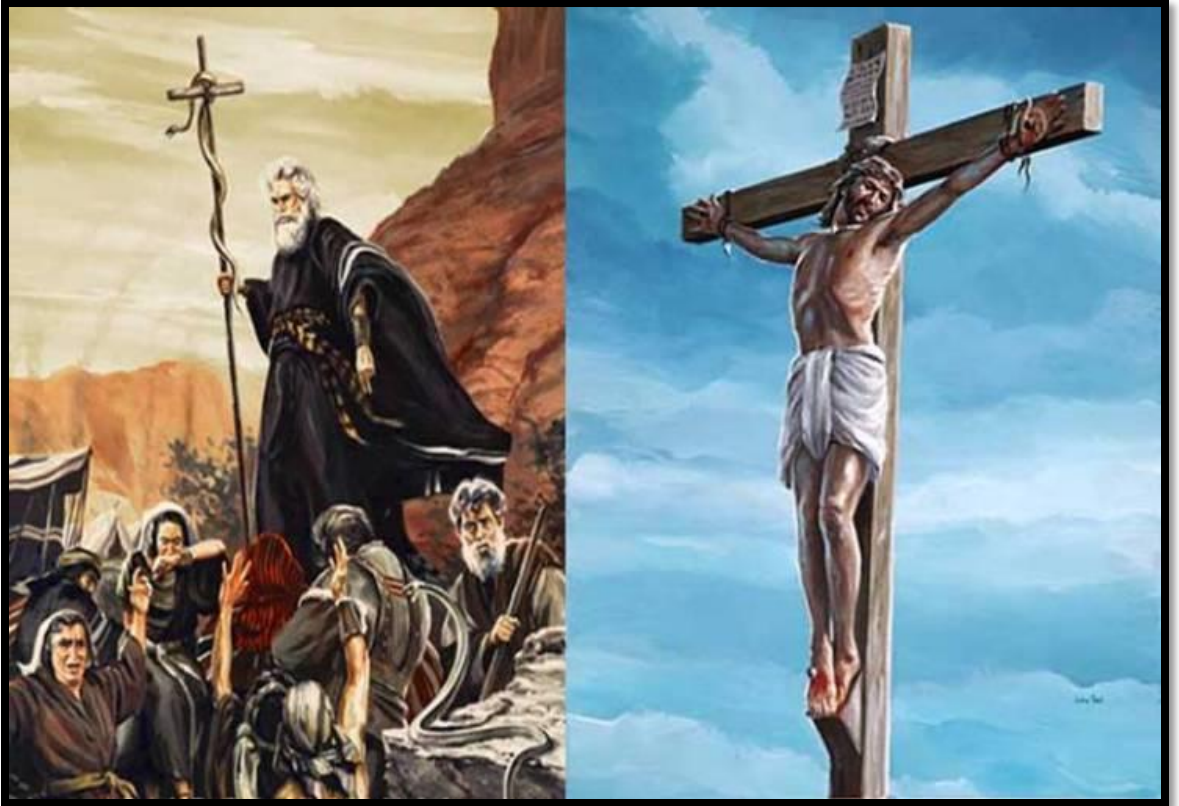


+DIVINE SERVICE III+
OF THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
+FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT + 10 MARCH 2024+



The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

A member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
902 S. Maple
Inglewood, CA 90301-3824
tgslcms.org

The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

“A Church where God gives and we receive.”

- ❖ The Rev. Edward Killian, Pastor (mobile) 424.293.6588
- ❖ Ms. Moira Killian, Secretary (Office) 310.671-7644
 - ❖ Mr. Jay Rogers, Organist/Music Director
 - ❖ Mr. Jose Lopez, Congregational Chairman
 - ❖ Mr. Greg Griffin, Acolyte

Welcome to our Divine Service!

We are pleased that you are with us.

+Worship Notes+

The entire service, including the rubrics of when to sit and when to kneel or stand, and what to say, is printed out in this folder so you may follow along.

Welcome to weekly Divine Service at The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church! We are a congregation that confesses the Holy Bible as inerrant, that justification is by faith according to the Holy Bible and confessed in the 1580 Book of Concord. God bless you.

