

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Lent & Holy Week Preaching Schedule, 2018

“... like me”

Wed., February 14, 2018: Ash Wednesday – Rev. Geoff Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: Matthew 12:15-21 (Isaiah 42:1-9)

SECOND READING: 2 Timothy 1:8-10

SERMON TITLE: “... like me: *in the beginning, grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

THEME:

Grace is what the Gospel is all about. Without it – without God's saving action toward us in the form of His Son – our sins would compound and we would be lost. Ash Wednesday reminds us to prepare for Lent – to be reminded of the sacrifice made on our behalf (a sacrifice planned right from the beginning) and to seek to live up to it.

Sunday, February 18, 2018: 1st Sunday of Lent/Communion: Rev. Geoff Ross preaching

FIRST READING: Genesis 17:1-8

SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25

SERMON TITLE: “... like me: *Chosen by Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 472, 670 V. 1, 534, 556

THEME:

Grace is the “last best word” of the English language says Phillip Yancey in his book **What's so Amazing about Grace?**; and it's true. Lent is a reminder of the sacrifice made on our behalf – a sacrifice planned from the beginning, made out of love, freely given to those God has chosen. The story of Abraham gives us a great starting point for this series because it tells us that ordinary people like you/like me – like Abraham – can be saved by the wonderful God of grace. This series is entitled “like me...” because we will focus on how God's grace is available to all – to anyone, even a “wretch like me” as the song Amazing Grace boldly says.

SPECIAL NOTE: This will be a service with Communion by distribution.

Sunday, February 25, 2018: 2nd Sunday of Lent – New Members. Rev. Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: John 3:1-17

SECOND READING: Romans 16:1-16

SERMON TITLE: “... like me: *Reborn by Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 765, 670 V. 2, 687, 476

THEME:

The story of Nicodemus' visit with Jesus and his questions about how one can gain eternal life is an opportunity for Jesus to explain the wonder of grace: that through faith we will be saved – or “born again.” While it is unclear whether Nicodemus is convinced – or is saved – as a result of his encounter with Jesus this is how any of us – even sceptical non-believers – can be saved. The Romans reading is a list of names of

people who made up a 'house Church' in Rome: a reminder that the people who will be joining the Church are part of a historic fellowship of "saved" believers.

Sunday, March 4, 2018: 3rd Sunday of Lent – Band Sunday/Rev. Geoff Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: Matthew 9:9-13

SECOND READING: Galatians 1:1-24

SERMON TITLE: “ ... **like me:** *Accepted by Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 683, 670 V. 3, 676, 570

THEME:

The call of Levi – who became Matthew as a result of his new life in Christ – is another example of how God’s call is for everyone/anyone who will hear it and respond. Levi was a tax collector – essentially a paid highway-robbers who worked for the Roman Empire – and was considered to be ‘outside’ of acceptable society: he was unclean and impure. And yet, Jesus ate with him – and then invited him to join Him as a disciple. The challenge – and often, the offence – of grace is that God extends it to all, and not just to those we think should deserve it. The sharp point to this lesson is that we, who have received grace, should be more willing to offer it others who need it, not because we like them but because it is what God through Jesus calls us to do.

Sunday, March 11, 2018: 4th Sunday of Lent - Rev. Geoff Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: John 7:55-8:11

SERMON TITLE: “ ... **like me:** *Redeemed by Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 205, 670 V.4, 209, 210

THEME:

The account of the adulterous woman is a powerful – and uncomfortable – story: uncomfortable because it cuts close to home and speaks of our human failings and habit of judging. This is a very dramatic story filled with rage, shame, shouting, and judgment: but it ends with the accusers having been silenced and the woman offered grace – a grace that none of her accusers were willing to confer to her. This is a clear example of how the stark letter of the law is often used to punish ‘offenders’ when the use of the spirit of the law can provide an opportunity for redemption.

