

*The
Season
of
Lent*



Lenten Service

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Pastor John Boor

March 13, 2024

Lent 4

Worship Service 7:00 p.m.

AS WE GATHER

You are daily assailed by empty words: idle small talk, advertising slogans, and news reports that play on your fears. Political and business leaders spew clichés, and spin. Perhaps even your friends and family get in on the act, betraying you with flattery and falsehoods. King David was only too familiar with such afflictions: “When one comes to see me,” he said, “he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity; when he goes out, he tells it abroad” (Psalm 41:6). Our Lord’s powerful Word was David’s refuge from vain and malicious talk. It is your refuge too. In Baptism, Jesus Christ has lifted you out of the verbal cesspool and placed you firmly on the rock of His Word. That Word is never empty, but it shall accomplish that which He purposes for you.

THE PRELUDE

Announcements

OPENING SENTENCES

2 Corinthians 5:21, alt.; Isaiah 53:5

- P For our sake God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin,
C **so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.**
- P But He was wounded for our transgressions;
C **He was crushed for our iniquities;**
- P upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
C **and with His stripes we are healed.**

¹O Lord, through-out these forty days
 You prayed and kept the fast;
 Inspire repentance for our sin,
 And free us from our past.

²You strove with Satan, and you won;
 Your faith-ful-ness en-dured;
 Lend us your nerve, your skill and trust
 In God’s e-ter-nal Word.

³Though parched and hungry, yet you prayed
 And fixed your mind a-bove;
 So teach us to de-ny ourselves
 That we may know God’s love.

⁴Be with us through this season, Lord,
 And all our earthly days,
 That when the final Easter dawns,
 We join in heaven’s praise.

Please stand

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Based on Philippians 2:1-11

Lord Jesus, search our hearts and minds that we may receive Your Word, share in Your Spirit, and be renewed in our relationships with You and with one another.

We observe a moment of silence for personal prayers of confession.

With humble hearts, let us pray together:

Lord Jesus, the Father’s only Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords, hear us as we pray. Even though You claimed us as Your own in the waters of Baptism, we often do not walk in the newness of life. Our rebellion against You in thought, word, and action is why You died for us – to forgive our sins, to redeem our lives, and to cancel the debt we owe to God. With hearts that are humble and lives ever grateful, help us to receive Your grace, bow before You in worship, and confess that You alone are Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Almighty God our heavenly Father shows His mercy to us in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who blesses us with new birth in the water and the Spirit and assures us that our lives belong to Him. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, You reveal Yourself as the bread of life who satisfies all the hungry souls that return to You in repentance and faith. Renew our hearts and minds during this Lenten season as we receive the promised treasures of Your Word; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

FIRST READING

James 3:1-10

The Old Testament Reading is from James, the third chapter.

¹Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ²For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. ⁴Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

PSALM

Psalm 52:1-9

¹Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man?
The steadfast love of God endures all the day.

²**Your tongue plots destruction,
like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit.**

³You love evil more than good,
and lying more than speaking what is right.

⁴**You love all words that devour,
O deceitful tongue.**

⁵But God will break you down forever;
He will snatch and tear you from your tent;
He will uproot you from the land of the living.

⁶**The righteous shall see and fear,
and shall laugh at him, saying,**

⁷“See the man who would not make God his refuge,
but trusted in the abundance of his riches
and sought refuge in his own destruction!”

⁸**But I am like a green olive tree
in the house of God.
I trust in the steadfast love of God
forever and ever.**

⁹I will thank You forever,
because You have done it.
I will wait for Your name, for it is good,
in the presence of the godly.

GOSPEL VERSE (sung)

**Return to the LORD, your God, for He is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

Please stand

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-sixth chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord. (*sung*)

⁵⁷Then those who had seized Jesus led Him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸And Peter was following Him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put Him to death, ⁶⁰but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶²And the high priest stood up and said, "Have You no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against You?"

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.** (*sung*)

MESSAGE

Pastor John

HYMN

"There Is A Green Hill Far Away"

LBW #114

¹There is a green hill far away,
 Outside a city wall,
 Where the dear Lord was crucified,
 Who died to save us all.

²We may not know, we cannot tell,
 What pains he had to bear,
 But we believe it was for us
 He hung and suffered there.

³He died that we might be forgiv'n;
 He died to make us good,
 That we might go at last to heav'n,
 Saved by his precious blood.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and born of the Virgin Mary,
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father,
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

OFFERING

PRAYER

- P Gracious God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You for blessing us with the opportunity to meditate again on the cross of Christ and receive Your promised treasures.
- C **Grant that the message of the Lamb of God slain for our salvation bring us the riches of Your pardon and peace.**
- P Lead us to see that our sins caused Jesus' great agony in the garden, that our sins nailed Him to the cross of Calvary,
- C **that He was forsaken by His Father so that we might never be forsaken, and that He died so that we may live.**
- P Lord Jesus, grant that especially during this sacred season the treasured story of Your wondrous love for us would draw us closer to You.

- C Enable us to see the blessings You have poured out into our lives through the washing of water with the Word.**
- P Holy Spirit, lift up troubled souls everywhere. Grant wholeness to those hurting in heart, body, and mind. Work Your healing power in the lives of those in need, [especially . . .], and in the lives of all we name before You in our hearts.**
- C All glory, honor, and praise be to You, with the Father and the Son, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

- 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.**

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER

- C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

- P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the T Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.**
- C Amen.**

On a hill far away stood an Old Rugged Cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

So I'll cherish the Old Rugged Cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
And I will cling to the Old Rugged Cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown.

To the Old Rugged Cross, I will ever be true,
It's shame and reproach, gladly bear;
Then He'll call me some day to my home far away,
Where His glory forever I'll share.

And I'll cherish the Old Rugged Cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
And I will cling to the Old Rugged Cross,
And exchange it some day for a crown.

(The congregation leaves in silence)