To all of you who are visiting our service this morning, we extend a most cordial welcome in Jesus' name. Please introduce yourself to our pastor. It is our hope that you will feel at home in our midst and will be blessed by our message of Christ crucified and risen for the sins of the world. If you are looking for a church home and would like to know about our membership, pastor would love to speak with you!

A Note From The Organist:

Well into his nineties, Walter Pelz is still writing. This setting of “My Faith Looks Up to Thee” was published in 2018, and features lush romantic harmonies with the melody played on the clarinet stop.

Theodore Beck spent most of his career at Concordia University Seward. He wrote many organ and choral works and contributed to many hymnals, including LSB. His setting of “By Grace I’m Saved” was published in 1985, and features a left-hand melody, with fanfare like passages in the right hand.

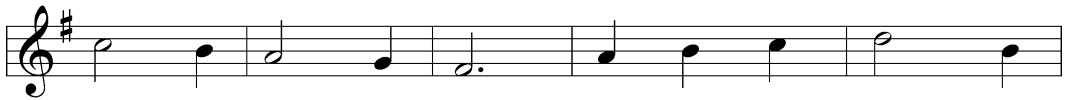
Confession and Absolution

Hymn of Invocation

560 Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed



1 Drawn to the cross, which Thou hast blessed With heal - ing
 2 Thou know - est all my griefs and fears, Thy grace a -
 3 Wash me and take a - way each stain; Let noth - ing
 4 And then for work to do for Thee, Which shall so



gifts for souls dis - tressed, To find in Thee my
 bused, my mis - spent years; Yet now to Thee with
 of my sin re - main. For cleans - ing, though it
 sweet a ser - vice be That an - gels well might



life, my rest, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
 con - trite tears, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
 be through pain, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
 en - vy me, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.

Text: Genevieve M. Irons, 1855–1928
 Tune: Joseph Barnby, 1838–96
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

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

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Exhortation

LSB 184

- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
C **who made heaven and earth.**
P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Kneel/Stand

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

Confession of Sins

LSB 184

- P** O almighty God, merciful Father,
C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

Absolution

LSB 185

- P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

Stand

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalms 27:3–5; antiphon: v. 1

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom | shall I fear?*

The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I | be afraid?

Though an army encamp against me, my heart | shall not fear;*
though war arise against me, yet I will be | confident.

One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek | after:*

that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his | temple.

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of | trouble;*

he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high up- | on a rock.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
 and to the Holy | Spirit;
 as it was in the be- | ginning,*
 is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom | shall I fear?*

The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I | be afraid?

Gloria Patri

LSB 186

☐ Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost;

as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and ev-er shall be, world with-out end. A-men.

Kyrie

LSB 186

☐ Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -

on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

✠ Gloria in Excelsis is omitted during Lent ✠

Salutation and Collect of the Day

☐ The Lord be with you.

☐ And with thy spir - it.



P Let us pray.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Sit

Old Testament

Numbers 21:4–9

The Bronze Serpent

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. ⁵And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. ⁷And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” ⁹So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 107:1–9

Let the Redeemed of the LORD Say So

¹Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!

**²Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,
whom he has redeemed from trouble**

**³and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.**

**⁴Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to a city to dwell in;**

**⁵hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.**

**⁶Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.**

**⁷He led them by a straight way
till they reached a city to dwell in.**

**⁸Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of men!**

**⁹For he satisfies the longing soul,
and the hungry soul he fills with good things.**

Epistle

Ephesians 2:1–10

By Grace Through Faith

¹And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Tract

Psalm 125:1–2, 5b

Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.
As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people,
from this time forth and forevermore. Peace be upon Israel!

Holy Gospel

John 3:14–21

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

¹⁴[Jesus said:] “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

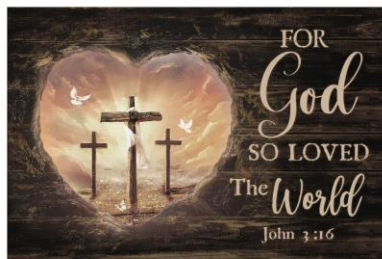
For God So Loved the World

¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.



