

ESTHER LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
MARCH 19, 2023

PRELUDE

BELL AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Please stand as you are able

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

P: All have sinned and fall short,

C: And God has mercy on us all.

P: Therefore we should have mercy on others,

C: And forgive as we are forgiven.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: God of grace and mercy,

C: We admit to you, to ourselves, and to this community that we have caused harm to others through our actions and through our failure to act. Give us the humility to accept our failings and make things right where we can. Forgive us and help us to forgive ourselves.

P: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. In that love God forgives you all your sin, for the sake of our savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: *We Come to the Hungry Feast

(ELW 479)

1 We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a word of peace.
To hungry hearts unsatisfied
the love of God is not denied.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

2 We come to the hungry feast
hungry for a world released

from hungry folk of ev'ry kind,
the poor in body, poor in mind.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.

- 3 We come to the hungry feast
hungry that the hunger cease,
and knowing, though we eat our fill,
the hunger will stay with us; still
we come, we come to the hungry feast.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943

Text © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

***GREETING**

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

C: And also with you.

KYRIE (ELW pg. 165) *Sing responsively

L: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

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

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: 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.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

All: Amen.

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW pg. 167)**

Refrain

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

- 1 Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Refrain

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.
Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

- 2 Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:
Have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

Refrain

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.
Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

- 3 For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.

Refrain

Glory to God in the highest. Amen, amen.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: God of promise,

**C: We wait for the time when all the world shall know your perfect peace and justice,
and you shall reign over all creation in love. Keep us alert and active in your work
while we wait, in Jesus name. Amen.**

Please be seated

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

PSALM 43:3-4

³O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.

⁴Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW pg. 171) *Let Your Steadfast Love* sung

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you promised; we will trust your word.

Reader: ¹⁴“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying,

Congregation: ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’

Pastor: ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying,

Congregation: ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’

Pastor: ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying,

Congregation: ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’

Pastor: ²⁶But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless servant, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

CHILDRENS STORY

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness*

(ELW 488)

- 1 Soul, adorn yourself with gladness,
leave the gloomy haunts of sadness,
come into the daylight's splendor,
there with joy your praises render.
Bless the one whose grace unbounded
this amazing banquet founded;
Christ, though heav'nly, high, and holy,
deigns to dwell with you most lowly.

- 2 Hasten as a bride to meet him,
eagerly and gladly greet him.
There he stands already knocking;
quickly, now, your gate unlocking,
open wide the fast-closed portal,
saying to the Lord immortal:
"Come, and leave your loved one never;
dwell within my heart forever."

- 3 Now in faith I humbly ponder
over this surpassing wonder
that the bread of life is boundless
though the souls it feeds are countless;
with the choicest wine of heaven
Christ's own blood to us is given.
Oh, most glorious consolation,
pledge and seal of my salvation.

- 4 Jesus, source of lasting pleasure,
truest friend, and dearest treasure,
peace beyond all understanding,
joy into all life expanding:
humbly now, I bow before you,
love incarnate, I adore you;

worthily let me receive you,
and, so favored, never leave you.

Text: Johann Franck, 1618-1677; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (Sung response ELW 751 *O Lord, Hear my Prayer*)

L: Trusting in the promise of Jesus Christ's unending love, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

L: Holy God, you have challenged us to be ready for your triumphant return. Fill us with the oil of your fervent love, that we might burn bright until that glorious day. Merciful God,

**C: O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and listen to me.**

L: Nothing on this planet exists in a vacuum. All things are connected and reliant upon one another. Make us careful stewards of land, water, and air, and of every living thing that inhabits this earth. Merciful God,

**C: O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and listen to me.**

L: As we walk together on this journey of Lent, give us the humility to see where we have been foolish in our refusal to see the signs of your presence. Give us wisdom, that we might prepare a place in our hearts for you. Merciful God,

**C: O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and listen to me.**

L: Heal the hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits of all who suffer from any affliction. We pray for healing of our members of this congregation, for our friends in our community, and our loved ones we name in our hearts. Merciful God,

**C: O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and listen to me.**

L: Let all people in every corner of the earth recognize our interdependence, that all might work toward equity and justice for our collective survival. Merciful God,

**C: O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and listen to me.**

L: We remember with gratitude all the saints who lived and died in you. May we one day follow them with thanksgiving into your eternal banquet. Merciful God,

**C: O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and listen to me.**

L: We lift these prayers to you, Gracious God, in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, our savior. **Amen.**

Please stand as you are able

***APOSTLES' CREED (ELW pg. 217)**

**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 power of 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**

***PEACE**

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

Please be seated

OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN: *Jesus, the Very Thought of You*

(ELW 754)

- 1 Jesus, the very thought of you
fills us with sweet delight;
but sweeter far your face to view
and rest within your light.

