

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Grant that we who are gathered here for Your worship, may repent of our evil, turn away from all our sinful thoughts and ways, and find Your abundant pardon in the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. Keep our hearts and minds always set on the cross that all that we do is accomplished in Your will and His Righteousness.

Make us mindful of the necessities of all people. As You give both the righteous and the ungodly their daily bread, help us to receive Your benefits with thanksgiving and ungrudgingly use what You have given us to the benefit of others.

Hear us as we bring to you our private petitions. **(Time of silent prayer.)**

In the glorious name of Jesus and for the sake of His kingdom we pray.

© Amen.

LENT FOUR

Chant Tone



Introit

The Lord is the stronghold of my
life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Though war arise against me, yet I
will be confident.

that I may dwell in the house of the
Lord all the days of my life, to gaze
upon the beauty of the Lord and to
inquire in His temple.

He will conceal me under the cover
of his tent; He will lift me high up on
a rock.

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom | shall I fear?*

The Lord is the stronghold of my
life; of whom shall I be afraid?

(Antiphon, Psalm 27:1;
Psalm 27:3-5)

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

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.

(Hebrews 12:2)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: Lord God, heavenly Father, Light of our life, the expectation of our salvation; grant us, we pray, the power of Your Holy Spirit, that we would trust in the merits of Jesus Christ, our Savior, rather than in our own attempted goodness. Help us look up at the cross of Christ and on it find Your Love poured out for us in the death of Your Son. Enable us to lift high the cross of Jesus, that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have eternal life. Help us lead the world out of darkness and into the marvelous light of Your Gospel. Accept the grateful melodies of our hearts, and listen to our songs of praise. In Jesus name we pray. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

THE APOSTLES THOUGHT THEY KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT JESUS. They had traveled with Jesus to celebrate the festival of the Passover. They watched as he cleared the temple of the money changers and those who sold the animals. They listened as He spoke with purpose and dedication about the things of God. They were at the beginning of their own personal recognition that He was in fact the Christ, the Messiah, the Only Begotten Son of God. When Jesus told them that in the same way Moses lifted up the snake, so He would be lifted up, they probably thought He meant that He would assume His earthly throne sometime soon. Yet they needed, we need, to understand that He meant lifted up on the cross, that all who look at the cross and recognize it for what it is, will be saved. We are happy that you could come out to worship today. It is uplifting to worship in the sight of God.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Jesus Lifted Up

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 27:1;) Psalm 27:3-5

Psalm 27 is thought to have been written by David, immediately before he became king. Psalm 27 mentions his last time in battle. The people said that the king shouldn't risk his life, but that is how Jesus saved us, by risking His life in battle. David tells us to wait for the Lord and be with Him in all things.

COLLECT

One of the main reasons for giving our service to God is because of the abundance of His mercy. He gives us everything we need, and we praise and thank Him for the wonder of His generosity.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Numbers 21:4-9

The promise of God is that we would be saved by a man because a man (Adam) brought sin into the world. Sin was suggested by Satan in the form of a serpent so God commanded that the people were saved through a lifted up serpent. The serpent-on-a-stick didn't have any power. It was only a symbol of the lifting up of the Messiah. In their repentance and faith in the healing delivered from God the people were saved. When the journey gets long and difficult we turn from speaking with God to speaking against God. In those times we are led to look up and see Jesus, Who brings us to the place of salvation and peace with God.

GRADUAL—Hebrews 12:2

Hebrews chapter 12 compares the greater wonder of Heaven to our place here on Earth. We can only, "fix our eyes on Jesus" if He first opens our eyes to see His wonder and goodness.

EPISTLE LESSON—Ephesians 2:4-10

We are God's craftsmanship, salvaged, (refined, and honed in Christ,) to do good works which God has prepared for us. The purpose of God's salvation and of His Love and mercy and grace and kindness, is that we do good works. We are not saved by works, we are saved for works. We who cannot do good works by ourselves are saved in order to perform them in God. The text underscores our need of outside help in a number of ways. There is a stress on Love, mercy and grace all of which are God's to give and not ours to earn. The text leaves no doubt that our spiritual needs do not come from anything we can do, they all come from God Himself.

GOSPEL LESSON—John 3:14-21

Jesus makes the proclamation of His death and Resurrection very early on in His ministry. It is interesting to note that Jesus referred to Himself