

Second Sunday in Lent

March 1st, 2026



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
SMITHVILLE, TEXAS

Divine Service with Holy Communion
10 AM

Bible Class and Sunday School
8:45 AM



Grace Lutheran Church – Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

308 Byrne St. Smithville, TX 78957

512-237-2108 glcs.org

Pastor David Woelmer

**GRACE LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
SMITHVILLE, TX

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church! We give thanks that our gracious Lord Jesus Christ has gathered us together here for his Divine Service. Today again our Lord comes to serve us and lavish us with his gifts of life, forgiveness, and salvation. Rejoicing in those wonderful gifts, we sing with David in Psalm 84: “How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! A day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.”

Holy Communion is a sacred gift from Christ to His Church. In this meal, He gives His true body and blood under bread and wine into our mouths in order to forgive our sins and strengthen our union with Him and with one another (Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:16-17). Christians receive this Sacrament trusting Jesus’ own words, repenting of all their sin, and confessing the faith taught in Holy Scripture together in unity (Matt. 5:23-24; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:17-26). For this reason, and because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm (1 Cor. 11:27-34), we ask that those who have not yet been instructed and those who are not members of a congregation in fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to speak with the pastor before receiving Holy Communion.

In our readings today: *The Lord called Abram (Abraham) to leave his home and go to a land that God would show him. He also promised to make of Abram “a great nation,” to bless him and make his name great as a blessing to “all the families of the earth” (Gen. 12:2–3). “Abram went, as the LORD had told him” (Gen. 12:4), and in Canaan “he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD” (Gen. 12:8). He “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” (Rom. 4:3). Here the grace of God is manifested, that He “justifies the ungodly” (Rom. 4:5), not by works of the Law, but through faith in His promises. He removes all of our sins and lawless deeds through Jesus Christ, the offspring of Abraham in whom all the Lord’s promises are realized. This forgiveness of sins is the Word of the Gospel, the voice of the Holy Spirit, which “gives life to the dead” (Rom. 4:17). It opens the eyes of faith to behold Christ Jesus, the Son of Man lifted up on the cross, “that whoever believes in him may have eternal life” (John 3:14–15).*

A Prayer Before Worship: *O Lord, our creator, redeemer, and comforter, as we come together to worship You in spirit and in truth, we humbly pray that You would open our hearts to the preaching of Your Word so that we may repent of our sins, believe in Jesus Christ as our only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear us for His sake. Amen.*

Exchange of Peace: By the second century, it was common for Christians to follow St. Paul’s encouragement to “greet one another with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12) during the Church’s worship. Though the place in the worship service and the manner of this greeting have changed throughout the Church’s history, it has always served as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matthew 5:22-24; Ephesians 4:2-3). It’s more than a simple “holy howdy” or a warm greeting to one another. Instead, it’s an extension of the reconciliation and forgiveness that Jesus has accomplished for us. We greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, “Peace be with you.”

Please stand and remain standing

ABSOLUTION: *(God speaks His words of forgiveness to us through His servant, the pastor).*

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive You all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT: *(We enter God's house with Psalms of praise).*

Psalm 105:4-7; antiphon: v. 8

*He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.*

Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually!

Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

O offspring of Abraham, his servant,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.

*He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations.*

KYRIE: *(From the Greek, "Kyrie eleison," meaning "Lord, have mercy").*

LSB 204



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

SALUTATION: *(The pastor and congregation greet each other in the Lord's presence).*

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

COLLECT OF THE DAY: *(These prayers have been used for over 1,500 years. They "collect" the Gospel theme for the day).*

P Let us pray.

O God, You see that of ourselves we have no strength. By Your mighty power defend us from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 12:1-9

¹The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

⁴So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. ⁸From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. ⁹And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 121; antiphon: v. 8

⁸*The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.*

¹I lift up my eyes to the hills.

From where does my help come?

²My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

³He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.

⁴Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

⁵The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade on your right hand.

⁶The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

⁷The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.

⁸*The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.*

EPISTLE READING

Romans 4:1–8, 13–17

¹What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, ⁶just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

⁷"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;

⁸"blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." . . .