Nicene Creed

**☐ I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father
and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy
Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for
the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of
the dead
and the life ✝ of the world to
come. Amen.**



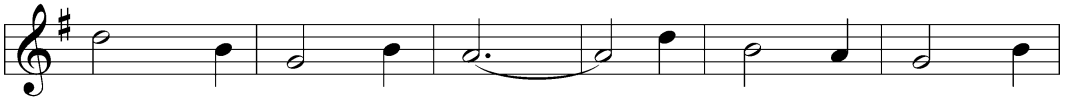
Sit

Hymn of the Day

437 Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed



1 A - las! And did my Sav - ior bleed, And
 2 Was it for crimes that I had done He
 3 Well might the sun in dark - ness hide And
 4 Thus might I hide my blush - ing face While
 5 But drops of grief can ne'er re - pay The



did my sov - reign die? Would He de - vote that
 groaned up - on the tree? A - maz - ing pit - y,
 shut his glo - ries in When God, the might - y
 His dear cross ap - pears, Dis - solve my heart in
 debt of love I owe; Here, Lord, I give my -



sa - cred head For such a worm as I?
 grace un - known, And love be - yond de - gree!
 mak - er, died For His own crea - tures' sin.
 thank - ful - ness, And melt mine eyes to tears.
 self a - way: 'Tis all that I can do.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt.
 Tune: Hugh Wilson, 1764-1824
 Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Pastor Edward Killian

Stand

Offertory


LSB 192



C Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -



way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho-ly Spir-it
 from me. Re-store un-to me the joy of Thy sal-va-
 tion, and up-hold me with Thy free spir-it. A-men.

Offering *Collected after service in the back of the church.*

Prayer of the Church

The proper response is "Hear our prayer."

P Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

O Lord God, draw us into Your light. Expose wherever we, like Your people of old, have thought, spoken and acted against You, that in repentance we might look to Your Son lifted up on the cross and be saved from Your righteous wrath. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord of hosts, You gave Your only Son so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. Bless the work of missionaries as they carry this Gospel to the ends of the earth, that many may hear of Your love in Christ Jesus and be saved through Him. Lord, in Your mercy,

P Almighty God, You have set Joe, our president, and Gavin, our governor, as authorities over us for our good. Bless and sustain them with all they need to govern us, that we might be ruled wisely and in accord with Your will. Lord, in Your mercy,

P Heavenly Father, You had Moses lift up the bronze serpent in the wilderness, thereby foreshadowing Your own Son's lifting up on the cross. Teach us to hear in the Old Testament the promises and pictures of the coming Christ, who is their Savior and ours. Lord, in Your mercy,

P O God, You are our light and our salvation. Hide in Your *especially Alice, Allison, Betty, Bev, Cynthia, Diane, Johnathan, Lynette, Marion and her family, Owen, Ron,*

Timothy, and all who suffer in body, mind or soul. Keep them in their day of trouble from falling into faithless fear, and uphold them with Your peace in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

- P** O Lord, whose steadfast love endures forever, we lift up our voices in thanksgiving. You have redeemed us out of trouble and gathered us here to feed us, that our souls may not faint within us. Satisfy the longing of our hearts with Your Son's good things, His body and blood, that we may abide in Your eternal peace. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Gracious Lord, You have made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our trespasses and sins. Cause Your Spirit to be at work in us, that we may not carry out the sinful desires of our bodies and minds, but be Your workmanship in Christ Jesus, walking in the good works He has prepared for us. Lord, in Your mercy,
- P** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C** Amen.

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 194



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Lift up your hearts.



C We lift them up un - to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.

C It is meet and right so to do.

Proper Preface (Abbreviated)

LSB 194

P It is truly meet, right, and salutary . . . evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 195

C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;

heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,

ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,

bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Lord's Prayer

LSB 196

P Our Father who art in heav - en, hal - low - ed be Thy name,



Thy king - dom come, Thy will be done on earth as it



is in heav - en; give us this day our dai - ly bread;



and forgive us our tres - pass - es as we forgive those who



tres - pass a - gainst us; and lead us not in - to



temp - ta - tion, but deliver us from e - vil.



☐ For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the



glo - ry for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

The Words of Our Lord

LSB 197



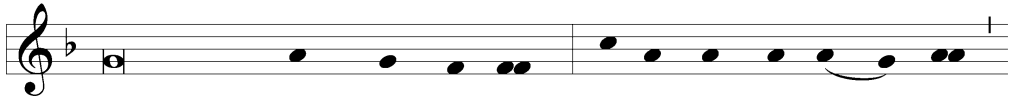
☐ Our Lord Je - sus Christ, on the night when He was be - trayed, took bread,



and when He had giv - en thanks, He broke it and gave it to the



dis-ci-ples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ bod-y, which is giv-en for you.



