

Third Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025

10:15 am

Prelude

Announcements

Introduction

The warnings are plentiful and blunt on the third Sunday in Lent. Cut it out or get cut down! The warnings are accompanied by God's invitation to attentiveness: "Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live." The landowner's ultimatum is forestalled by the gardener's readiness to till the ground one more year. That is good news for all of us. Thanks be to God!

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate One, **you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In ✙ Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn: ELW #445

"Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters"

- 1. Wash, O God, our sons and daughters, where your cleansing waters flow. Number them among your people; bless as Christ blessed long ago. Weave them garments bright and sparkling; compass them with love and light. Fill, anoint them; send your Spirit, holy dove and heart's delight.**
- 2. We who bring them long for nurture; by your milk my we be fed. Let us join your feast, partaking cup of blessing, living bread. God, renew us, guide our footsteps; free from sin and all its snares, one with Christ in living, dying, by your Spirit, children, heirs.**
- 3. Oh, how deep your holy wisdom! Unimagined, all your ways! To your name be glory, honor! With our lives we worship, praise! We your people**

stand before you, water washed and Spirit born. By your grace, our lives we offer. Recreate us; God, transform!

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Prayer of the Day

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.

Readings and Psalm

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-9

To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to God will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

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.

Psalm: Psalm 63:1-8

¹ O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

² **Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place,
that I might behold your power and your glory.**

³ For your steadfast love is better than life itself;
my lips shall give you praise.

⁴ **So will I bless you as long as I live
and lift up my hands in your name.**

⁵ My spirit is content, as with the richest of foods,
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

⁶ **when I remember you upon my bed,
and meditate on you in the night watches.**

⁷ For you have been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

⁸ **My whole being clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.**

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Paul uses images from Hebrew Scriptures and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents.

¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Gospel Acclamation

Jesus began to proclaim, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. (*Matt. 4:17*)

The Gospel according to the book of Luke starting with the 13th Chapter. **Glory to you O Lord.**

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9

Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.

¹At 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?"³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or 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? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

⁶Then 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. ⁷So 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?' ⁸He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day: ELW #331 "As the Deer Runs to the River"

- 1. As the deer runs to the river, parched and weary from the chase, we have come from hurt and hurry, thirsting for your healing grace.**

Refrain: Jesus, source of living water, may we drink of you and live.

- 2. When your Israel crossed the desert where no stream or spring was seen, Moses struck the rock, and water flowed for them, refreshing, clean. Refrain.**
- 3. "Come and drink," Isaiah summoned, "all who for God's mercy plead! God's forgiveness, like a fountain, flows to satisfy your need." Refrain**
- 4. Christ, we come from desert places, deepest thirst unsatisfied. Lead us to the waters flowing from the cross on which you died. Refrain.**

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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.**

Peace

Offering

Offering Hymn: ELW #186 "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

**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.**

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Offering Prayer

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.

Prayers of Intercession

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. Grant humility and wisdom to bishops, pastors, deacons, elders, councils, and congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly. Teach your people the goodness of your generosity, that in sharing what we have been given, all life may flourish on the planet that is our shared home. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for those in need, called to receive your compassion (*especially*). Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict (*especially*). Aid communities in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended (*especially*). May their witness inspire our own. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Preface

Thanksgiving at the Table

Lord's Prayer

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.**

Invitation to Communion

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

Distribution 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 sour to worlds unknown, see thee on thy judgment throne, Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.

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Post Communion Blessing

Prayer after Communion

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.

Blessing

God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, ✝ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Sending 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.

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

Thanks be to God!

Postlude



Thank You Pastor Paul Meierding, for leading worship today.

- ✚ **Easter Worship April 20, 2025:** Pancake Breakfast at 8:30, Worship at 10:15 am.
- ✚ As part of the WELCOME Team, Calvary invites you to "A Fiesta of Joy" on April 3, 2025, 5pm - 8pm at Christ the King church in Mankato. This event features authentic south of the border food from celebrity chef Jordan Mendez of Mankato's Mazatlan restaurant, a silent auction, where you have the opportunity to bid on baskets/items donated by our church & others, all the while relaxing to sounds of Latino music. Please consider attending & supporting this event. This event helps WELCOME support families seeking asylum here in the United States. Our celebrity chef needs a head count for this event; please RSVP to Christ the King, Calvary or Erica Kittelson by March 18th. See the invitation hanging up at the church, on our Facebook page or website.
- ✚ **Prayers:** Please continue to keep our members and loved ones in your prayers, including Arlen, Lan-Shiang, Ken, Deb, Ruth, Barry, Monica, Jeff, Jenny, Dennis, Caroline, Paul, Jeannie, Gregg Nelson the Schwantes family, and the Strand family.

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