

Order of Worship for March 3, 2024

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: “*Jesus, Refuge of the Weary*” - **Hymn #423**

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism: Gracie Ann Gruis (8:30 AM)

Confession and Forgiveness p. 151

Service of the Word

Entrance Psalm:

P: For zeal for Your house has consumed me,

C: and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

P: Deliver me from sinking in the mire;

C: let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters.

P: Let not the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up,

C: or the pit close its mouth over me.

P: Answer me, O LORD, for Your steadfast love is good;

C: according to Your abundant mercy, turn to me.

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: For zeal for Your house has consumed me,

C: and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy) p. 152-3

Salutation p. 156

Prayer of the Day:

P: O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

R: And God spoke all these words, saying, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. “You shall have no other gods before Me. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity

of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments. “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. “You shall not murder. “You shall not commit adultery. “You shall not steal. “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn: “*The Law of God Is Good and Wise*” - **Hymn #579**

Epistle Lesson: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

R: For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel: John 2:13-22

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the second chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

P: The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple He found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And He poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And He told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house will consume me."

So the Jews said to Jesus, "What sign do You show us for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking about the temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon Hymn: *"Built on the Rock"* - **Hymn #645**

Sermon: *"Destroyed and Rebuilt"* – **John 2: 13-22**

We know something about construction projects around here, of buildings torn down and buildings built up. During the last school year, the area around the church was full of construction noise. The sorority house next door was torn down, and then they dug deep down to put rock and other foundation materials. After the hail storms in the past couple of months, neighborhoods are full of houses getting new roof after the hail storms last year, and the church is waiting for a new one, as well. Ten years ago, the former First National Bank building and the former Campus Book Store building became holes in the ground, along with much of the block further west on Lincoln Way, and the apartment buildings that are there now went up in their place. Construction on the Cy-Town plaza continues to move along, with big plans for what that will bring to Iowa State and the Ames community.

All of these building projects take longer than three days. Most construction projects do. Even just remodeling projects can take longer than a few days.

That's why people have trouble understanding what Jesus is talking about in today's Gospel lesson. Jesus and his disciples are in Jerusalem. It's the big city for those country bumpkins from up in Galilee, and they're amazed by what they see. Especially, they're amazed by the temple.

The temple of Herod was a vast complex, covering 35 acres. It was one of the most impressive buildings of its day. The Jews tell Jesus that it has taken forty-six years to build the temple. Construction was begun by Herod about 20 BC. The temple would finally be completed in 64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

The temple was important because that was where the people could find God. It was the place where God's presence was. And yet Jesus wants to destroy it? First the renovation of tossing out the animals and money changers, then a full blown tear down? And the project could be

completed in just three days? Jesus, the son of a carpenter, a builder, surely would have known better than that.

Jesus is cleaning out the temple is because the animals and what they represent are no longer necessary. The system of sacrifices established in the Old Testament were done because so many things made you dirty. The people needed to come at least once a year to offer sacrifices to make themselves clean. Priests also offered daily sacrifices on behalf of all of Israel, and the costs for those were covered by a temple tax, part of the reason the money changers were in the temple.

But the reason the sacrifices needed to be repeated was because they didn't work well enough. The sacrifices had to be repeated annually, if not more often, because the people couldn't stay clean on their own. They needed to make up for their sins. But the sacrifices didn't solve the problem. "For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Hebrews 10:1-4).

The sacrifices were done to take away sins, but they couldn't do what they claimed to do. Instead, Jesus came to offer himself as the one sacrifice for sins. He predicts what will happen here. Two years later, Jesus would be crucified at Passover, showing himself to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The one sacrifice that could work forgiveness for the whole world. The one sacrifice that would make all other sacrifices unnecessary. One sacrifice once for all.

Jesus wouldn't just replace the sacrifices in the temple, though. He would replace the temple itself! As a symbol of God's presence with his people, the temple when it existed was one of the most impressive buildings ever created. Yet it was destroyed by the Romans and remains in ruins to this day on one of the most contested pieces of land in the whole world. But Jesus changed that. Later in the Gospel of John, Jesus would tell the Samaritan woman at the well that the time was coming when people wouldn't worship God in Jerusalem or Samaria, but in spirit and truth wherever they were. God had come down to them to make His people clean.