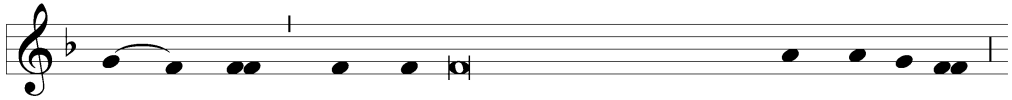
This do in re-mem-brance of Me." In the same way al - so



He took the cup after sup-per, and when He had giv-en thanks, He gave it



to them, say-ing: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in



My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the for-give-ness of sins.



This do, as often as you drink it, in re-mem-brance of Me."

Pax Domini

LSB 197



P The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.



C A - men.

Amen

Agnus Dei

LSB 198

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

Sit

Distribution

Distribution Hymn

620 Jesus Comes Today with Healing

1 Je - sus comes to - day with heal - ing, Knock - ing at my door, ap - peal - ing, Of - f'ring par - don, grace, and peace.
 2 Christ Him - self, the priest pre - sid - ing, Yet in bread and wine a - bid - ing In this ho - ly sac - ra - ment,
 3 Un - der bread and wine, though low - ly, I re - ceive the Sav - ior ho - ly, Blood and bod - y, giv'n for me,
 4 God de - scends with heav'n - ly pow - er, Gives Him - self to me this hour In this or - di - nar - y sign.



He Him - self makes prep - a - ra - tion, And I hear His
 Gives the bread of life, once bro - ken, And the cup, the
 Ver - y Lamb of God from heav - en, Who to bit - ter
 On my tongue His pledge re - ceiv - ing, I ac - cept His



in - vi - ta - tion: "Come and taste the bless - ed feast."
 pre - cious to - ken Of His sa - cred cov - e - nant.
 death was giv - en, Hung up - on the curs - ed tree.
 grace, be - liev - ing That I taste His love di - vine.

5 Let me praise God's boundless favor,
 Whose own feast of love I savor,
 Bidden by His gracious call.
 Wedding garments He provides me,
 With a robe of white He hides me,
 Fits me for the royal hall.

6 Now have I found consolation,
 Comfort in my tribulation,
 Balm to heal the troubled soul.
 God, my shield from ev'ry terror,
 Cleanses me from sin and error,
 Makes my wounded spirit whole.

Distribution Hymn

729 I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus



1 I am trust-ing Thee, Lord Je - sus, Trust - ing on - ly Thee;
 2 I am trust-ing Thee for par - don; At Thy feet I bow,
 3 I am trust-ing Thee for cleans - ing In the crim - son flood;
 4 I am trust-ing Thee to guide me; Thou a - lone shalt lead,



Trust - ing Thee for full sal - va - tion, Great and free.
 For Thy grace and ten - der mer - cy Trust - ing now.
 Trust - ing Thee to make me ho - ly By Thy blood.
 Ev - 'ry day and hour sup - ply - ing All my need.

5 I am trusting Thee for power;
Thine can never fail.
Words which Thou Thyself shalt give me
Must prevail.

6 I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall.
I am trusting Thee forever
And for all.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836-79

Stand

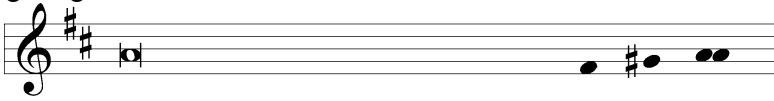
Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199

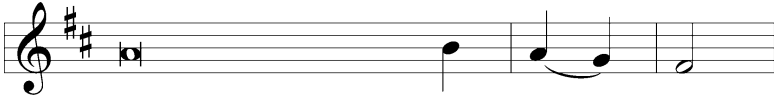
Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -
cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,
which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

Thanksgiving

LSB 200



A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



C and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

Post-Communion Collect

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Salutation

LSB 201



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus

LSB 202



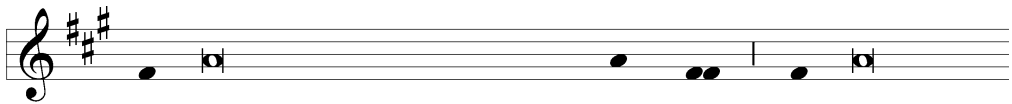
A Bless we the Lord.



