



*A man had a fig tree planted in  
his vineyard; and he came  
looking for fruit on it ...*

LUKE 13:6, NRSV



## First Lutheran Church

2808 South Avenue West

Third Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025

# First Lutheran Church

Missoula, MT

Third Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025

Celebrating 125 years of God's Grace

"His Story is our Future!"

## As We Gather

A main emphasis of our Lenten discipline is our struggle against temptations to sin and toward true repentance that leads to living faithful Christian lives. As our physical well-being depends in part on healthy choices of diet, in today's Readings God uses the metaphor of eating and drinking to warn and encourage His people to avoid the temptations of the world and our own sin that leads us away from God and to rely constantly on the forgiveness and faith that God provides to enable us to lead godly lives.

## Prelude

### Welcome

## Opening Hymn LSB 824

## May God Bestow on Us His Grace



1 May God be - stow on us His grace, With bless - ings rich pro -

2 Thine o - ver all shall be the praise And thanks of ev - 'ry

△ 3 O let the peo - ple praise Thy worth, In all good works in -



vide us; And may the bright - ness of His face

na - tion; And all the world with joy shall raise

creas - ing; The land shall plen - teous fruit bring forth,



To life e - ter - nal guide us, That we His sav - ing

The voice of ex - ul - ta - tion. For Thou shalt judge the

Thy Word is rich in bless - ing. May God the Fa - ther,



health may know, His gra - cious will and plea - sure,

earth, O Lord, Nor suf - fer sin to flour - ish;

God the Son, And God the Spir - it bless us!



And al - so to the na - tions show Christ's rich - es with - out

Thy peo - ple's pas - ture is Thy Word Their souls to feed and

Let all the world praise Him a - lone, Let sol - emn awe pos -



mea - sure And un - to God con - vert them.  
nour - ish, In righ - teous paths to keep them.  
sess us. Now let our hearts say, "A - men!"

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## Invocation

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

## Opening Sentences

*Psalm 85:4, 7*

- P** Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
- C** and put away Your indignation toward us!
- P** Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,
- C** and grant us Your salvation.

## Confession and Absolution

*1 Corinthians 10:13*

- P** God has made us His people by our Baptism into Christ. He graciously provides us with all we need to live in true faith, confidence, and hope. Let us present ourselves before Him, confessing our sins and need for His mercy, and receive His promised help.
- C** **Almighty God, our Father in heaven, we come to You seeking Your forgiveness and the strengthening of our faith that we may live and serve You faithfully. We confess all our sins against You and against those whom we have hurt or failed to help. Even our very thoughts and desires have been soiled with sin. In true sorrow, we ask for Your grace, Your forgiveness, and that You strengthen our faith, all for the sake and in the praise of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**
- P** "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful."

Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, announce the grace of God to 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.

## Introit

**P** For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
**C** **but the way of the wicked will perish.**

**P** For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;  
**C** **evil may not dwell with you.**

**P** The boastful shall not stand before your eyes;  
**C** **you hate all evildoers.**

**P** You destroy those who speak lies;  
**C** **the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.**

**P** But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house.  
**C** **I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you.**

**P** Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies;  
**C** **make your way straight before me.**

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

**P** For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
**C** **but the way of the wicked will perish.**

## Salutation

**P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** **And also with you.**

## Collect

**P** O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**C** **Amen.**

## Psalm

Psalm 85; antiphon: v. 8

LORD, you were favorable to your land;  
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.  
You forgave the iniquity of your people;  
you covered all their sin.  
You withdrew all your wrath;  
you turned from your hot anger.

Restore us again, O God of our salvation,  
and put away your indignation toward us!  
Will you be angry with us forever?  
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?  
Will you not revive us again,  
that your people may rejoice in you?  
Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,  
and grant us your salvation.

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,  
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;  
but let them not turn back to folly.  
Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,  
that glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;  
righteousness and peace kiss each other.  
Faithfulness springs up from the ground,  
and righteousness looks down from the sky.  
Yes, the LORD will give what is good,  
and our land will yield its increase.  
Righteousness will go before him  
and make his footsteps a way.

## **Praise Team** (11am only)

## **Man of Sorrows**

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## **Old Testament Reading**

## **Ezekiel 33:7-20**

“So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel.  
Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from  
me. If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not  
speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in  
his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked  
to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in  
his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

“And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said: ‘Surely  
our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away because of  
them. How then can we live?’ Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I  
have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his  
way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O  
house of Israel?