¹³For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

¹⁶That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

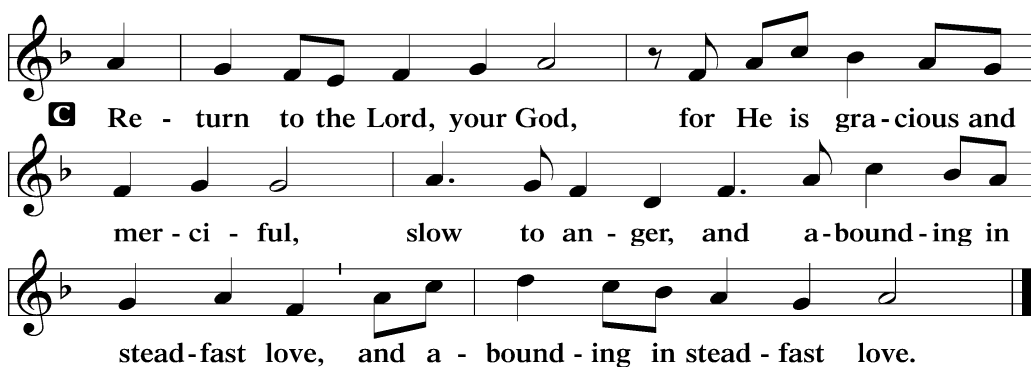
P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

VERSE

Joel 2:13



C 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

John 3:1-17

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

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” ³Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

⁹Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And 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.

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.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

NICENE CREED (*From the Latin, “Credo,” meaning “I believe.” We say back to God what He says to us.*)

C 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.



1 Lord, Thee I love with all my heart; I pray Thee, ne'er from
 2 Yea, Lord, 'twas Thy rich boun-ty gave My bod - y, soul, and
 3 Lord, let at last Thine an - gels come, To A - br'ham's bos - om



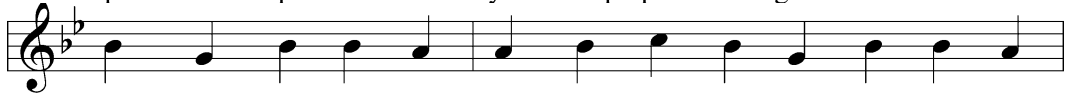
me de - part, With ten - der mer - cy cheer - me. Earth
 all I have In this poor life of la - bor. Lord,
 bear me home, That I may die un - fear - ing; And



has no plea - sure I would share. Yea, heav'n it - self were
 grant that I in ev - 'ry place May glo - ri - fy Thy
 in its nar - row cham - ber keep My bod - y safe in



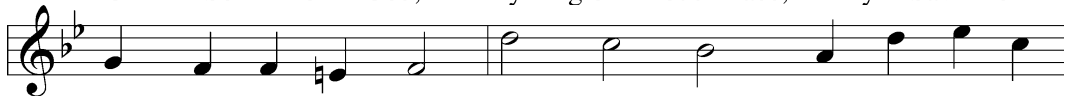
void and bare If Thou, Lord, wert not near me. And should my
 lav - ish grace And help and serve my neigh - bor. Let no false
 peace-ful sleep Un - til Thy re - ap - pear - ing. And then from



heart for sor - row break, My trust in Thee can noth - ing shake.
 doc - trine me be - guile; Let Sa - tan not my soul de - file.
 death a - wak - en me, That these mine eyes with joy may see,



Thou art the por - tion I have sought; Thy pre - cious
 Give strength and pa - tience un - to me To bear my
 O Son of God, Thy glo - rious face, My Sav - ior



blood my soul has bought. Lord Je - sus Christ, my God and
 cross and fol - low Thee. Lord Je - sus Christ, my God and
 and my fount of grace. Lord Je - sus Christ, my prayer at -



Lord, my God and Lord, For - sake me not! I trust Thy Word.
 Lord, my God and Lord, In death Thy com - fort still af - ford.
 tend, my prayer at - tend, And I will praise Thee with - out end.

SERMON

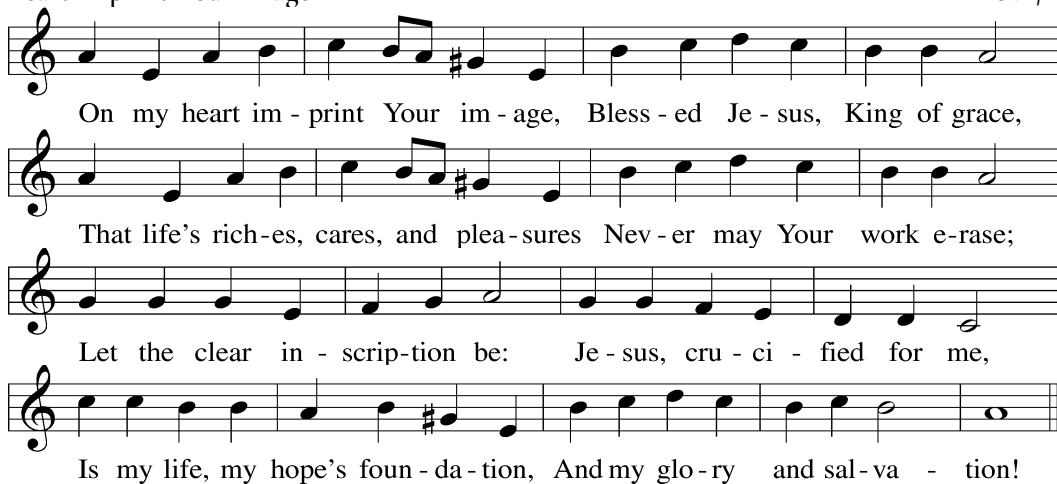
(Based on one of the Scripture readings, the pastor proclaims God's Word of Law and Gospel for our lives today).

