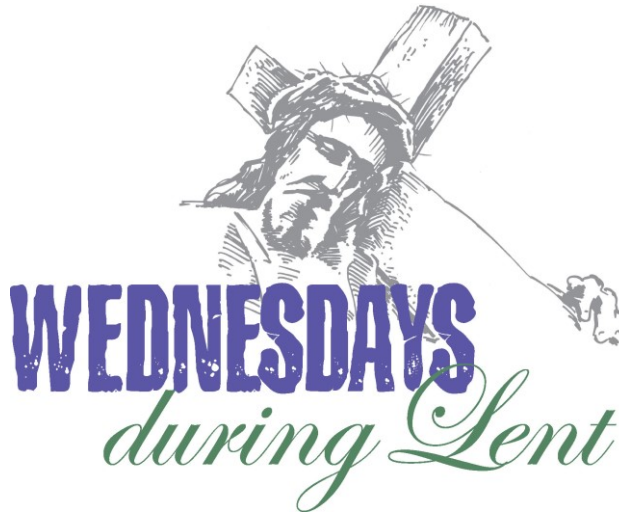




**St. John
Lutheran
Church**

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March 15, 2023

Welcome

to St. John Lutheran Church and our Midweek Lenten Service. We are so glad you have chosen to join us today and we pray your time with us will fill you with the love our Lord has for you.

May God bless your worship with us today,
Paul Kruse, Pastor

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Mobile: 989-992-6030

***‘Compelled by the Love of Christ to Live, Learn,
Share, and Serve’***

***‘Our Vision is to inspire the vibrant experience of
Christian faith in our community, to all generations,
wherever they may be’***

A Time of Preparation

Prelude

Welcome and Sharing of the Peace

Opening Song

"All Praise to Thee" LSB 883

All praise to Thee, my God, this night
For all the blessings of the light.
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,
Beneath Thine own almighty wings.

Forgive me, Lord, for Thy dear Son,
The ill that I this day have done,
That with the world, myself, and Thee,
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed.
Teach me to die that so I may
Rise glorious at the awe-full day.

Oh, may my soul in Thee repose,
And may sweet sleep mine eyelids close,
Sleep that shall me more vig'rous make
To serve my God when I awake!

When in the night I sleepless lie,
My soul with heav'nly thoughts supply;
Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,
No pow'rs of darkness me molest.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

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

Prayer as we enter Worship

P We have gathered here, loving God, to mark the season of Lent.

C **We have gathered here to walk with Jesus as he walks to the cross.**

P We have gathered here to repent of our sins publicly and privately.

C **We have gathered here to repent of those sins known only to ourselves and to you.**

P We have gathered here to be in the presence of one another, where we can draw strength,

C **Knowing that wherever two or three of us are gathered, you are also present among us.**

P Guide us throughout this Lenten season as we climb deeper into your embrace.

C **And let us put to death those things that separate us from each other and from you.**

P May we know your presence is always with us.

C **May we know the power of your transforming love within us.**

P May we know your grace surrounds us and is beyond us.

C **In the name of Jesus, our faithful friend and companion on this journey. Amen.**

Confession and Forgiveness

P Gracious and merciful God, we confess to you our reluctance to enter those moments when we are confronted with our true selves.

C **Reveal our true nature, O God, and increase our trust in you.**

P When we are tempted to put worldly values before our desire for you, and when our hunger for more is greater than our hunger for seeking and doing your will:

C **Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.**

P When we are tempted to use the gifts you give us to benefit ourselves at the expense of serving others:

C **Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.**

P When we are tempted to seek our glory, rather than being guided by the humility of Christ:

C **Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and self-examination

- P** Merciful Father,
- C** **Save us from times of trial and deliver us from evil. Forgive all our sins and fill us with the joy and peace of your salvation. Strengthen us with your Spirit that we may confidently put our whole trust in you, just as Jesus did. This we pray in his name. Amen.**
- P** The Apostle John writes in 1 John 1:8-9, *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* As you have confessed, so also is God faithful and just. Because of Christ's work on the cross, your sins are forgiven ✕ and you are cleansed from all your unrighteousness.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