“And you, son of man, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous  
shall not deliver him when he transgresses, and as for the wickedness of the  
wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his wickedness, and the  
righteous shall not be able to live by his righteousness when he sins. Though I  
say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness  
and does injustice, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in his  
injustice that he has done he shall die. Again, though I say to the wicked,

'You shall surely die,' yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live.

"Yet your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not just,' when it is their own way that is not just. When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it. And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by them. Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways."

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Epistle

## 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Verse

*2 Peter 3:9b, c*

**P** The Lord is patient toward you,

**C** not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

## Holy Gospel

Luke 13:1-9

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the thirteenth chapter.

**G** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

There were some present at that very time who told [Jesus] about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**G** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## Apostles' Creed

**G** **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life  $\dagger$  everlasting. Amen.**

# Sermon Hymn LSB 511

# Herald, Sound the Note of Judgment



1 Her - ald, sound the note of judg - ment, Warn - ing  
 2 Her - ald, sound the note of glad - ness; Tell the  
 3 Her - ald, sound the note of par - don— Those re -  
 4 Her - ald, sound the note of tri - umph; Christ has



us of right and wrong, Turn - ing us from sin and  
 news that Christ is here; Make a path - way through the  
 pent - ing are for - giv'n; God re - ceives His way - ward  
 come to share our life, Bring - ing God's own love and



sad - ness Till once more we sing the song.  
 des - ert For the one who brings God near.  
 chil - dren, And to them new life is giv'n.  
 pow - er, Grant - ing vic - t'ry in our strife.

*Refrain*



Sound the trum-pet! Tell the mes-sage: Christ, the Sav-ior king, is come!

Text: Moir A. J. Waters, 1906-80

Tune: David McCarthy, 1931

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# Sermon

Rev. David Johnson

✠ ✠ ✠ **Our offerings are received at the Altar** ✠ ✠ ✠

# Offering Hymn LSB 894

# For the Fruits of His Creation



1 For the fruits of His cre - a - tion, Thanks be to God.  
 2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.  
 3 For the har-vests of the Spir - it, Thanks be to God.



For His gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, Thanks be to God. For the  
 In the help we give our neigh-bor, God's will is done. In our  
 For the good we all in - her - it, Thanks be to God. For the





plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, Si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,  
world - wide task of car - ing For the hun - gry and de - spair - ing,  
won - ders that as - tound us, For the truths that still con - found us,



Fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, Thanks be to God.  
In the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will is done.  
Most of all, that love has found us, Thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000

Tune: Welsh, 18th cent.

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## Prayer of the Church

- P** Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.
- P** For the faithful proclamation of Christ's saving name, that God's people be strengthened in the true faith and His kingdom extended, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the Holy Christian Church throughout the world and for all who confess the name of Christ, that God guard and defend us from the temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the government and all who have been set into positions of leadership, that they use the authority entrusted to them honorably and for the good of all people, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For those who are sick, [*especially . . . and*], all who are injured or suffer in body or soul, that God grant healing to their bodies and strength to bear their infirmities with patience and trust, let us pray to the Lord.
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

**P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**G** **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.

## Benedicamus

**P** Bless we the Lord.

**G** Thanks be to God.

## Benediction

**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.

**G** Amen.

## Closing Hymn LSB 918

## Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer



1 Guide me, O Thou great Re - deem - er, Pil - grim through this  
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain Whence the heal - ing  
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, Bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but Thou art might - y;  
stream doth flow; Let the fi - ery, cloud - y pil - lar  
fears sub - side; Death of death and hell's de - struc - tion,



Hold me with Thy pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en,  
Lead me all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer,  
Land me safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs of prais - es,



bread of heav - en, Feed me till I want no  
strong de - liv - 'rer, Be Thou still my strength and  
songs of prais - es I will ev - er give to



more; Feed me till I want no more.  
shield; Be Thou still my strength and shield.  
Thee; I will ev - er give to Thee.

Text: William Williams, 1717–91, abr.; (st. 1): tr. Peter Williams, 1722–96, alt.; (sts. 2–3): tr. William Williams, 1717–91  
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