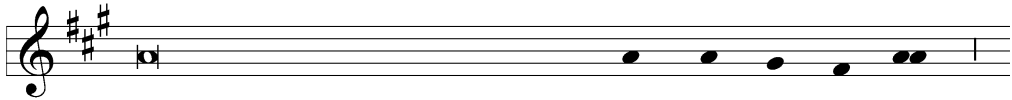
C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

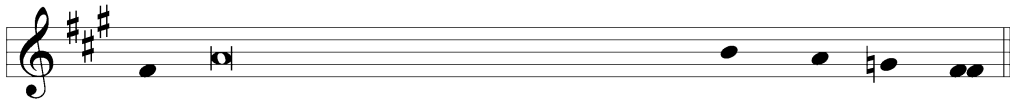
LSB 202



P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.



C A-men, a-men, a - men.

Hymn to Depart

561 The Tree of Life



1 The tree of life with ev - 'ry good In E - den's
2 The still - ness of that sa - cred grove Was bro - ken,
3 What mer - cy God showed to our race, A plan of
4 Now from that tree of Je - sus' shame Flows life e -



ho - ly or - chard stood, And of its fruit so pure and
as the ser - pent strove With tempt - ing voice Eve to be -
res - cue by His grace: In send - ing One from wom - an's
ter - nal in His name; For all who trust and will be -



sweet God let the man and wom - an eat. Yet in this
guile And Ad - am too by sin de - file. O day of
seed, The One to fill our great - est need— For on a
lieve, Sal - va - tion's liv - ing fruit re - ceive. And of this



gar - den al - so grew An - oth - er tree, of which they
 sad - ness when the breath Of fear and dark - ness, doubt and
 tree up - lift - ed high His on - ly Son for sin would
 fruit so pure and sweet The Lord in - vites the world to



knew; Its love - ly limbs with fruit a -
 death, Its aw - ful poi - son first dis -
 die, Would drink the cup of scorn and
 eat, To find with - in this cross of



dorned A - gainst whose eat - ing God had warned.
 played With - in the world so new - ly made.
 dread To crush the an - cient ser - pent's head!
 wood The tree of life with ev - 'ry good.

Text: Stephen P. Starke, 1955

Tune: Bruce W. Becker, 1952

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Tune: © 1995 Bruce W. Becker. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000401

By Grace I'm Saved

Theodore Beck (1929-2003)

Acknowledgments

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Continue to join us for Midweek Lenten Services!

Fourth Midweek in Lent "Seventh & Eighth Commandment" – March 13th @ 7pm

Fifth Midweek in Lent "Ninth & Tenth Commandment" – March 20th @ 7pm

Lenten suppers will be held before service in the Assembly room at 6pm.

✠ THIS WEEK'S NOTES ✠

Announcements

+ **Last Sunday's Attendance: 35**
Midweek Attendance: 25

+ **Altar Guild Set Up:** March 10th Gayle
March 17th Marie
Cleanup for March: Maurine and Nannette

+ **Ushers for March:** Dick Huhn and Leon Tarr

+ If you are interested in **ordering an Easter Lily** to help decorate the sanctuary for Easter Celebration, the order forms can be found in your bulletins. Turn order sheets in by Sunday, March 17th.

+ **Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study!** Join us at 8:30am before service as Pastor Killian leads us through a study of the Book of Concord!

+ **We will be holding Lenten suppers on Wednesdays.** If you would like to contribute to one of the weeks, there is a sign-up sheet on the coffee table in the Narthex.

March Birthdays!

Taylor Hurd 19th
Kannon Wilhitz 22nd

Join us for Holy Week

Maundy Thursday – March 28th at 7 pm

Good Friday – March 29th at 7 pm

Easter Sunday Celebration – March 31st at 10 am

There will be an Easter Brunch following Easter Service.



