



## St. John Lutheran Church

2888 W Houghton  
Lake Dr  
Houghton Lake,  
MI 48629  
989-366-5164



**March 29, 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*

E-mail: [paul@stjohnhl.com](mailto:paul@stjohnhl.com)

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**

***“O Lord, We Praise Thee”*** LSB 617

O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and adore Thee,  
In thanksgiving bow before Thee.

Thou with Thy body and Thy blood didst nourish  
Our weak souls that they may flourish:

O Lord, have mercy!

May Thy body, Lord, born of Mary,  
That our sins and sorrows did carry,  
And Thy blood for us plead

In all trial, fear, and need:

O Lord, have mercy!

Thy holy body into death was given,  
Life to win for us in heaven.

No greater love than this to Thee could bind us;  
May this feast thereof remind us!

O Lord, have mercy!

Lord, Thy kindness did so constrain Thee  
That Thy blood should bless and sustain me.

All our debt Thou hast paid;

Peace with God once more is made:

O Lord, have mercy!

May God bestow on us His grace and favor  
That we follow Christ our Savior  
And live together here in love and union

Nor despise this blest Communion!  
O Lord, have mercy!  
Let not Thy good Spirit forsake us;  
Grant that heav'nly-minded He make us;  
Give Thy Church, Lord, to see  
Days of peace and unity:  
O Lord, have mercy!

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; (st. 1): German, 14th cent.; (sts. 2–3): Martin Luther, 1483–1546 Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110002579

## 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.

**☒ 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.

**☒ And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray together...

**☒ 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

Exodus 16:4-18

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. <sup>5</sup> On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” <sup>6</sup> So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, <sup>7</sup> and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?” <sup>8</sup> And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.” <sup>9</sup> Then Moses said to

Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’”<sup>10</sup> And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.<sup>11</sup> And the LORD said to Moses,<sup>12</sup> “I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”<sup>13</sup> In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp.<sup>14</sup> And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground.<sup>15</sup> When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.<sup>16</sup> This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he can eat. You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.’”<sup>17</sup> And the people of Israel did so. They gathered, some more, some less.<sup>18</sup> But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**G** **Thanks be to God.**

## **Gospel Reading**

John 6:35-51

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St John the sixth chapter

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

<sup>35</sup> Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.<sup>36</sup> But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.<sup>37</sup> All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.<sup>38</sup> For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.<sup>39</sup> And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.<sup>40</sup> For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should

have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”<sup>41</sup> So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”<sup>42</sup> They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?”<sup>43</sup> Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.<sup>44</sup> No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.<sup>45</sup> It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—<sup>46</sup> not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.<sup>47</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.<sup>48</sup> I am the bread of life.<sup>49</sup> Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.<sup>50</sup> This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.<sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

## **Apostles' Creed**

**C** **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**

***“Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling”*** *LSB 650*

Holy Spirit, ever dwelling  
In the holiest realms of light;  
Holy Spirit, ever brooding  
O'er a world of gloom and night;

Holy Spirit, ever raising  
Those of earth to thrones on high;  
Living, life-imparting Spirit,  
You we praise and magnify.

Holy Spirit, ever living  
As the Church's very life;  
Holy Spirit, ever striving  
Through us in a ceaseless strife;

Holy Spirit, ever forming  
In the Church the mind of Christ:  
You we praise with endless worship  
For Your gifts and fruits unpriced.

Holy Spirit, ever working  
Through the Church's ministry;  
Quick'ning, strength'ning, and absolving,  
Setting captive sinners free;

Holy Spirit, ever binding  
Age to age and soul to soul  
In communion never ending,  
You we worship and extol.

Text: Timothy Rees, 1874–1939, alt. Text: Public domain

## Message

## ***"Heavenly Food"***

## Offering

*Would you like to give online? Scan the QR code and it will take you directly to our donation site.*



## 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,

**G** **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:

**C** **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.
- G** Amen.

## Closing Song

### ***“O Jesus, Blessed Lord, to Thee”*** LSB 632

O Jesus, blessèd Lord, to Thee  
My heartfelt thanks forever be,  
Who hast so lovingly bestowed  
On me Thy body and Thy blood.

Break forth, my soul, for joy and say:  
What wealth is come to me this day!  
My Savior dwells within my heart:  
How blessed am I! How good Thou art!

Text: Thomas Hansen Kingo, 1634–1703; tr. Arthur J. Mason, 1851–1928

Text: Public domain

#### **Acknowledgments**

Divine Service, Setting One and Three from Lutheran Service Book Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. All Hymns from the Lutheran Service Book are used by permission and printed under the authority of **LSB Hymn License .NET, no. 100011308**.



