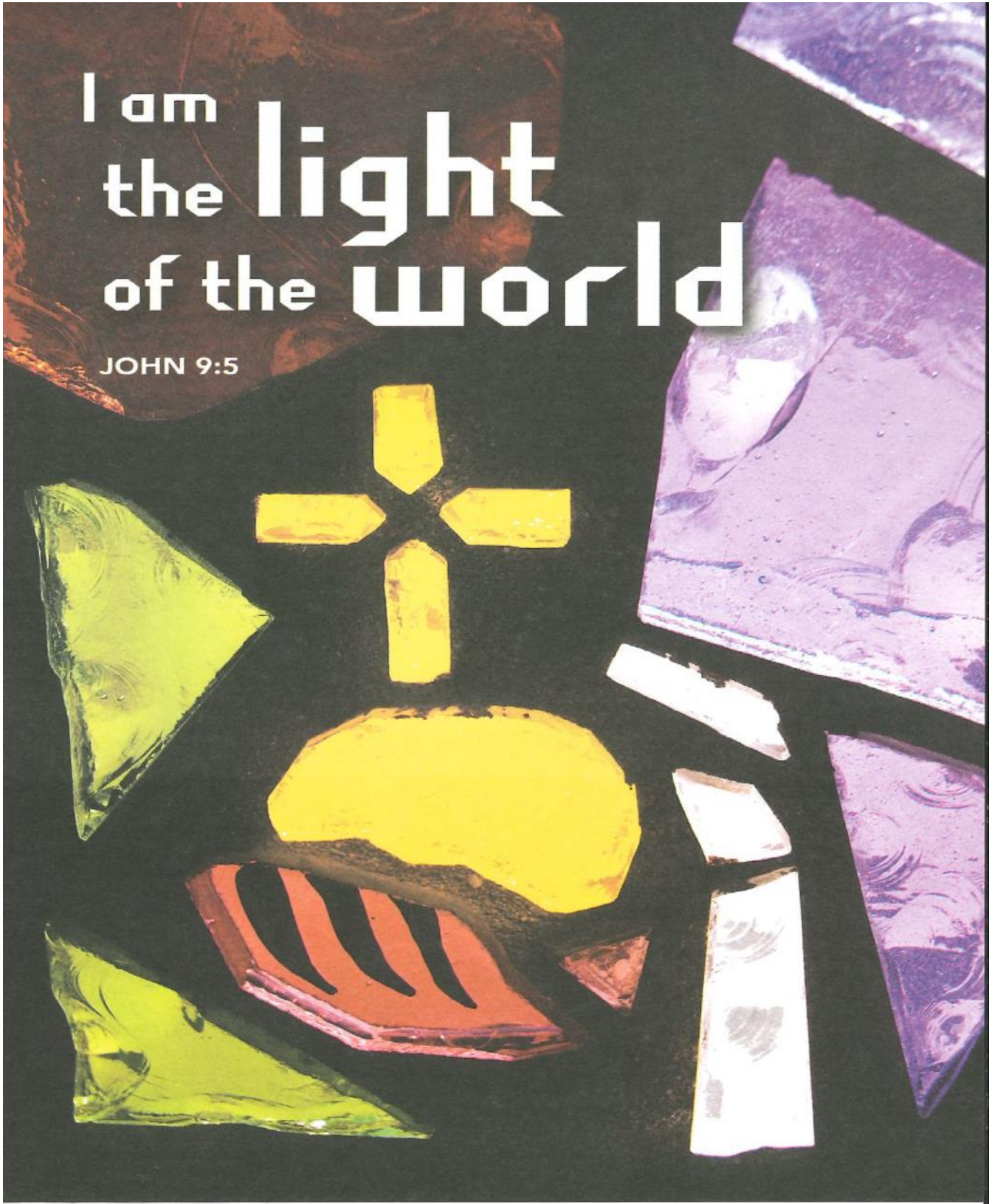


I am
the light
of the world

JOHN 9:5



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

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*The service for this week is designed to be used in the home with a designated leader.
All musical parts may be spoken.*

*This Service can be viewed on the St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury &
George Facebook page.*

Geranium Sale—The Annual SpiriTrust Lutheran Auxiliary Geranium Sale is currently taking orders for red or salmon colored plants. The is \$3.50 per plant. Plants may be ordered by calling Jim Mummert at 717-309-4101. He will provide with additional information; to whom to make the check, where it is to be mailed and the date of delivery. Thank you for supporting the Auxiliary in this way.

In our prayers we remember...

*Sylvia Little, Gayle Guyton, Chris Snyder, Rodney Miller, Amanda, Jim Young, Penny
Bailey, Eddie Turner, Sr., Jessica Ericson, Kristine Gross, Porter Stacey,
and those in the military and in mission work.*

Sunday, March 22, 2020
Fourth Sunday in Lent
The Service

This morning's hymns are from the green Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)

PRELUDE

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

Aaron David Miller

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

Amen.

Almighty God, to 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 your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

Amen

APOSTOLIC GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE



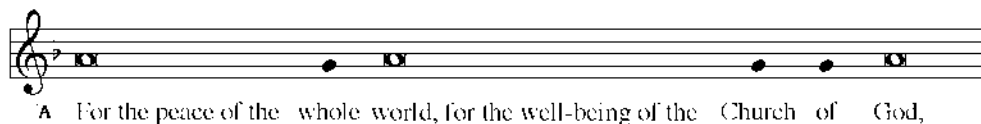
A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer-cy.**



A For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer-cy.




A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the u-ni-ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



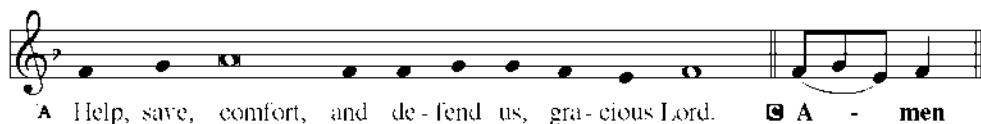
Lord, have mer-cy.



A For this ho-ly house, and for all who of-fer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer-cy.**



A Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. **A - men**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...God of all mercy, by your power to heal and to forgive, graciously cleanse us from all sin and make us strong; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

Sit

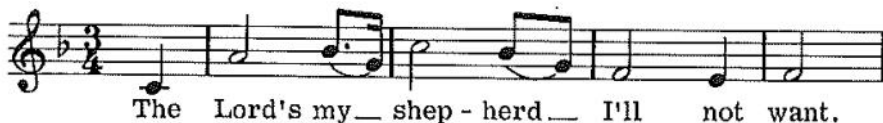
CHILDREN'S BIBLE STORY

PSALMODY PSALM 23

The cantor sings the refrain, then it is repeated by all. The text of the Psalm is sung by the cantor. The refrain is sung by all at the appointed time.

Jessie Seymour Irvine
Arr. Hal H. Hopson

REFRAIN



© 1988 Hope Publishing Company

- ¹The LORD | is my shepherd;*
I shall not | be in want.
- ²He makes me lie down | in green pastures*
and leads me be- | side still waters.
- ³He re- | vives my soul*
and guides me along right pathways | for his name's sake. **REFRAIN**
- ⁴Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall | fear no evil;*
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they | comfort me.
- ⁵You spread a table before me in the presence of those who | trouble me;*
you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is | running over.
- ⁶Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days | of my life,*
and I will dwell in the house of the | LORD forever. **REFRAIN**

READING Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light — ⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,
"Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

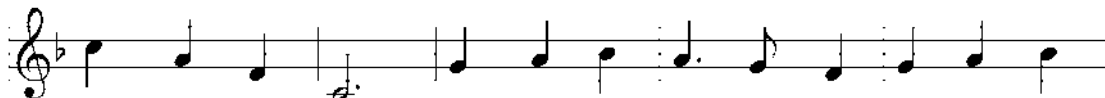
Stand

SEQUENCE HYMN

God, Whose Almighty Word (LBW 400)



1 God, whose al - might - y word cha - os and dark - ness heard
2 Lord, who once came to bring, on your re - deem - ing wing,
3 Spir - it of truth and love, life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,
4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three, glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,



and took their flight: hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the
heal - ing and sight, health to the sick in mind, sight to the
speed forth your flight; move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the
wis - dom, love, might! Bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in



gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray,
in - ly blind: oh, now to hu - man - kind let there be light!
lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place
full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide,

HOLY GOSPEL

John 9:1-41

The Holy Gospel according to **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Stand

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

Sit

OFFERING Organ *Lamb of God, Pure and Sinless* Kristina Langlois
Please remember to give electronically or mail your offering. Thank you.

OFFERTORY



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -
it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take

Continued on next page...



not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the
joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

THE PRAYERS

Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Dear God, open the hearts of the church and the world to all who testify to your deeds of power. Raise up voices in your church that are often silenced or overlooked due to age, gender expression, race, or economic status. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Empower us to care for the land and all living things that dwell in it and beneath it. Provide rich soil for crops to grow. Bring rain to lands suffering drought. Protect hills and shorelines from damage caused by erosion. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring peace to all people and nations. Anoint leaders who seek goodness, righteousness, and truth on behalf of all. Frustrate the efforts of those who would seek to cause violence or terror. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You care for our needs even before we ask. Come quickly to all who seek prayer this day *especially Sylvia Little, Gayle Guyton, Chris Snyder, Rodney Miller, Amanda, Jim Young, Penny Bailey, Eddie Turner, Sr., Jessica Ericson, Kristine Gross, Porter Stacey, and those battling the coronavirus.*

Accomplish healing through the work of doctors, nurses, physical therapists, nutritionists, and all who tend to human bodies. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You call out to those who are asleep and awaken them to new life with you. We give thanks for your saints (*especially*). Join us together with them as your children in this world and the next. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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, forever and ever. Amen

BLESSING

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord look upon us with favor and ✝ give us peace. **Amen.**

HYMN

O Christ, Our Light, O Radiance True (LBW 380)



1 O Christ, our light, O Ra - diance true, shine forth on
2 Fill with the ra - diance of your grace the wan - d'ers
3 Lord, o - pen all re - luc - tant ears and take a -
4 Lord, let your mer - cy's gen - tle ray shine down on
5 Make theirs with ours a sin - gle voice up - lift - ed,



those es - tranged from you, and bring them to your home a -
lost in er - ror's maze. En - light - en those whose se - cret
way the child - ish fears of those who trem - ble to ex -
oth - ers strayed a - way. To those in con - science wound - ed
ev - er to re - joice with wond - 'ring grat - i - tude and



gain, where their de - light shall nev - er end.
minds some deep de - lu - sion haunts and blinds.
press the faith their se - cret hearts con - fess.
sore show heav - en's wait - ing, o - pen door.
praise to you, O Lord, for bound - less grace.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Healer of Our Every Ill

Jeffrey Honore

It has been a bit like the blind leading the blind these last few days. Things that once seemed to be easy, comfortable, second nature, have in the wake of COVID 19 made me feel like a blind man; uncertain of the terrain, the direction I am heading, a complete lack of vision.

Vision was to be a major part of our Council and Committee Chairperson retreat last weekend. The conversation surrounding the insights gained through our Stewardship emphasis last fall. Those conversations were diminished in the wake of the ever changing Coronavirus situation. That however does not reduce the importance of vision; for the congregation, for the neighborhood, for global mission. Vision is new birth. We heard a lot about new birth in the third chapter of John, that night that Nicodemus came to Jesus. Today it is the new birth brought on by Jesus restoring vision to a blind man.

The man born blind who sat and begged; he was given vision and new birth. That's what these first seven verses are all about; new birth, restoration, healing, life. This is a miracle story. Jesus is doing something that bears witness to God's divine purpose. In this case, Jesus is opening up eyes that were closed from birth. Spit, dirt, mud, "Go" wash; the man is given vision. Jesus does something to point out what God is up to. But it doesn't seem to matter what God is up to, we human creatures tend to focus on ourselves. We are always concerned about things changing, and with the beggar being restored, well that seems to threaten the rest of the community. It is often interpreted as "there must be less health and wellness for me."

The remaining section of the gospel reading from John unfolds in six units. Each unit is in response to the original miracle story which we have just heard.

