

“Even now,” declares the LORD,  
“return to me with all your heart.”  
Joel 2:12, NIV

**March 18, 2026**  
**Midweek Lent 5**

**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PRAYER**  
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Our Mission Statement  
Lutheran Church of Prayer walks with others and teaches the  
Word of God through relationships and personal example.

**Welcome Friends & Guests!**

We pray you will be blessed by our worship today. A welcome packet can be found at the Welcome Center Desk in our lobby. Please pick one up. Each family is asked to fill out an attendance card. Place the completed card in the offering plate. If you have a prayer request to be included in the service, please write your requests on the blue Prayer Requests sheet found in the pew rack and hand it directly to an Usher before worship begins.

**A Time for Quiet Meditation**

**As you enter the sanctuary for worship you are encouraged to use this time for prayer and meditation to prepare your hearts to worship our Lord and to look over the worship bulletin. Visiting with friends can be done in the narthex area so others will not be disturbed. Thank you.**

**Offering**

The offering is an act of worship for members and friends of Lutheran Church of Prayer, moved by God's love, to support the mission of the church. We do not want guests to feel obligated to participate. We want you to feel welcome and we truly wish to serve you! God bless you!

**Standing**

If at any time during the service it becomes uncomfortable for you to stand, please feel free to sit down, even if others are standing. God knows our strengths and understands our weaknesses too.

**Organist, David Collins • Choir Director, David Ortiz**  
**Pianist, David Collins • Handbell Director, Judy Houston**  
**Praise Band Director, Tammy Poynor**

**Serving Us Today**

Pastor ..... Pastor Dwayne Hendricks  
Elder ..... Ken Campbell  
Ushers..... Michael Griggs & Bryant Arnold  
Reader .....  
Greeters .....  
Altar Circle ..... Linda Hartnett & Barb Kralej

# Good News of a God Who Makes a Way for Us

## As We Gather

When the Israelites seemed trapped, the way out for them was through the middle of the sea. For Christians today, it has been through the waters of Baptism. It is Jesus who is the way, and the truth, and the life. God's Old Testament people survived to continue their escape in the desert. But we follow Christ, in our daily walk, through a resurrection like His, and on to the place He has readied for us. This is all good news for us from Exodus.

## Call to Worship

*Chimes*

## Prelude:

## “Prelude in C Major”

*By J.S. Bach*

## Welcome

## Hymn: 673 Jerusalem, My Happy Home

*V 1-4*



1 Je - ru - sa - lem, my hap - py home,  
2 O hap - py har - bor of the saints,  
3 Thy gar - dens and thy gal - lant walks  
4 There trees for - ev - er - more bear fruit



When shall I come to thee? When shall my sor - rows  
O sweet and pleas - ant soil! In thee no sor - row  
Con - tin - ual - ly are green; There grow such sweet and  
And ev - er - more do spring; There ev - er - more the



have an end? Thy joys when shall I see?  
may be found, No grief, no care, no toil.  
pleas - ant flow'rs As no - where else are seen.  
an - gels dwell And ev - er - more do sing.

Text: F. B. P., 16th cent., alt.

Tune: American

Text and tune: Public domain

## Opening Sentences

*Psalm 143:1, 5, 10*

**P** Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my pleas for mercy!

**C** **In Your faithfulness answer me, in Your righteousness!**

**P** I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that You have done;

**C** **I ponder the work of Your hands.**

**P** Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God!

**C** **Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground!**

## First Reading:

*Daniel 3:19–30*

<sup>19</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated.

<sup>20</sup>And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

<sup>21</sup>Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. <sup>22</sup>Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. <sup>23</sup>And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

<sup>24</sup>Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." <sup>25</sup>He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."

<sup>26</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. <sup>27</sup>And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. <sup>28</sup>Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside

the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. <sup>29</sup>Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way." <sup>30</sup>Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

**L** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### **Second Reading:**

*1 Peter 4:12–19*

<sup>12</sup>Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup>But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. <sup>14</sup>If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. <sup>15</sup>But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. <sup>16</sup>Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. <sup>17</sup>For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? <sup>18</sup>And

“If the righteous is scarcely saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

<sup>19</sup>Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will  
entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

**L** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Third Reading:**

*Matthew 5:2–10*

<sup>2</sup>And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the  
kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be  
comforted.

<sup>5</sup>“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for  
righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

<sup>7</sup>“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive  
mercy.

<sup>8</sup>“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called  
sons of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for  
righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**L** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Responsory

**L** Our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.

**C** The Rock was Christ.

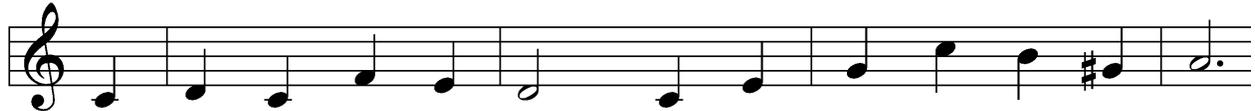
**L** All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

**C** The Rock was Christ.

**L** All ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink.

**C** The Rock was Christ.

## Hymn: 672 Jerusalem the Golden



1 Je - ru - sa - lem the gold - en, With milk and hon - ey blest—  
2 With-in those walls of Zi - on Sounds forth the joy - ful song,  
3 A - round the throne of Da - vid, The saints, from care re - leased,  
△ 4 O sweet and bless - ed coun - try, The home of God's e - lect!



The prom - ise of sal - va - tion, The place of peace and rest—  
As saints join with the an - gels And all the mar - tyr throng.  
Raise loud their songs of tri - umph To cel - e - brate the feast.  
O sweet and bless - ed coun - try That faith - ful hearts ex - pect!