- 2 No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
nor can the mind recall
a sweeter sound than your blest name,
O Savior of us all!

- 3 O Hope of ev'ry contrite soul,
O joy of all the meek,
how kind you are to those who fall!
How good to those who seek!

- 4 O Jesus, be our joy today;
help us to prize your love;
grant us at last to hear you say:
"Come, share my home above."

Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091-1153; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Let us pray.

C: God you have showered us with abundance. Keep us ever mindful of the needs of others, that we might be inspired to share what we have. We offer now these gifts to your good work in the world. Accept them for the sake of Jesus Christ, our savior. Amen.

Please stand as you are able

MEAL

GOD FEEDS US WITH THE PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING** ELW pg. 172

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift our hearts to the Lord

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise!

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION** *sung*

The night of His betrayal, our Lord took bread.
He broke it and he blessed it, and then he said,
“My body given for you is what this means,
remember now my children what you have seen.”

And then He took the chalice, and raised it high.
“My body broken for you, a full supply...
a covenant, a promise, a cleansing stream.
Remember now, my children, what you have seen.”

We share this food together, remembering Christ;
we share a common treasure and know the price
we share it without measure, a gift of love;
we share our life forever, with God above.

*** OUR LORD’S PRAYER** *sung*

(CLH 632)

Our Father which 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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom - and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

COMMUNION SONG** ELW pg. 174 ***Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sing of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Jesus comes to us where we are, and calls us into the wedding banquet that has no end.
Come and share in the feast of rich foods, and be satisfied, for all is made ready.

Please be seated

COMMUNION

The acolytes, ushers, organist and those assisting with communion should come forward at this time and receive communion. Following the assistants, we will celebrate Holy Communion around the altar. The ushers will direct you.

COMMUNION HYMN

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

(ELW 708)

Refrain

Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.

- 1 Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet,
master who acts as a slave to them. *Refrain*

- 2 Neighbors are wealthy and poor,
varied in color and race,
neighbors are near us and far away. *Refrain*

- 3 These are the ones we will serve,
these are the ones we will love;
all these are neighbors to us and you. *Refrain*

- 4 Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet:
this is the way we will live with you. *Refrain*

Text: Tom Colvin, 1925-2000, alt.

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COMMUNION HYMN

Take, Oh Take Me As I Am

(ELW 814)

Take, oh, take me as I am;
summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart
and live in me. **(x3)**

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

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Please stand as you are able

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: Compassionate God,

C: You have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage; may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

***BLESSING**

God, the giver of love,

✝ Christ, the resurrection and the life,

and the Holy Spirit of rebirth

bless you in this Lenten journey.

Three-fold Amen

SENDING SONG: *Rejoice, Rejoice Believers

(ELW 244)

- 1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing,
and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising
and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
at midnight comes the cry.
- 2 The watchers on the mountain
proclaim the bridegroom near;
go forth as he approaches
with alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting;
the gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory;
the bridegroom is at hand.
- 3 The saints, who here in patience
their cross and suff'rings bore,
shall live and reign forever
when sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory

the Lamb they shall behold;
in triumph cast before him
their diadems of gold.

