

# Bethesda Episcopal Church

**The Fourth Sunday in Lent: Laetare**

**10 March 2024**

**Organ** Prélude, from *Prélude, Fugue et Variation*

César Franck (1822-1890)

**The Entrance Hymn #379**

*From the Hymnal 1982*

**The Opening Acclamation and Collect for Purity**

*The people standing, the Celebrant says*

**Celebrant** Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.  
**People** **His mercy endures forever.**

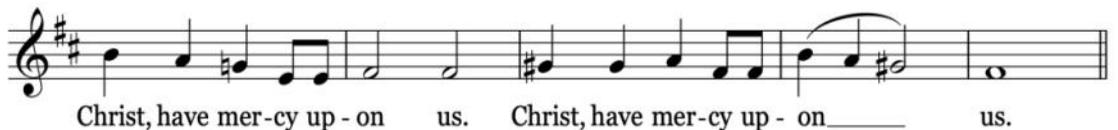
Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**The Summary of the Law**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: Hear O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'

**All: Lord, have mercy upon us, and write both these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.**

**The Kyrie Eleison**





*Remain standing.*

***The Collect of The Day***

*Celebrant*      The Lord be with you.  
***People***        **And with thy spirit.**  
*Celebrant*      Let us pray.

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which giveth life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*All sit.*

***The Lesson***

*Numbers 21:4-9*

From Mount Hor the Israelites set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

*The Lector concludes*                      The Word of the Lord.  
*The People respond*                        **Thanks be to God.**

*All stand.*

***The Gradual Hymn #671***

*From the Hymnal 1982*

*Remain standing.*

***The Holy Gospel***

*John 3:14-21*

*Celebrant*      The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St John.  
***People***        **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the

world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

*Celebrant  
People*

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

***The Sermon***

*Robert E. Bullock*

*All stand.*

***The Nicene Creed***    *Said by all*

**I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
and of all things visible and invisible;  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of his Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God;  
begotten, not made;  
being of one substance with the Father;  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation  
came down from heaven,  
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried:  
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,  
and ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;  
and he shall come again, with glory,  
to judge both the quick and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.  
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life,  
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;  
who spake by the Prophets.  
And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*All kneel.*

## ***The Prayers of The People***

This week, in the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for the Episcopal Church, and for Michael Curry, our Presiding Bishop; and in our diocese, for Bishop Jeremiah.

We remember with thanksgiving those who are celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week and those whose year's mind falls at this time.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord, by responding to each petition, **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and especially, for this parish family, Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the gospel to the ends of the earth, Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For peace in the world, that a spirit of respect and reconciliation may grow among nations and peoples, Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and for their families; for refugees, prisoners, and all in danger; that they may be relieved and protected. In our parish, we pray at this time for Sonia, Jerilyn, Pat, Jamie, Lyle, Sally, Leslie, Bruce and Kevin. Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For those whom we have injured or offended, Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

For grace to amend our lives and to further the reign of God, Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

In communion with all those who have walked in the way of holiness and are now at rest. Of your charity, I ask your prayers for the repose of the soul of Paul Evans.

Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord:

**And let light perpetual shine upon him.**

May he rest in peace. **Amen.**

*The Celebrant says*

Heavenly Father, who by the cross and passion of thy Son, Jesus Christ, didst save and deliver us: Keep us, we beseech thee, steadfast in faith, and enable us no longer to live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again, even the same, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## ***The Confession and Absolution***

*Celebrant* Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

**Almighty God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**maker of all things, judge of all men:  
 We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness,  
 which we from time to time most grievously have committed,  
 by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty,  
 provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us.  
 We do earnestly repent,  
 and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings;  
 the remembrance of them is grievous unto us,  
 the burden of them is intolerable.  
 Have mercy upon us,  
 have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;  
 for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,  
 forgive us all that is past;  
 and grant that we may ever hereafter  
 serve and please thee in newness of life,  
 to the honor and glory of thy Name;  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The Celebrant says*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*All stand. At the exchange of the Peace, please remain in your pew.*

***The Peace***

<i>Celebrant</i>	The peace of the Lord be always with you.
<i>People</i>	<b>And with thy spirit.</b>

***Hymn at The Offertory #471***

*From the Hymnal 1982*

*Remain standing*

***The Eucharistic Prayer***

<i>Celebrant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	<b>And with thy spirit.</b>
<i>Celebrant</i>	Lift up your hearts.
<i>People</i>	<b>We lift them up unto the Lord.</b>
<i>Celebrant</i>	Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
<i>People</i>	<b>It is meet and right so to do.</b>

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who was in every way tempted as we are, yet did not sin; by whose grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer unto ourselves, but unto him who died and rose again. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying,

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - - - ly, Lord God of Hosts:  
 Hea-ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo - ry be to  
 thee, O Lord Most High. Bless - ed is he that com - eth in the  
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*All kneel.*

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he *brake* it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord; By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen**

### ***Our Father***

And now, as our Savior Christ hath commanded and taught us, we are bold to say,

**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 Fraction***

*Celebrant* Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
*People* **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

*Remain kneeling*

### ***Prayer of Humble Access***

**We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

***The Agnus Dei*** from Mass in G

*Francis Jackson (1917-2022)*

*O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.*

*Communion is distributed at the chancel step.*

### ***At The Communion***

**Motet:** God So Loved The World

*John Goss (1800-1880)*

*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. (Text: St John 3: 16-17)*

**Organ:** Fugue, from *Prélude, Fugue et Variation*

*César Franck (1822-1890)*

*After Communion, all kneel.*

***The Post Communion Prayer*** Said by all.

Let us pray. **Almighty and ever living God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.**

### ***The Blessing and Dismissal***

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Celebrant*  
*People*

Let us bless the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as the choir and ministers depart.*

### ***The Closing Hymn #690***

*From the Hymnal 1982*

**Organ** Fugue on the Kyrie

*Francois Couperin (1668-1733)*

### ***Today at Bethesda.***

**New to Bethesda?** We are glad you're here! If you are interested in joining the parish and/or would like further information about our community, please complete the form on the back of the bulletin and drop it into a collection plate or hand it to an usher.

**The Altar Flowers** for *Laetare* Sunday are given in loving memory of William Hugh Agee by his wife, Jane, and their children.

**Thank you** to Bob Bullock, our preacher today, and to those reading and leading prayers:  
8am Lynne Priestley 10am Max Ascitutto & Paula Pinion

Following the 10am service, join us for a **cup of coffee** and for a piece of **simnel cake**. Thank you to Fr Kriss, cleric and baker *extraordinaire*!

The Old Testament **Bible Study** meets this morning at 9.20am. All welcome.

**Midweek Communion** A midweek service of Holy Communion is held Thursdays at 12.10pm. Our next service is 14 March.

Our next **Parish Work Day**, to tidy the church before Holy Week and Easter, is planned for Saturday 16 March at 9am. Please join us!

**Maundy Thursday** The church will be open for private prayer on Maundy Thursday between 8pm - 10pm, and on Good Friday between 10am - 12 noon. There is a sign-up sheet on the tract table. If you wish to keep vigil, please sign up for a particular period (each slot is 30 minutes) so that we have at least two persons present at all times.

**Office** The parish office on Elm Street will be open this week from 10–1pm on Tuesday and Wednesday; and on Thursday, from noon to 3pm.

**Passiontide Lessons and Carols** On Sunday, 24 March, the Cathedral Choir of All Saints', Albany, presents a service of lessons and carols on the Passion of Christ. The service begins at 3.00pm, and is preceded by an organ recital at 2.30pm. The Cathedral is located at 62 South Swan Street, Albany.

Bethesda's special monthly envelope for **March** supports **LifeWorks Community Action**. Since 1965, Lifeworks has built a comprehensive network of programs and resources in Saratoga County to assist low-income families facing a variety of challenges, including health, housing, childcare, immigration and legal services.