Stand

OFFERTORY *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness with sacrifices of praise).*

On My Heart Imprint Your Image

LSB 422



On my heart im - print Your im - age, Bless - ed Je - sus, King of grace,
That life's rich - es, cares, and plea - sures Nev - er may Your work e - rase;
Let the clear in - scrip - tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me,
Is my life, my hope's foun - da - tion, And my glo - ry and sal - va - tion!

Sit

OFFERING: *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness by bringing Him the first fruits of what He has given).*

Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH: *(The congregation prays for the Church and for all people throughout the world).*

- P** Lord, in Your mercy,
C hear our prayer.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE AND PROPER PREFACE: *(We praise and thank God for what He does for us in the Lord's Supper).* LSB 208

- P** The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.
P Lift up your hearts.
C We lift them to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.
P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;
Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.
Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho-san - na to the Lord;
Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

- P** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. At Your command, Abraham prepared to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on the mountain; yet, in mercy You provided a ram as a substitute. We give You thanks that on Calvary You spared not Your only Son but sent Him to offer His life as a ransom for many. As we eat and drink His body and blood, grant us, like Abraham our father, to trust in Your promise now fulfilled in Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

LORD'S PRAYER: (We pray the words that Jesus gave us to pray, trusting that our Father will hear and answer us).LSB 209

- P** Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:
C 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.

WORDS OF OUR LORD (Jesus tells us that He gives us His body and blood under the bread and the wine). LSB 209

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI: (Latin for "The peace of the Lord." The body and blood of Jesus gives us peace).

LSB 209

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

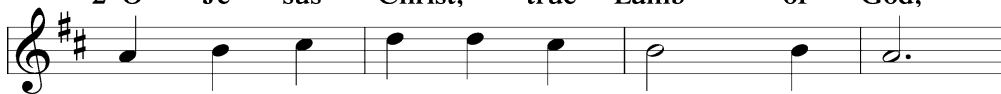
C Amen.

AGNUS DEI: (Latin for "Lamb of God." We cry out to Christ our Lamb who was sacrificed for our sins).

LSB 210



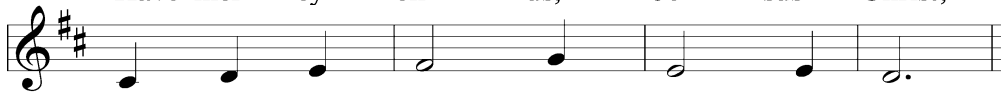
C 1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,



You take the sin of the world a - way;
You take the sin of the world a - way;



O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,



Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Sit

Silent Prayer before Communing:

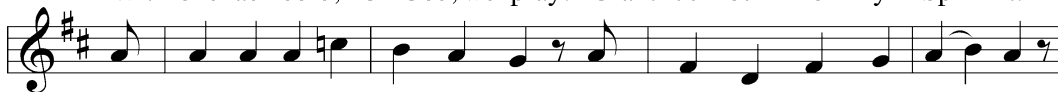
Dear Savior, at your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul at the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

All Who Believe and Are Baptized

LSB 601



1 All who be - lieve and are bap - tized Shall see the Lord's sal - va - tion;
2 With one ac - cord, O God, we pray: Grant us Your Ho - ly Spir - it.



Bap - tized in - to the death of Christ, They are a new cre - a - tion.
Help us in our in - fir - mi - ty Through Je - sus' blood and mer - it.



Through Christ's re - demp - tion they shall stand A - mong the glo - rious,
Grant us to grow in grace each day That by this sac - ra -



heav'n - ly band Of ev - 'ry tribe and na - tion.
ment we may E - ter - nal life in - her - it.



1 All de - pends on our pos - sess - ing God's a - bun - dant
 2 He who to this day has fed me And to man - y
 3 Man - y spend their lives in fret - ting O - ver tri - fles
 4 When with sor - row I am strick - en, Hope a - new my



grace and bless - ing, Though all earth - ly wealth de - part.
 joys has led me Is and ev - er shall be mine.
 and in get - ting Things that have no sol - id ground.
 heart will quick - en; All my long - ing shall be stilled.