- 4 Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for,
o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted,
we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption
that sets your people free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907

***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve in love. **Thanks be to God.**

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This Week at Esther

Sunday, March 19 – Fourth Sunday of Lent

8:30 am - WELCA
9:00 am – First Communion Class
9:00 am – Sunday School
9:15 am – Birthday Fellowship
10:00 am - Worship w/Communion
Coffee Fellowship following worship
2:00 pm - Service at St. Williams led by Pastor Brown

Wednesday, March 22

6:00 pm – Soup and Sandwich Supper
7:00 pm – Holden Evening Prayer w/skit

Sunday, March 26 – Fifth Sunday of Lent

9:00 am – Sunday School
9:00 am – First Communion Class
10:00 am – Worship
Coffee Fellowship following worship
2:00 pm - Service at St. Williams led by Pastor Bovendam

News and Notes

First Communion Classes will be held Sundays at 9 am in the sanctuary on March 19, March 26, and April 2 after worship. We are inviting 5th Graders and their parents and anyone who would like to learn more to attend. All are welcome!

Lenten Soup and Sandwich sign-up sheets are on the narthex table. Suppers are each Wednesday in March at 6 pm, followed by Holden Evening Prayer worship at 7 pm. Thank you to Christy Hart for volunteering to coordinate these meals and times of fellowship.

Easter Flower order forms are on the narthex table and on our website. Please return the form and payment to the envelope on the narthex table **by March 26**.

Caring Ministry of Esther is a team whose goal is to provide care to our congregation and community in times of need, and acknowledge and celebrate times of joy. We all have trying or transitional times throughout our lives, such as a health crisis, grief due to loss of a loved one, times of transition such as loss of a job or separation from a loved one which may result in loneliness or depression. The Caring Ministry Team is looking for people that are willing to share in praying for church and community members in need of prayer, visiting and providing Communion to those who are homebound, sitting with people during tough times, making phone calls to check in on people, providing meals as needed, and providing for other needs that may arise depending on the requests for help. ***It takes the whole church to care for the whole church - and our community.*** If you know of someone in need of help, or if you would like to be on the list to be notified when the Caring Ministry is asked to help, please contact caringministry@estherlutheran.net or speak to Pastor Scott or Luella Thom. The next meeting will be on Sunday, April 16 at 8:30 am. All are welcome to attend!

Church Wish List: 8 1/2" paper plates, 10" paper plates, 9 oz cups, toilet paper, Kleenex, bathroom cleaner, toilet bowl cleaner, Pine-Sol, 16"x25"x1" furnace filters, 8 1/2" x 11" copy paper, 8 1/2" x 14" copy paper, postage stamps.

Luther Crest Bible Camp is still taking registrations for Summer Camp. Go to luthercrest.org to register your youth.

The Esther Camp and Spiritual Growth Fund has been established to help our families pay for camp for our youth. Scholarship applications can be found on our website under the "Faith Formation" tab, as well as on the narthex table.

In Our Prayers

Joan Arvidson
Kristy Fyhrie
Mike Heiser
Bill Wagner
Harvey Bendewald – father of Lana Doll
Marsha Clow – sister of Linda Arvidson
Wes Hoyhtya – friend of the Thoms
Steve Kuenzel – brother of Sue Ellwanger
Bruce Miller - father of Karin Wagner
Jason Mueller – nephew of the Andersons
Cindy Rachuy - sister of Dawn Kreidler
Family and Friends of Audrey Arvidson, Caleb Rokes, Wilbur Burquest, James Velde and Jim Hosmer

Serving in March

Pastor: Scott Hoecker

Organists: Marcia Guenther, Brad Lambrecht

Altar Care: Deb Koep

Communion Assistants: Steph Stueve, Amy Stanley

Lay Reader: Megan Townsend, Nancy Bunde

Ushers: Steve Dobratz

Acolyte: March 5 – Sydney Lorine

March 12 - Laney Grinager

March 19 – Colby Schlosser

March 26 – NEED VOLUNTEER

Birthday Card Sender: Donna Pederson

Tech Team: Jewel Townsend

Birthday Fellowship Families (March 19): Judy Thoennes, Jeremy Arvidson & Melissa Schlosser, Bea Skoglund, Justin & Jaci Schlosser

“Knowing Christ-Making Christ Known through Faith, Hope and Love”

Pastor Scott Hoecker - Cell: (218) 355-0187 Email: prscott@estherlutheran.net

11019 625th Ave, Parkers Prairie, MN 56361 - Telephone: 218-338-2171

Website: www.estherlutheran.com Email: secretary@estherlutheran.net

Caring Ministry Email: caringministry@estherlutheran.net