Sunday, March 18, 2018: 5th Sunday of Lent – Rev. Geoff Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: Luke 15:11-32

SEE AND HEAR:

SERMON TITLE: “ ... **like me:** *Restored by Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 706, 670 V. 5, 373, 640

THEME:

The source of the song “Amazing Grace” is the parable of the Prodigal son in which the son that was once lost is now found, who was dead and is now alive – all through the grace of a loving father. In this reading we have another powerful story of how a common ‘wretch like me’ is restored by grace. This is a message we need to hear again and again because, all too often, we think that grace is for someone else – someone

who isn't as 'bad' as we are – someone better; but that's not true: grace is available for everyone – including us.

Sunday, March 25, 2018: Palm Sunday: Jr. Music Makers/Rev. Geoff Ross Preaching

OPENING READING: Matthew 21:1-11

FIRST READING: John 12:20-26

SERMON TITLE: “... **like me:** *Received by Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 218, 670 V. 6, 214, 217

THEME:

The Palm Sunday readings give us an example of how Jesus invited anyone who sought Him to follow Him: in this case, in the John reading, we hear how people considered being outside the scope of God's grace (some Greeks) are welcomed and received by Jesus. But this reading also tells us about the cost of discipleship: while grace is available to all those who look for it it does require us to change our ways – to lose our life in order to 'keep it' for eternity.

SPECIAL NOTE: This will be a Palm parade at the start of this service. The Matthew reading we be read as the call to worship.

Thurs., March 29, 2018 Maundy Thursday: 7:00 – Rev. Geoff Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: John 13:1-17; 31b-35

SECOND READING: 1 John 4:7-12

SERMON TITLE: “... **like me:** *the extent of grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 225, 229, 224 V.1-2, 224 V.3-4

THEME:

Maundy Thursday is when we celebrate the institution of the Eucharist – as well as the command for us to love one another: even if that love requires us to lower ourselves in service. We will have the regular Maundy Thursday reading from John 13 but we will add a reading from 1 John in which we're told of the full extent of God's grace – that God “loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

SPECIAL NOTE: This service will be in the Great Hall with Communion by Intinction.

Fri., March 30, 2018 Good Friday: 11:00 – Rev. Geoff Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: Luke 22:39-23:56

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:6-11

SERMON TITLE: “... **like me:** *Saved by Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 238, 242, 231

THEME:

Using the Luke version of the Passion story, we will be focusing on the power of God's love to save one last sinner... the thief who comes to believe in Christ as they both hang on the cross. Jesus came to save sinners – like me/you/us – and did so right up to His last breath. What's amazing about this grace – and this version of the Passion story – is that it even shows how little the world understands about grace – and the extent of God's love for us – by documenting the taunts Jesus endured at the hands of

the soldiers and the “leaders:” taunts and scoffs that anyone offering grace to others today still endure.

Sunday, April 1, 2018: Easter Sunday: 8:00 & 10:30/Band Sunday/Rev. Ross Preaching

FIRST READING: Luke 24:1-12

SECOND READING: John 1:1-18

SERMON TITLE: “ ... **like me:** *Amazing Grace.*”

SUGGESTED HYMNS: 243, 670 V.1-3,6, 250, 255

THEME:

Easter Sunday is all about grace – amazing grace – that God would do what He did to chose us, offer us new life, accept us, redeem and restore us, receive and save us despite ourselves, not because of who we are, but because of who He is. Grace is amazing because it isn’t about us – it’s about God. This service will focus on the Good News that is offered to each and every one of us: that through faith – through our coming to God through Christ – our sins will be forgiven and we will be set free – just as Jesus was freed from the grave; by the power of God.

SPECIAL NOTE: Special Communion – early service; Hymns: 243, 410
Easter “Sunrise” Breakfast between Services; Easter Flower Cross.

Sunday, April 8, 2018: Geoff Away/Camp Sunday

THEME:

This will be our annual camp Sunday – details to come.