

Third Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025; 9 a.m.



St John's
Lutheran Church

(An usher rings the church bell at 8:55 a.m.)

Prelude

(Acolytes light the candles)

Linda Ranney

Gathering Hymn

ELW #618; *Guide Me Ever Great Redeemer*

- 1 Guide me ever, great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but you are mighty;
hold me with your pow'rful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.
- 2 Open now the crystal fountain
where the healing waters flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer,
shield me with your mighty arm,
shield me with your mighty arm.
- 3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs and praises, songs and praises,
I will raise forevermore,
I will raise forevermore.

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

ELW Setting One

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

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

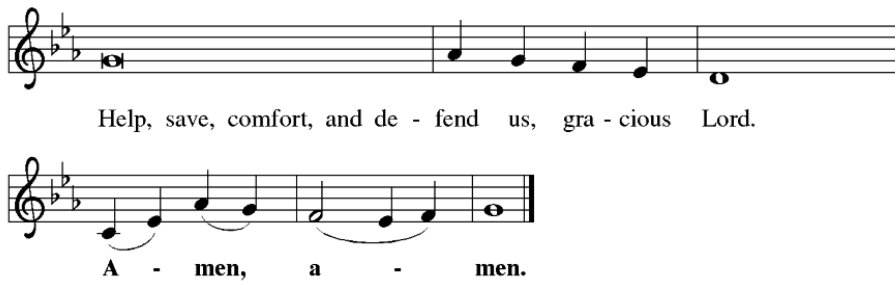
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Eternal God, **your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Reading: Isaiah 55:1-9

- ¹ Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have 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 carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
- ³ Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
- ⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
- ⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.
- ⁶ Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;
- ⁷ let the wicked forsake their way,

and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

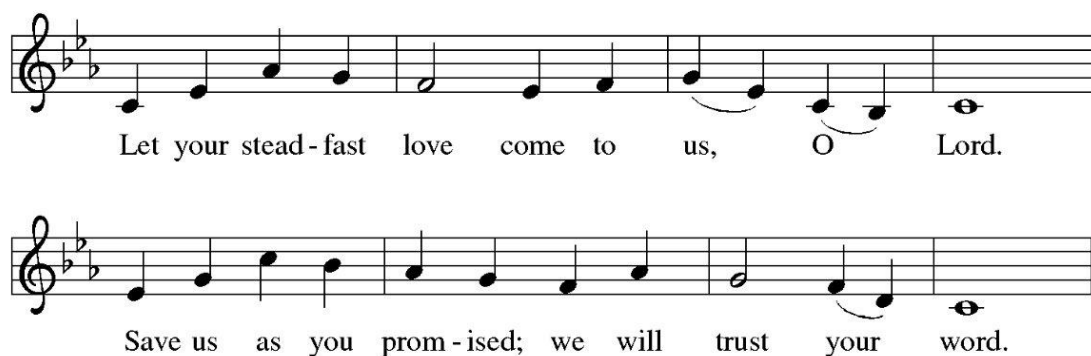
Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Time

Gospel Acclamation *(please stand)*

ELW Setting 1; p. 103



Gospel: Luke 13:1-9

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 13th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.² [Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener,

‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon *(please sit)*

“The Blaming Game” -- Pastor Christine Emerson

Hymn of the Day *(please stand)*

ELW #726; *Light Dawns on a Weary World*

- 1 Light dawns on a weary world
 when eyes begin to see
 all people's dignity.
 Light dawns on a weary world:
 the promised day of justice comes.

Refrain

- The trees shall clap their hands;
the dry lands, gush with springs;
the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out in joy,
and be led forth in peace,
as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.
- 2 Love grows in a weary world
 when hungry hearts find bread
 and children's dreams are fed.
 Love grows in a weary world:
 the promised feast of plenty comes. *Refrain*
 - 3 Hope blooms in a weary world
 when creatures, once forlorn,
 find wilderness reborn.
 Hope blooms in a weary world:
 the promised green of Eden comes. *Refrain*

Sacrament of Baptism

Noa Rose Schwieters, daughter of Sydney Schwieters and Kurt Schwieters
Sponsors: Brock Schwieters & Jaiden Schwieters

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

I renounce them.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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.

(parents, child, and sponsors gather around the font)

Sponsors: We present **Noa Rose Schwieters** for the sacrament of holy baptism.

Pastor: Parents, as you bring **Noa Rose** to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities: to live with her among God's faithful people, bring her to the word of God and the holy supper, teach her the Lord's prayer,

the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in her hands the holy scriptures, and nurture her in faith and prayer, so that she may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace. Do you promise to fulfill these promises?

Parents: We do.

Pastor: Sponsors, do you promise to nurture **Noa Rose** in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Sponsors: We do.

Pastor: People of God, do you promise to support **Noa Rose** and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

People: We do.

Pastor: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that they who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Pastor: **Noa Rose**, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us pray...We give you thanks, O God that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

(Parents lay hands on the head of the newly baptized.)

Sustain **Noa Rose** with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, now and forever. **Amen.**

(Parents use oil to make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the newly baptized)

Pastor: Noa Rose, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

(Sponsors take the candle and light it using the Christ candle.)

(The candle is to remind us that we carry the light of Christ throughout our baptized life.)

Worship Assistant: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **Amen.**

Pastor: Let us welcome **Noa Rose** into the community of faith.