They who trust with faith un - shak - en By their God are
 He who ev - er gent - ly schools me, He who dai - ly
 I shall strive to win a trea - sure That will bring me
 To His lov - ing - kind - ness ten - der Soul and bod - y



not for - sak - en And will keep a daunt - less heart.
 guides and rules me Will re - main my help di - vine.
 last - ing plea - sure And that now is sel - dom found.
 I sur - ren - der, For on God a - lone I build.

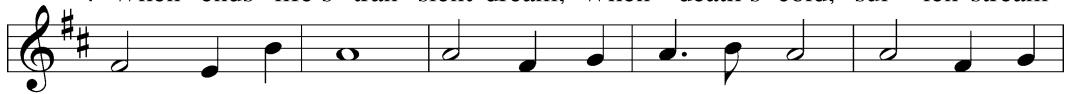
5 Well He knows what best to grant me;
 All the longing hopes that haunt me,
 Joy and sorrow, have their day.
 I shall doubt His wisdom never;
 As God wills, so be it ever;
 I commit to Him my way.

6 If my days on earth He lengthen,
 God my weary soul will strengthen;
 All my trust in Him I place.
 Earthly wealth is not abiding,
 Like a stream away is gliding;
 Safe I anchor in His grace.

My Faith Looks Up to Thee



1 My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
 2 May Thy rich grace im - part Strength to my faint - ing heart;
 3 While life's dark maze I tread And griefs a - round me spread,
 4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, When death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine. Now hear me while I pray; Take all my
 My zeal in - spire! As Thou hast died for me, Oh, may my
 Be Thou my guide; Bid dark - ness turn to day, Wipe sor - row's
 Shall o'er me roll, Blest Sav - ior, then, in love, Fear and dis -



guilt a - way; O let me from this day Be whol - ly Thine!
 love to Thee Pure, warm, and change-less be, A liv - ing fire!
 tears a - way, Nor let me ev - er stray From Thee a - side.
 trust re-move; O bear me safe a - bove, A ran-somed soul!

Silent Prayer after Communing:

Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of my sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

C Amen.

Stand

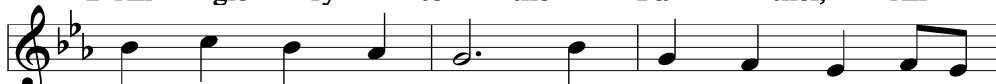
POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE: *(Having received Christ in the Sacrament, we give thanks and go forth in peace).*

Nunc Dimittis

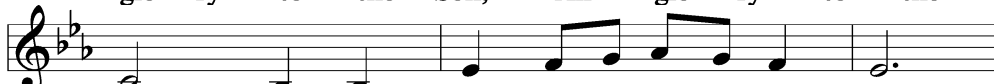
Luke 2:29-32



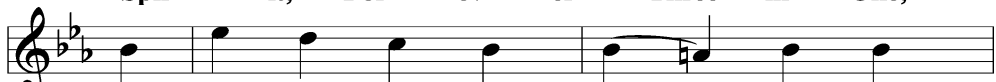
C 1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
 2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All



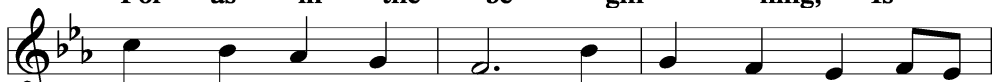
part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the
 glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the



glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
 Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;



A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -
 For as in the be - gin - ning, Is



to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
 now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -



peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
 sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT: (*We thank God for what He has done and ask that it would show forth in our lives.*)

P Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION: (*The Divine Service ends just as it began. We go forth with God's name upon us.*)

LSB 212

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Sit

CLOSING HYMN:

A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

LSB 438



1 A Lamb goes un - com - plain - ing forth, The
2 This Lamb is Christ, the soul's great friend, The
3 "Yes, Fa - ther, yes, most will - ing - ly I'll
4 Lord, when Your glo - ry I shall see And



guilt of sin - ners bear - ing And, lad - en with the
Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, Whom God the Fa - ther
bear what You com - mand Me. My will con - forms to
taste Your king - dom's plea - sure, Your blood my roy - al