The crowd surrounding Jesus missed that his return to the temple was when the temple had returned to its purpose. God was present in the temple, in Jesus, in God made flesh. They also miss Jesus' point. He's not talking about stone and beams being torn down or built up. He is talking about his body, the true temple where God's presence is found.

Jesus' remarks here will be a cause of his prediction coming true. When the chief priests are looking for how they can charge Jesus, the quote about destroying the temple becomes the charge the witnesses can agree to, and will lead to his death.

It is only after his death and resurrection that the disciples understand what he was saying. Jesus himself was God's presence in the temple. More than that, Jesus himself was the sacrifice that would do what the temple sacrifices never could.

And here in John's Gospel, they would continue to demand signs. "By what authority do you do this? Show us a sign!" And Jesus had shown them signs. Earlier in John 2 was the story of the wedding at Cana, where Jesus turned water into wine. But here He promises a greater sign than that. He promises to raise up the temple in three days. But not the large stone structure that had taken 46 years to build. He was talking about his body, about his death and resurrection. That would be the greater sign than turning water into wine. This would be a sign for all peoples.

John differs from the Synoptics, the other Gospels, in a few ways. In John, Jesus teaches through long discourses, not through parables. The Synoptics locate the bulk of Christ's ministry in Galilee and then move Jesus geographically and thematically towards Jerusalem and His death on the cross there. John describes three different occasions when Jesus traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem before His last momentous trip, which is why we think Jesus' earthly ministry was three years long. The Synoptics report Christ's temple cleansing at the end of their stories, as one of the final acts that gets the chief priests to put their plan in motion to kill Jesus, but John records it earlier, here. In doing so, John highlights one of his dearest ideas—that Jesus is the new temple, where God was present with his people.

Building projects are a large undertaking. They take a lot of time and a lot of money, often more of both than was originally expected. Yet the payoff is usually worth it. Jesus' building project was definitely worth it. He died for us, destroying his body, the temple. Yet his resurrection shows us his new body, and what awaits us. Jesus brings the presence of God into our lives. What a wonderful promise.

Prayer of the Church:

P: Lord in Your mercy . . .

C: hear our prayer.

Sharing Our Ministry:

Offering/Voluntary:

Offertory: *"What Shall I Render to the Lord?"* p. 159

Service of the Sacrament

Preface p. 160

P: It is truly good, right, and proper that we should in all times and in all places give thanks to You, heavenly Father, almighty God, For You sent Your Son, Christ Jesus, into this world to suffer and die with sin and evil on the cross so that He could rise on the third day. Through Him You have destroyed the power of sin in our lives so that we can be rebuilt in Your love. Therefore with angels and all the army of heaven we praise and make great Your holy name, evermore praising You and singing . . .

Sanctus (*Holy, Holy Holy*) p. 161

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

P: Blessed are You O Lord God, king of the universe For You have destroyed our old way of life by the death of Jesus on the cross and rebuilt us by His resurrection to be Your holy temple. Send us Your Holy Spirit so that we celebrate this great victory as we join in the supper of Jesus' true body and blood given to us for the Forgiveness of our sins. All this we pray in Jesus' name and as He taught us . . .

The Words of Our Lord p. 162

Pax Domini (*Peace of the Lord*) and **Agnus Dei** (*Lamb of God*) p. 163

Distribution of Holy Communion:

Communion Hymns: “*O Love, How Deep*” - **Hymn #544**,
“*The Infant Priest Was Holy Born*” - **Hymn #624**

Song After Communion: “*Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace*” – **Hymn #937**

Prayer After Communion:

P: Eternal Lord, Your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of Your Son. Help us to hear Your Word and obey it, so that we become instruments of Your redeeming love; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing: p. 166

Closing Hymn: “*Lamb of God*” - **Hymn #550**

Postlude: