**Nativity Worships**

**Fourth Lent**

**March 30, 2025**

**The Rev. Kirsten Snow Spalding, Presiding**

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| Prelude  | *Heywood's Home*from Tunes for Grace |
| Opening | Guide me, O thou great Jehovah | H 690 |
| Gradual | Praise our great and gracious Lord [v. 1 before Gospel; v. 2 after] | H 393 |
| Offertory     | Jerusalem, my happy home | H 620 |
| Closing | When from bondage we are summoned | WLP 754 |
| Postlude | *Unidos*( Together in your name) by Benjamin Villanueva, 1982 |

**The Collect**

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

**Old Testament Joshua 5:9-12**

The Lord said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

**The Psalm 32 *Beati quorum***

1 Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, \*
and whose sin is put away!

2 Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, \*
and in whose spirit there is no guile!

3 While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, \*
because of my groaning all day long.

4 For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; \*
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, \*
and did not conceal my guilt.

6 I said," I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." \*
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

7 Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; \*
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

8 You are my hiding-place;
you preserve me from trouble; \*
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

9 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; \*
I will guide you with my eye.

10 Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; \*
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,
or else they will not stay near you."

11 Great are the tribulations of the wicked; \*
but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.

12 Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; \*
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

**The Epistle 2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

From now on, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**The Gospel Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

All the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So Jesus told them this parable:

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe--the best one--and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

**The Prayers**

In our Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, we pray for Episcopal Community Services, which provides essential services to individuals and families experiencing homeless­ness in San Francisco.

We pray for our parish members: Jamie, Nancy B, Nina A, Marian, Norma, Duane, Amanda, Ruth, Steve K, Dick, Barbara B, Uwe and our families and friends: Myles, David, John, Violet & Aaron, B. Y., Justin, John B, Laura, Tanner, Phil, Greg, Nick, Phoebe, Seanna, Stacy, Cheryl and Lucy.

We pray for those who have died and those who mourn remembering especially Bill Shepherd, Lisa, Ming Huang, Andrea Georgi, Richie Faber, The Rev. Dorothee Jones and those who have died in the wars in Israel, Palestine, Ukraine and Sudan and those who have died in the fires in Los Angeles.

**Announcements**

**Stations of the Cross,**Mondays at 4:30 p.m., 3/31.

**Easter Festival Choir Rehearsals** 11:20-11:45 at Nativity, 3/30, 4/6 and 4/13.

**Who is My Neighbor?**Sunday morning check in. 9:15-9:40 in Rev. Kirsten’s Office. A Nativity/St. Paul’s Task Force will meet each week to pray together and encourage one another as we navigate the anxiety of how new federal government policies will impact
everyone in our community. (3/30, 4/6)

**Book Club.** The Ungrateful Refugee by Dina Nayeri. Mondays at 5 pm. In the Nativity Kitchen. Everyone is invited to read and discuss this book which challenges us to think about how we understand and speak about immigrants in our community. (3/31, 4/7)

The **Street Chaplaincy Wellness Dinner**. Join Nativity volunteers in preparing a dinner for
our neighbors at First Presbyterian Church, downtown San Rafael. April 1, 4:30-7:30 p.m, Cooking, Serving, Clean up shifts available. Contact Rev. Kirsten, kss@well.com.

**Movie Night.** Today at 5p.m. in the Nativity Kitchen. Join us for a showing of Peace by Chocolate, a dramatic story of a refugee family settling in Canada.

**Red Door Community Garden** boxes available for rent. $50 for a year. Applications due March 23rd. Notifications by March 31st. Rentals April 1, 2025 to March 31st, 2026. For an application, send a note to Church of the Nativity: nativityonthehill@gmail.com.

**Albs for Lectors and Choir Members**If you are a lector, special occasions choir member and may need to wear an alb from the sacristy, please notify Nina Woods or Kathy Schlegel. The remaining albs will be stored upstairs.

**Meditation Workshop at Nativity**  12-steppers are reminded that prayer and meditation are the tools “to improve our conscious contact with God,” but some find 20 minutes of silent meditation overwhelming. Members of the Nativity Red Door Community are invited to join in a meditation workshop in the sanctuary **9-noon, April 12**, that is designed as an introduction and refresher about this contemplative experience. There is no fee, but a goodwill donation is welcome to defray costs of refreshments and for the facilitator. To RSVP, please reach out to workshop organizer Richard Olive at Ollipops@comcast.net.

We will with thanksgiving receive offerings of Nativity pledges and plate today. You can contribute by sending a check to the church or by using the “Give” button on our website, [www.nativityonthehill.org](http://www.nativityonthehill.org).

All who participate in this Holy Eucharist virtually receive the full benefits of the sacrament by coming with the intention of being united with Christ and one another.