

**The Holy Friendship
of
St. James Episcopal Church, Preston
&
Grace Episcopal Church, Yantic**

The Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 21, 2021 at 9:00 am



Livestream Sunday's worship service on Facebook:
St. James Episcopal Preston *or*
Grace Episcopal Church Yantic

The Reverend Kim J. Litsey, Provisional Priest in Charge
The Reverend Deacon Ronald Steed
Musicians: Mike LaFleur, Guitar & Peter Leibert, Concertina
Kevin Harkins, Bells

The Word of God

Bells

Welcome

Opening Hymn #551 Rise Up Oh Men of God

Celebrant: Blessed the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People: His mercy endures for ever.

The Decalogue

Deacon: Hear the commandments of God to his people: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage. You shall have no other gods but me.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Honor your father and your mother.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit murder.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not commit adultery.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not steal.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not be a false witness.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Amen. Lord have mercy.

Celebrant: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Confession of Sins

Deacon: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

~ Silence ~

Celebrant and People:

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Absolution

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy.

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

The Collect

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lessons

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 51:1-13

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; *
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness *
and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions, *
and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you only have I sinned *
and done what is evil in your sight.

5 And so you are justified when you speak *
and upright in your judgment.

6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *
a sinner from my mother's womb.

7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, *
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice.

10 Hide your face from my sins *
and blot out all my iniquities.

11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.

12 Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.

13 Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

Hebrews 5:5-10

Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”; as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ, according to John.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

John 12:20-33

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor. “Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily
Steed

The Rev. Deacon Ron

~ A short silence will be kept ~

Celebrant: Let us reaffirm our faith in the Nicene Creed.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. **Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

Deacon: God gave our ancestors a land flowing with milk and honey. Let us pray for all peoples on this bountiful earth.

Leader: For the Holy Catholic church throughout the world, sharing the death and resurrection of Christ.
Lord, have mercy.

For Michael our presiding bishop, Ian and Laura our bishops, for presbyters and deacons and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.
Lord, have mercy.

We hold in prayer the communities of St. James and Grace: continue to guide and nurture, oh God, this holy

friendship.

Lord, have mercy.

For all nations, peoples, tribes, clans, and families, especially for the native tribes of our region.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who are oppressed, afflicted, or in need.

Lord, have mercy.

For the dying and the dead, especially those with COVID.

Lord, have mercy.

For our families, friends, and companions, and for all those we love.

Lord, have mercy.

Are there others who need our prayers this day?

Lord, have mercy.

Remembering the ever-blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.

To you, O Lord.

Celebrant: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, whose glory is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all those we hold in prayer so that they will know the healing power of your love and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

† **THE HOLY COMMUNION** †

Offertory Hymn #703 Lead Us of Father in the Paths of Peace

The Presentation of the Gifts: The Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise Him all creatures here below.

Praise Him above ye heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

† **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING** †

Eucharistic Prayer C

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Celebrant: God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

People: Glory to you for ever and ever.

Celebrant: At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

People: By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill.

You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

People: Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

People: By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

Celebrant and People:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the names of Lord.

Hosanna in highest.

Celebrant: And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.

Celebrant: Lord God of our Fathers; God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **Amen.**

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People: Therefore let us keep the feast.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Silence

A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Celebrant: Let us pray.

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.

The Prayer after Communion:

Celebrant: Let us pray.

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Announcements

Deacon: Bow your heads before the Lord.

Lenten Blessing †

Look down in mercy, Lord, on your people who kneel before you; and grant that those whom you have nourished by your Word and Sacraments may bring forth fruit worthy of repentance; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn #460 Alleluia Sing to Jesus

The Dismissal

Announcements

Say Farewell to Deacon Ron! Please reach out to Deacon Ron to say farewell. Deacon Ron's last day will be on Easter Sunday. In lieu of gifts please consider a contribution to the discretionary fund of St. James or Grace. The discretionary fund enables clergy to care for those folks in our churches and the community that need our assistance. If you have any further questions, please contact Rev. Kim.

Palm Sunday: 9:00 AM, March 28, will be live streaming at St. James on Facebook Live and Zoom.

Good Friday: 7:00 PM, April 2 will be live streaming on Facebook Live and Zoom.

The next **Community Meal** is Sunday, March 28. Each year, the members of Grace and St. James gather in the summer for our own community meal that includes Holy Eucharist. So, together, let us harness our passion and commitment to feeding the food insecure by participating in the Community Meal. Reach out to Judie Blackman-Cochran at 860-984-3450 or Bob Peck at 203-214-5687 to find out how you can play a part. Your help is needed!

The 8th Annual "Clean Up the Streets" will be held March 27, from 9am to 11am, meeting at the Norwich YMCA parking lot on Main Street in Norwich. Last season they collected 20,520 pounds of trash from the streets of Norwich. This would not be possible without the dedicated volunteers, who brave the weather, whether hot or cold, to come work! They appreciate you so much and are looking forward to another fantastic season, working together to clean up the streets! Supplies will be available and asking everyone to please wear masks.

Lenten Quiet Day at Camp Washington, 190 Kenyon Rd, Lakeside, CT on Saturday March 27, 9am -1pm
Join for a time of reflection and renewal in the midst of your Lenten journey. Your time together will be held outside in the chapel (weather permitting) while observing all physical distance guidelines. The day will consist of 4 sections: reflection/meditations, journaling/discussion, walking & hands on activities. You're welcome to bring a lunch to enjoy afterwards. There is no charge to the program. Please call 860-567-9623 or register online at campwashington.org

Free CT Food Bank Drive-Thru Food Distribution: Every Monday in Norwich (until further notice) Address: 28 Stonington Road, Norwich, CT 06360 - in the parking lot across from Pistol Pete's Bar & Grill Hours: 9:30am - 12pm

Stations of the Cross & Evening Prayer: Every Thursday through Lent, 7pm -Zoom

Guided Healing Prayers: Fridays, 8am -Zoom.

Sacred Ground meets every other Monday 7:00 - 8:30 PM, via Zoom. *Sacred Ground* is a film- and readings-based dialogue series on race, grounded in faith. We will walk through chapters of America's history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional identity. The 10-part series is built around a powerful online curriculum of documentary films and readings that focus on Indigenous, Black, Latino, and Asian/Pacific American histories as they intersect with European American histories. *Sacred Ground* is part of Becoming Beloved Community, The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society. Participants are invited to peel away the layers that have contributed to the challenges and divides of the present day – all while grounded in our call to faith, hope and love. For more general information, please visit: episcopalchurch.org/sacredground. To join in the conversation contact Rev. Kim, and she will send the link to the session materials.