

First Lutheran Church ELCA



The Fourth Sunday in Lent

Sunday ☩ March 30, 2025 ☩ 10:30 am

The Season of Lent

On this Sunday in Lent, the Psalm sets the tone this day: “Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!” The theme continues in all of the scripture readings: Happy are those who have “become the righteousness of God” in the merits of Christ Jesus. Happy are those for whom the forgiveness of God has “rolled away . . . the disgrace” of former times. Happy is the father at the return of his prodigal son. Happy are we that our sins are forgiven for Jesus’ sake. Rejoice!

Gathering

PRELUDE	<i>“Within My Heart of Hearts”</i>	<i>J.S. Bach</i>
OPENING HYMN	<i>“Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling”</i>	ELW 608

1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
 2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for
 3 Oh, for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for

you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,
 you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,
 you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain

watch - ing for you and for me.
 mer - cies for you and for me? "Come home, come home!
 par - don for you and for me. Come home, come home!"

You who are wea - ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,

Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847-1909
 Music: THOMPSON, Will L. Thompson

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

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.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive 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.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together:

God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WELCOME! ANNOUNCEMENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

God's Word for Us

FIRST READING

Joshua 5:9-12

By celebrating the Passover and eating the produce of the promised land instead of the miraculous manna that had sustained them in the desert, the Israelites symbolically bring their forty years of wilderness wandering to an end at Gilgal.

⁹ The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the Passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 32

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!

² **Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD."
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you
in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow,
they shall not reach them.**

⁷You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸**“I will instruct you and teach you
in the way that you should go;
I will guide you with my eye.**

⁹Do not be like horse or mule,
which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,
or else they will not stay near you.”

¹⁰**Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

¹¹Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

One way to describe the gospel is the promise that in Christ everything is transformed into newness. All mistakes, all deliberate sins, all old history is reconciled with Christ's resurrection. This is Paul's strong message to the congregation in the city of Corinth.

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

We stand to hear the Gospel

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

HOLY GOSPEL

from Luke 15

SERMON

CELEBRATION TIME!
The story of the Prodigal Son

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Amazing Grace"

ELW 779

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me;
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we'd first begun

APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

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

**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.**

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Following each prayer, we respond...

**God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.**

Welcome to God's table

SHARING OF THE PEACE

Greet one another with a gesture of peace.

**The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.**

OFFERING OF MUSIC

"Come, Sweet Rest"

J.S. Bach

OFFERTORY SONG

“Loaves were broken”

ACS 966 (verse 1)

Offerings are shared in the basket at the entry before or after worship.

Thanks to those who give on a regular basis through “direct deposit” giving.

Loaves were broken, words were spoken by the Galilean shore.
Jesus, Bread of life from heaven, was their food forevermore.
By your body broken for us, by your wine of life outpoured,
Jesus, feed again your people. Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of grace, bless what we offer to your service:
our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts.

May our lives overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also 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.

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you,
Almighty and merciful God.
You call your people to cleanse their hearts,
that renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.
And so we praise your name,
and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

setting eight, page 191



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Communion Prayers / Words of Institution

Blessed are you, O God of the universe,
Your mercy is everlasting
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's Passover
from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
Our Father...

Invitation to the Table

These are the gifts of God, for the people of God!
All are welcome to God's table!

Communion

All are invited to receive these gifts of God. Children are welcome to receive communion or a blessing. Communion is served by intinction. Dip the bread in either the wine or the grape juice. Gluten-wafers are available, simply ask your server. If you prefer to remain in your pew, the pastor will come and serve you there. All are welcome at God's table!

Music during Communion

"Lamb of God"

ELW, page 191

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

"In the Singing"

ELW 466

1 In the sing-ing, in the si-lence, in the hands ex-pect-ant, o-pen,
2 In the ques-tion, in the an-swer, in the mo-ment of ac-cept-ance,
in the bless-ing, in the break-ing, in your pres-ence at this ta-ble,
in the heart's cry, in the heal-ing, in the cir-cle of your peo-ple,
Refrain
Je-sus Christ, Je-sus Christ, be the wine of grace;
Je-sus Christ, Je-sus Christ, be the bread of peace.

Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931

Music: BREAD OF PEACE, Carlton R. Young, b. 1926

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BLESSING AND PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Nourishing God,
at this table you have refreshed us
with holy gifts of food and drink.
Strengthen us for service,
and send us out to embody your good news
of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.
In the name of Christ we pray,
Amen.

Sending

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✚ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN "For By Grace You Have Been Saved" ELW 598



1 For by grace you have been saved and e - ven faith is not your
 2 "So my grace is all - suf - fi - cient for each child who is my
 3 So this weak - ness with con - tent - ment I'll ac - cept now in my -



own, it's the gift of God for you and not the works that you have
 own, for my strength is now made per - fect for each child who is my
 self, all my hard - ships, pains, and griefs that still lie deep with - in my -



done. Don't let an - y - bod - y boast, for this is
 own. When you're weak, then you are strong, for this is
 self. When I'm weak, then I am strong, for this is



God's great gift. A - men.
 God's great gift." A - men.
 God's great gift. A - men. A - men.

Text: Kari Tikka, b. 1946; tr. Michael Harper
 Music: ARMOLAULU, Kari Tikka
 Text and music © Fennica Gehrman, admin. Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" Guenter Raphael

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SERVING TODAY

Pastor David Halaas	<i>presider</i>
Janet Gross	<i>assisting minister</i>
Yvonne Hazlett	<i>organist</i>
Lee Knop	<i>reader</i>
David Gross	<i>sacristan</i>
Ann Doellinger	<i>communion minister</i>
Denise Powell	<i>usher</i>
Becki McGlaufflin, Chris Taylor	<i>greeters</i>
Ben and Ellie Hertenstein	<i>sound and media technicians</i>
Chris Taylor, Dorothy Chauncey	<i>coffee fellowship</i>
Nadine Holst	<i>radio broadcast and livestream</i>

First Lutheran Church ELCA.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Welcome to worship at First Lutheran Church!

Holy Communion will be served today by intinction... dip the bread in either the wine or the grape juice. Gluten-wafers are available, simply ask your server. Children are welcome to receive Communion, or a blessing. If you prefer to remain in your pew, the pastor will come and serve you there. All are welcome at God's table!

Discover the First Lutheran radio broadcast – every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. on iHeart radio 620 am

Worship is also available at any time on our Facebook livestream page
<https://www.facebook.com/firstlutheransiouxcity/>

This week at First Lutheran

Monday, March 31

7:00 pm handbells, choir room

Wednesday, April 2

9:00-11:30 am Holy Family Food Pantry, volunteers: Chris Taylor, Enola Peters

12:30 pm Lenten Worship/Lutherans Together – at Senior Center, 4th & Hamilton

1:00 pm WELCA Meeting, fireside room

6:30 pm Lenten Worship/Lutherans Together – at Senior Center, 4th & Hamilton

8:00 pm Choir, choir room

Thursday, April 3

1:00 pm Bible Study – Pastor Halaas leads a ‘read-through’ of the Book of Acts

Lenten Tree Project

The Congregational Life committee invites you to participate in collecting items in support of Sleep in Heavenly Peace during this Lenten season. Please see the directions located near the tree and return items by the end of March. (Take an egg... and return the egg to the tree!) We are also planning to have another “Bed Building Event” in the spring. Watch for details!

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9am to 2pm.

Thank You! Thank you to the volunteers who faithfully served at the Soup Kitchen on March 27th: Becki McGlaufflin, Doug Webb, Lori McClaren, Lee Knop and Janet Gross.

Prayer concerns and pastoral care: There are several ways for you to share your prayer concerns and needs when ill, homebound, or celebrating. Please communicate your wishes and expectations by phone, text, or email.

Happening! : **Sunday School! at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays**

...Next Sunday, April 2nd: following worship, a “Q & A” session about the process of ‘call committee’ and ‘transition’.