S WORD.  
USE THIS SHEET TO MAKE SOME PERSONAL NOTES.  
GO BACK OVER THEM THROUGH THE WEEK.  
THINK AND LET GOD CRYSTALIZE TRUTHS IN YOUR LIFE.***

SERMON TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

BIBLICAL TEXT: \_\_\_\_\_

INTRODUCTION: \_\_\_\_\_

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MAJOR POINTS: \_\_\_\_\_

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WHAT I WILL DO AS A RESULT OF THIS MESSAGE:

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“...They received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures everyday.”  
Acts7:11(NIV)