Vision is new birth. Well not exactly for the neighbors. Verses 8-12 bear out that the neighbors prefer to see things the way they always have. Jesus does something that exceeds hope, and the neighbors argue among themselves. Why they aren't even certain that this is the man who has been begging from them for years and even when he assures them that he is the man, they argue!

Vision is new birth. Well not exactly for the Pharisees either. Verses 13-17 make it pretty clear that they prefer to see what the law says. It can't be of God or from God because it took place on the Sabbath. From the Pharisees point of view it would be impossible for a sinner, someone who performed something such as this on the Sabbath, to perform such a sign. They prefer to spend time justifying their position and their status.

Vision is new birth. Well not exactly for the parents of the man. Verses 18-23 clearly lets us know that they prefer to pass the buck, "we don't know how it is that now he sees." "Ask him, he is of age." They don't want to jeopardize their standing in the community and among the religious leaders. So they prefer not to comment. And they point the finger back to their very own son.

Vision is new birth. Well not exactly as the Pharisees question the man who was given vision. They prefer to ask more questions, gather data to discredit the man. Verses 24-34 tries to paint Jesus, the man who gave vision, they paint him as a sinner. The man who now sees is not willing to call anyone a sinner, he simply tells again the story of God's divine action. Spit, dirt, mud, "Go" wash; I was blind but now I see. And the Pharisees drove him out. They do their best to put him back to the same place that he was before he encountered Jesus.

Continued on next page...

Jesus does what God seems to always be doing, he seeks the man out. Verses 35-38 drives home the desire of God to seek out the lost, here it is Jesus seeking out the lost. The man given vision and new birth believes that it is the Son of Man who has come to him.

Vision is new birth. Well not exactly for the Pharisees who encounter Jesus. Verses 39-41 highlight the importance of judgement. Judgement had been the jurisdiction of the religious leaders. Jesus has removed it from them and has given it a new twist. The twist in the story is that the Pharisees conclude “surely we are not blind?” They are more concerned with self, more concerned with position, more concerned with the way things have been, than opening blind eyes, seeing future, moving from begging to living.

I can't tell you how much of my life has been caught up in things that in the end don't really seem to matter. There have been untold hours spent in arguments; everything from what shoes one of the children should wear to what color to paint the dining room. Another chunk of life has been spent in attempts to justify my particular view point utilizing resources that reflect the most acclaimed positions, mainly the scriptures and the Lutheran confessional writings in my adult life. You can then add to the list all of the time I have tried to pin things on someone else; “whose fault was it” or attempts to identify the most logical, believable scape goat. If you are tallying it up the hours have stretched into years. Add to the equation all the times that I found things to be unbelievable because I wasn't an eye witness. You can throw in a couple of hours of “doubt” to this section too because I don't want to be thought a fool, so I am not just going to believe any old thing. No I am too smart for that. Add to this all the time that God keeps coming to me, seeking me out, and looking for “Stan” who keeps straying off.

Vision is new birth. The writer of the 4th Gospel and the early Christian community understood their work to be enlightening a darkened world by their belief in Jesus. They believed that by living their daily life enlightening a darkened world that others would come to believe in God's love made known in Christ Jesus. But then as now people would rather argue, people would rather justify their position, people would rather pass the buck, people would rather question, and people would rather remain lost, rather than be given vision, new life, restoration, healing, hope in Christ Jesus. In these days when we find ourselves at more than arm's length from one another those whom we encounter are most likely craving light, seeking a way forward, frustrated by the lack of vision, and the blindness that seems to be permeating so many things. God's desire in Christ Jesus is that you see clearly the love that God has for you. That you see from the selfless love lifted up on the cross that God is at work providing you vision and new birth.

The miracle story is told in a very straightforward fashion; spit, dirt, mud, “Go” wash. Then according to the gospel reading what follows is; arguing, justifying, passing the buck, finding it unbelievable, and preferring to live visionless. I take comfort knowing that at the heart of our life together is the desire to communicate and articulate the vision we have in Christ Jesus and how our new life in baptism shapes our community to reach out in love. Imagine, reaching out in love; even while we are practicing keeping our distance. The vision we receive from Jesus is new birth. Amen.