All: We welcome her into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

(The child, parents and sponsors may return to their seats.)

Prayers of the People

ELW #178; Hear Our Prayer; after each petition



Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole:
peace to all peo - ple, hope for each soul.
God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always!
And also with you.

(Ushers collect offering. Begin at the back of the sanctuary on the inside aisle and collect as you move to the front and continue around to the outside aisle)

returning with the offering to the Gathering Area. One usher collects offering from balcony.)

Offering *(please sit)*

ELW #331 *As the Deer Runs to the River* St. John's Choir

Offertory *(please stand – Acolytes receive the offering)*

ELW #185; *Create In Me*

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray. Gracious Provider,
**you set your immense treasures among us,
opening your heart to the world.**
**As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love,
deepen our commitment to sharing those
treasures with others,
through our Savior, Jesus Christ.**
Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

This musical score is written for a single voice part in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.'; 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.'; 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.'; and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.' The melody is simple and hymn-like, using mostly quarter and eighth notes with some rests.

Proper Preface

Holy, Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

This musical score is written for a single voice part in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are: 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of'; 'pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -'; 'san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the'; and 'name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.' The melody is more complex than the previous section, featuring some dotted notes and longer phrases.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

Invitation to the Table *(please sit)*

All who are hungry, come!
The feast of grace is spread.

(Acolyte- comes forward for communion. The 2 ushers will go to the front of the Sanctuary and begin releasing worshippers to receive a wafer and wine.)

Lamb of God



Communion Hymn

ELW #623; *Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me*

- 1 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee;
let the water and the blood,
from thy riven side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure;

cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.

- 2 Not the labors of my hands
can fulfill thy law's demands;
could my zeal no respite know,
could my tears forever flow,
all for sin could not atone;
thou must save, and thou alone.
- 3 Nothing in my hand I bring;
simply to thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to thee for dress;
helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly;
wash me, Savior, or I die.
- 4 While I draw this fleeting breath,
when mine eyelids close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown,
see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee.

Post-Communion Blessing & Prayer (*please stand*)

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Generous Host,
you have shared your feast with us and made us new.
Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities,
that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom,
in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Commissioning of Eucharistic Ministers

(those being commissioned for ministry to those who are homebound may come forward)

A reading from First Corinthians. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

Brothers and sisters, you have volunteered your time, your energy, and your gifts to visit and bring communion to those who are otherwise unable to commune with us. Will you offer your giftedness to this ministry in the confidence that it comes from God?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

A reading from Ephesians. I pray that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through God's Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:16-19)

Will you trust in God's care, seek to grow in love for those you visit, and honor the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, for which you are entrusted?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

I now ask you, people of St. John's: Will you today renew your commitment to those of our community who are most vulnerable: the infirm, sick, and homebound. And will you support these ministers as they visit them with prayer and help?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

Let us pray. Gracious God, for Jesus' sake, empower these ministers to care for our homebound members. Help them to bring the precious gifts of your body and blood faithfully, so that your most vulnerable members will continue to be fed with your forgiveness and grace. Lift up these servants with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel

and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, who has given you the gifts and the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them. **Amen.**

Benediction

The God of steadfastness and encouragement
Grant you to live in harmony with one another,
In accordance with Christ Jesus.
Amen.

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The God of all grace
✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Sending Hymn

(Acolytes extinguish the candles)

ELW #445; *Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters*



1 Wash, O God, our sons and daughters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
2 We who bring them long for nur-ture; by your milk may we be fed.
3 Oh, how deep your ho-ly wis-dom! Un-im-ag-ined, all your ways!



Num-ber them a-mong your peo-ple; bless as Christ blessed long a-go.
Let us join your feast, par-tak-ing cup of bless-ing, liv-ing bread.
To your name be glo-ry, hon-or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
God, re-new us, guide our foot-steps; free from sin and all its snares,
We your peo-ple stand be-fore you, wa-ter-washed and Spir-it-born.



Fill, a-noint them; send your Spir-it, ho-ly dove and heart's de-light.
one with Christ in liv-ing, dy-ing, by your Spir-it, chil-dren, heirs.
By your grace, our lives we of-fer. Re-cre-ate us; God, trans-form!

Sending

Go in peace. Turn toward God's abundance.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Linda Ranney

Altar Flowers

In Memory of Tim Wolter by Vicki Wolter

Serving at Worship Today

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Presider | Pastor Christine Emerson |
| Assistant | Valerian Ahles |
| Lector | Brandi Fuchs |
| Acolytes | Xavier Olson |
| Ushers | Larry Schaefer, Bryan Sedlander |
| Greeters | Dramus Peuse, Lynn Yolitz |
| Communion Servers | Mark Sontag, Patti Sontag, Sam Peuse, Jessica Peuse |
| Media & Streaming | Scott Olsen |
| Screen Operator | Brett Isaacson |
| Musicians | Linda Ranney, accompanist; Mark Lundin, Director of Music; St. John's Choir |

Copyright Information

Reprinted from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, copyright 2006 & Lutheran Book of Worship, copyright 1978
Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #20510.

Reprinted from With One Voice copyright © 1995 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission of Augsburg
Fortress license #20510.

Reprinted from Worship & Praise copyright © 1995 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission of Augsburg
Fortress license #20510.

"All Rights Reserved" Used by permission. CCLI License # 1070784. With permission by OneLicense.net
license A-703800.