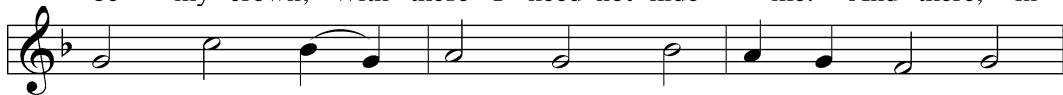
sins of earth, None else the bur - den shar - ing; Goes
chose to send To gain for us His fa - vor. "Go
Your de - cree, I'll do what You have asked Me." O
robe shall be, My joy be - yond all mea - sure! When



pa - tient on, grows weak and faint, To slaugh - ter led with -
forth, My Son," the Fa - ther said, "And free My chil - dren
won - drous Love, what have You done! The Fa - ther of - fers
I ap - pear be - fore Your throne, Your righ - teous - ness shall



out com-plaint, That spot-less life to of - fer, He bears the
from their dread Of guilt and con-dem - na - tion. The wrath and
up His Son, De - sir - ing our sal - va - tion. O Love, how
be my crown; With these I need not hide me. And there, in



stripes, the wounds, the lies, The mock - er - y, and
stripes are hard to bear, But by Your pas - sion
strong You are to save! You lay the One in -
gar - ments rich - ly wrought, As Your own bride shall



yet re - plies, "All this I glad - ly suf - fer."
they will share The fruit of Your sal - va - tion."
to the grave Who built the earth's foun - da - tion.
we be brought To stand in joy be - side You.

Silent Prayer After Worship

Almighty and merciful God, we have again worshiped in Your presence and received both forgiveness for our many sins and the assurance of Your love in Jesus Christ. We thank You for this undeserved grace and ask You to keep us in faith until we inherit eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

Hymn of the Month: “A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth” (LSB 438)

Text Background

It is fitting that we reflect on this hymn during the season of Lent. This hymn is appointed for the Sunday of the Passion (also observed on Palm Sunday) and has historically been designated for Good Friday. In the first three stanzas, Paul Gerhardt (1607-76) beautifully contemplates Christ as our Suffering Savior by leading us through a dialogue between the Father and the Son. A similar dialogue also appears in the hymn, “*Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice*” (LSB 556, stanza 5).

Stanza 1

If you think back to a time that someone slandered you, hurt your reputation, or spoke falsely about you, you may remember how painful such betrayal felt, and how eager you were to defend yourself. As Gerhardt retells the Passion of Christ, who obediently “goes patient on” to the cross, he shows us the betrayal and suffering our Lord endured. By willingly entering into suffering and enduring unimaginable cruelty, Christ fulfills the Servant’s path foretold by Isaiah. He is struck and mocked, yet He does not retaliate or defend himself. He stands silent before His accusers (Isaiah 50:6; 53:7) and is led to slaughter for our sake “without complaint.” What a sacrifice! This “spotless” Lamb bears not His own guilt but ours. In doing so, He becomes the atoning sacrifice (1 John 2:2) who “gladly” carries our sins in His body on the tree (1 Peter 2:22-24).

Stanza 2

“Go forth, My Son’ the Father said.” The Son is the Father’s chosen gift, sent as the Lamb of God (John 1:25) so that the world might not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). He bears hard things: not only the “stripes,” but also the “wrath” of God. He takes our dread, guilt, and condemnation and frees us by his precious blood (1 Peter 1:19-20; Hebrews 2:14-15). He becomes the atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 John 4:9-10). Then, as Gerhardt emphasizes, the Father declares something remarkable: through Christ’s passion, we share in the fruit of His salvation. We are made partakers of the Father’s divine love. We are reunited and reconciled, redeemed and restored to our heavenly Father whose “favor” now rests upon us.

Stanza 3

The Son answers the Father with perfect obedience: “I delight to do Your will” (Ps. 40:8; Heb. 10:7). In the language of the hymn: “I will bear what you command me ... I will conform my life, actions, and will to your decree ... I will do what you have asked.” O wondrous Love! The Father does not spare His own Son but gives Him up for us all (Romans 8:32). The Creator through whom all things were made (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16) – the Author of life – humbles Himself even to death and burial. The One who laid the earth’s foundation is laid in the grave for our salvation.

Stanza 4

Here we see the “fruit” of Christ’s salvation: we are clothed not in our works, but in His righteousness. The “garments of salvation” (Isaiah 61:10) are the bridal garments given to the Church, whom Christ “loved and gave Himself up for” (Ephesians 5:25), betrothing her as a pure bride (2 Corinthians 11:2). He is the Bridegroom whose presence turns sorrow into joy (Mark 2:19). At the last, the marriage feast of the Lamb will come, and the Bride will stand arrayed in His righteousness (Revelation 19:7-8; 21:2). The Lamb who suffered “once for all” (1 Peter 3:18) now prepares His people to stand in eternal joy beside Him.