An Invitation to Engage During Lent

- P** Lent is not a season designed for us to be miserable, but for taking stock and resetting our aims for following Christ.
- C** **Loving God, in you we trust, let us never fool ourselves.**
- P** Lent is an opportunity for healthy repentance – repentance for our indifference in the face of the permeating evil of the world, – and repentance for our personal sins which we have glossed over as "mere foibles."
- C** **According to your loving kindness, remember us, God of goodness and saving grace.**
- P** Lent is truly a time for joy as we experience the exhilaration that comes from defying temptations, from turning our face to the light that shines on the narrow path of Christ, from walking into adverse winds, and from enjoying small victories day by day.
- C** **Make us to know your ways, O God, teach us your paths, for you are the God of our salvation and our true happiness.**

Prayer of the Day

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** Let us pray together...
- C** **God, you loved the world so much that you embraced it in all its sin through your beloved Son Jesus Christ, who sought the way of the cross that he might come to Easter and offer us the way back to you.**

We thank you for this Lenten time to become more receptive to your incredible promise of new life, to challenge all that is corrupt in our world, and to consider all that is dull in our hearts. Help us use this time, not only in prayer at worship, but also in the thoughtfulness in which we live our days. Empower us to listen for your voice in all we do, as you convict us of the habits that restrict our lives and the assumptions that close our minds. Help us also to be aware of others and give us ears that listen, that we may find the words to sustain and the openness to learn through Jesus Christ, our deliverance and our hope. Amen.

First Reading

Isaiah 55:1-3

¹ “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. ² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. ³ Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

G **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

John 4:31-38

P The Holy Gospel according to St John the fourth chapter

G **Glory to You, O Lord.**

³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

³² But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” ³³ So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” ³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the

will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.

³⁶ Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷ For here

the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

G **I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.

Message Song

“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word” *LSB 655*

Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word;

Curb those who by deceit or sword

Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son

And bring to naught all He has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, Your pow’r make known,

For You are Lord of lords alone;

Defend Your holy Church that we

May sing Your praise eternally.

O Comforter of priceless worth,

Send peace and unity on earth;

Support us in our final strife

And lead us out of death to life.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Text: Public domain

Message Offering

“Good Food”

Prayer for Lent

P O God, grant that by taking time to pause for reflection and remembrance, we may be sensitive to your presence in our lives. Open our lives to your grace, and guide us to a true change of heart and reorientation of our lives. Lord in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Lead us through discipline and discipleship, through fasting and feasting, through constraint and freedom. Free us from our own struggles, so that we may more fully serve one another. Lord in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P We know that if we are to remain faithful, we need your help and your strength. As we are met with the challenge of handing over our lives to you, rid us of what clutters our lives, and all that distracts us from the simple truth of your love for us. Lord in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Enlighten us by your Spirit so we may walk in truth and love. Help us to use the freedoms and blessings you have given us, to liberate those with burdens too heavy to bear. Kindle in our hearts a cheerful spirit as we approach each day and help us to love others as you love them. Lord in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P We ask you to hear our prayers for others at this time. Bring healing, hope, and comfort to all who struggle in body, mind, and spirit. Guide those seeking gainful employment or a place to lay their head. Lord in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Bring to our minds the times we have compromised the truth for that which is convenient to us. Forgive us for the times we have shut our eyes, ears, and hearts to the needs of others and have instead indulged ourselves to our own detriment. Help us, dear God, to know that you forgive these things, and give us strength to resist them in the future. Lord in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

P Help us to be obedient and joyful, humble and caring, merciful and loving. Anchor us in your life-giving word and make us radiant for you, as ambassadors of your message of reconciliation. In the name of Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord.

C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

P 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.

Words to Leave and Live By

P Since we stand surrounded by all those who have gone before, that great cloud of witnesses, let us drop every extra weight, every sin that clings to us and slackens our pace, and let us run with endurance the race set before us. Stay focused on Jesus, who designed and perfected our faith. Who endured the cross and ignored the shame of death because he focused on the joy that was set before him, as he is now seated on his throne in heaven. In the same way, let us also embrace the road that lies before us. Go into the days ahead, strong in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and confident that God goes with you.

Blessing

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

☑ Amen.

Closing Song

“God Be With You” (not in Hymnal)

God be with you till we meet again;
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again;
'Neath His wings protecting, hide you,
Daily manna still provide you;
God be with you till we meet again.

Acknowledgments

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