Lectionary Summary for the Third Sunday in Lent

Jesus Is Lifted Up on the Cross so that We May Look to Him and Live

The people sinned by speaking “*against God and against Moses,*” and the Lord called them to repentance by sending fiery serpents, which “*bit the people, so that many people of Israel died*” (Num. 21:4–6). When the people confessed their sin, the Lord provided a means of rescue from death. He instructed Moses to “*make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole,*” so that “*if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live*” (Num. 21:8–9). Thus, God sent His Son into the world, in the likeness of our sin and death, and lifted Him up on the pole of the cross, that whoever looks to Him in faith “*may have eternal life*” (John 3:14–16). By His cross, “*the light has come into the world,*” not for condemnation, but “*that the world might be saved through him*” (John 3:17–19). While we “*were dead in the trespasses and sins*” in which we once lived (Eph. 2:1), God loved us, calling us to repentance and raising us up with Christ to live “*with him in the heavenly places*” (Eph. 2:4–6).

Lutheran’s For Life Thoughts

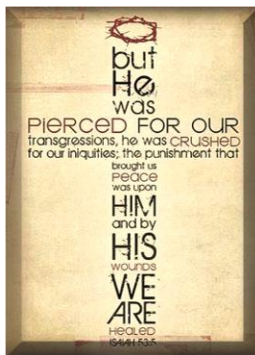
Surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis come with risks and costs. But as with the ancient Israelite serpent infestation, the real enemy is neither one’s neighbor nor the Maker (Numbers 21:8). Only impaling the snake (not terminating each other) brought deliverance, and the antidote called for faith instead of death. Christians insist God has sent us His Son for extending lives and not ending them (John 3:17).

“With gentleness and respect, we witness to our faith in Jesus so that others will come to believe in Him and eagerly await His return. All who confess Jesus as Lord look forward to His Second Coming with a joy far greater than idle mirth. We are encouraged as we remind each other that our Savior is coming back, and we pray that He would ‘hear and grant our fervent plea.’ Come, Lord Jesus!” *Dr. Carol Geisler – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

A Verse for the Week

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5



A Snippet From 1517

How God Loves Us: The Meaning of "So," John 3:16

"So loved," then isn't about how much but instead simply how.

...It's true that God's love extends so far as to pour himself out as a libation for my sin. But that reading doesn't make sense in the context of John's theme of double knowledge. He consistently shows his readers that there are two ways of knowing or understanding both our world and what God is up to in it. In response to Nicodemus' undercover dark-of-night query of him, Jesus sheds light on the truth of his own purpose. Leave the thinking about the extent of God's love to Mark and Jesus' three passion predictions. Here, Jesus clears up our problem of seeing through a glass dimly to say clearly that God's love is all about incarnation.

In the immediately preceding verses ([John 3:14-15](#)), Jesus points to God's care for the Israelites in the wilderness by providing a bronze serpent to be lifted up. God gives not an idea but an actual thing to rescue them from a deadly asp invasion. "So loved," then isn't about how much but instead simply how. The Greek word John uses that we translate as "so" is "outos" (pronounced hoo-toes), which means "in this way" or "thus."

God loves you in this way: not by remaining a far-off pie-in-the-sky in the sweet-by-and-by fever dream of a god who might or might not love you, or by being an idea of a supreme sovereign who rules from on high, or even by being a wielder of justice. No, God loves you by invading your dimwit life of lifting yourself up as your preferred solution to the world's problems. God comes bursting as the real thing, as a living, breathing cruci-fiable body. If God comes to you so embodied that he can be lifted up on Golgotha like the desert serpents, you no longer need to wonder what God might be up to in your own darkest nights of the soul. Here he is. In this particular person Jesus of Nazareth, you have the embodiment of God's love. That means you have a God you can believe in. Jesus lays himself out in a way you can trust him.

Like he does so many times in John's gospel, Jesus follows this verse with a circular discourse, this time about living in either darkness or light. The question at the fore is whether you can count on a God who makes all the big eternal omni stuff available to you in the down-to-earth package John told about in his prologue. Will you be stuck in the dark or enlightened about Jesus' identity? Darkness is done, for the Word has pitched a tent among us. He dwells with you and for you.

Try putting that on a candy heart in February. You'll need a mighty big heart, because it's a story as big as heaven itself. But once you have the "how" down, Jesus will also go on to demonstrate the "how much." That's something waiting off stage to be performed on Good Friday and Easter. For now, rest assured that one itinerant first century preacher has been the very mind of God from the foundation of the world, and in his love, he's come for you. *Ken Sundet Jones, February 2023, 1517.org*