**LifeWorks Community Action** works to alleviate poverty by assisting local families and individuals with a wide range of services. Bethesda is currently collecting the following items on behalf of **LifeWorks**:

- ◆ Household cleaning supplies. Laundry detergent, dishwasher detergent
- ◆ Canned Foods including those low in salt, fat & sugar and gluten free.
- ◆ Diapers (size 4 & 5), baby wipes, and baby care products: shampoo and soap.
- ◆ Adult personal hygiene products: soap, toothpaste/brushes, shampoo, razors, shaving cream, deodorant.

Please leave donated items *in the box by the side door entrance* of the church. Thank you!

### ***The Fourth Sunday of Lent***

*Today, the Fourth Sunday of Lent, provides a respite from our Lenten fast. This day has various names, including **Mothering Sunday**, **Refreshment Sunday** and **Laetare Sunday**. The first title is a reference to the fact that this was the traditional day for young people "in service" (i.e. working as servants) to go home and visit their mums! In the UK and Commonwealth nations, Mothering Sunday is the original "mother's day" and reminds us of our natural mothers and also of our spiritual mother, the Church. This day is marked with a special holiday confection called Simnel cake, baked with fine flour, sugar, and dried fruit. In some churches—like Bethesda—it is the custom to bring Simnel cake to church to be blessed and shared. Why not join us for a slice?*

## **Holy Week and Easter at Bethesda Church 2024**

### **24 March - Palm Sunday**

8am Holy Communion  
10am Sung Eucharist

**27 March - Wednesday in Holy Week**—7pm Stations of the Cross

### **28 March - Maundy Thursday**—7pm Eucharist.

*The Church remains open until 10pm for prayer.*

**29 March - Good Friday**—12 Noon Liturgy of the Day

### **31 March - Easter Day**

8am Holy Communion  
10am Sung Eucharist

### **7 April - Sunday after Easter**

8am Holy Communion  
10am Lessons and Carols for Easter  
*Elizabeth Huntley, harp*

## **Daily Prayers—beginning Monday 11 March**

### **Invocation**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Opening Prayer (said daily)**

Eternal God, the light of your glory shines in the darkness of our lives. Make us attentive to your presence, prompt to serve you, and ever eager to follow in the steps of the one who is our true light, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Reading**

<b>Monday</b>	John 6:1-15
<b>Tuesday</b>	John 6:16-27
<b>Wednesday</b>	John 6:27-40
<b>Thursday</b>	John 6:41-51
<b>Friday</b>	Luke 2:41-52
<b>Saturday</b>	John 6:52-71

*A period of silence may be kept.*

### **Prayers**

Our Father, who art in heaven ...for ever and ever. Amen.

Have compassion, O Lord, on all who are mourning for those dear to them, and all who are lonely and fearful. Be their comforter and friend; give them such help as may be best for them; and grant them the fullness of your love and mercy; for your holy name's sake. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.



## Holy Week Offerings

Bethesda offers the opportunity to purchase palms for Palm Sunday as well as flowers for Easter Sunday. If this is something that you would like to do, please complete this form and return it to the church office. You can place the completed form in the offering plate or mail it to the office at 178 Elm Street, Suite 5, Saratoga Springs.

I would like to contribute towards the following:

\_\_\_ Palms (Fans and Fronds) \$20

\_\_\_ Maundy Thursday (Altar of Repose, white flowers) \$25 each

\_\_\_ Easter Flowers (Lilies, Hyacinths, etc) \$25 each

Given By: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return to the church office before March 22, 2024:**

Bethesda Episcopal Church Office  
178 Elm St. Suite 5  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866





***Please place this form in the collection plate if you would like us to get in touch with you:***

*Name(s):*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Phone:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Email address:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Home address:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Preferred contact method:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Contact Reason(s):*

- Visitor or new resident
- Would like more information about the church and/or worship
- Interested in opportunities to serve
- Would like to speak with or have a visit from the priest
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

*Fr Charles Wallace, Priest-in-Charge*

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Website: [bethesdachurch.org](http://bethesdachurch.org)  
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