We know not, oh, we know not What joys a - wait us there:  
The Prince is ev - er with them; The day - light is se - rene;  
They sing to Christ their lead - er, Who con - quered in the fight,  
In mer - cy, Je - sus, bring us To that e - ter - nal rest



The ra - dian - cy of glo - ry, The bliss be - yond com - pare!  
 The cit - y of the bless - ed Shines bright with glo - rious sheen.  
 Who won for them for - ev - er Their gleam - ing robes of white.  
 With You and God the Fa - ther And Spir - it, ev - er blest.

Text: Bernard of Cluny, 12th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.

Tune: Alexander C. Ewing, 1830–95, alt.

Text and tune: Public domain

## Message

*"God's Grand Story"*

## Offering:

**"Fughetta"**

*By P. Carlmann Kolb*

## Offertory

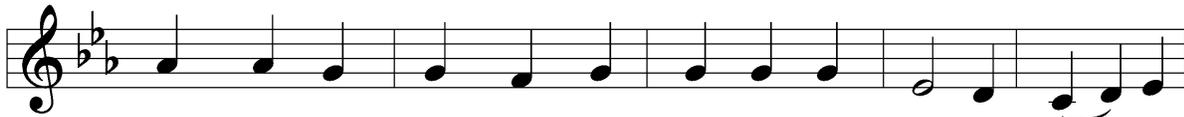
*LSB 192*



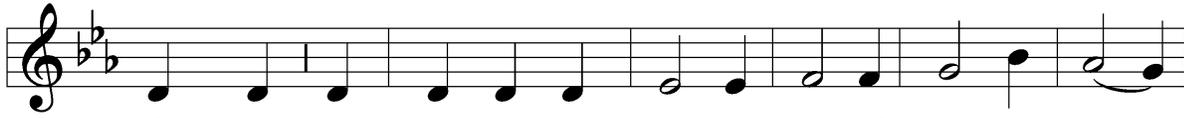
**C** Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



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.

## Prayers

- P** Let us pray for all people who are unsure of God's hearing their prayers.
- C** **Hear their cries, O Lord, grant them courage as You accompany, and answer them speedily.**
- P** Let us ask God to strengthen the faith of those who only recently have known Him.
- C** **Reveal Yourself gently to them, Lord Jesus, through the caring of Your church.**
- P** Let us pray for those who feel trapped by circumstances beyond their control.
- C** **Assure them that You know their dilemma and that the deliverer has come: Jesus, our Savior and Lord.**
- P** Let us pray for all who fear God's punishment.
- C** **Show them mercy, O Lord, as You passed over Your Old Testament people. Grant them peace through Your presence.**
- P** Let us pray for all who know no good ways to turn, are unsure of the truth, and await only their deaths.
- C** **Tell them again, Lord Jesus, that You alone are the way, and the truth, and the life.**

- P** Finally, let us pray for all who are tired from opposition in the world around them and from their own conflicts within themselves.
- C** **Awaken in them a sense of Your accompanying them on their journey until that day when they and we join those who have gone before us at Your heavenly banquet hall.**
- 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.
- C** **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.**
- P** O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works,
- C** **give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness;**
- P** through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## **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.**

## **Luther's Evening Prayer**

**I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

## Benediction

**P** The Lord, who protected His people throughout the exodus, bless you.

The Lord, who sustained them in the desert, bless you.

The Lord, who led them and you to the Promised Land, bless and keep you, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## Hymn: 919 Abide, O Dearest Jesus

*V 1-6*



1 A - bide, O dear - est Je - sus, A - mong us with Your grace  
2 A - bide, O dear Re - deem - er, A - mong us with Your Word,  
3 A - bide with heav'n - ly bright - ness A - mong us, pre - cious Light;  
4 A - bide with rich - est bless - ings A - mong us, boun-teous Lord;



That Sa - tan may not harm us Nor we to sin give place.  
And thus now and here - af - ter True peace and joy af - ford.  
Your truth di - rect and keep us From er - ror's gloom - y night.  
Let us in grace and wis - dom Grow dai - ly through Your Word.

5 Abide with Your protection  
Among us, Lord, our strength,  
Lest world and Satan fell us  
And overcome at length.

6 Abide, O faithful Savior,  
Among us with Your love;  
Grant steadfastness and help us  
To reach our home above.

Text: Josua Stegmann, 1588–1632; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.  
Tune: Melchior Vulpius, c. 1570–1615  
Text and tune: Public domain

# Dismissal

**P** Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Acknowledgments

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 2.  
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## Acknowledgments

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## + What We Believe +

**God:** is Triune, Father, Son, Holy Spirit; Three Persons, One Essence. He is the only true God: *Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 8:4*

**Jesus:** is true God, equal to the Father and Holy Spirit, the only Savior of mankind. *John 5:23; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 20:28*

**Sin:** all mankind is wicked; by nature the human race is spiritually blind, dead, broken in heart/mind, and in need of restoration with God and each other. God's wrath abides on all. *Genesis 8:21; Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:23, 7:15, 18; Mark 7:20-23; John 3:36.*

**Justification:** Sin and God's wrath against it has been dealt with by God through the death of God the Son on the cross. All have salvation through the blood of Jesus where our Father no longer holds our wickedness and sin against us but declares us righteous. We have peace again with God through faith in Jesus. This good news gives believers hope, peace, joy, and love to live as Christians. *Romans 5:1-10; John 3:16, 36; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 1 John 2:1-2; Corinthians 5:18-21.*

**Conversion:** to faith in the Savior is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God (spoken, written, and sacramental). In the message of the cross God gathers His family. *Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23; John 3:5-6; 1 Corinthians 12:3.*

**Holy Baptism:** is a gracious work of the Holy Spirit Who creates faith, washes away sins, and connects us to Jesus and His body the church. *John 3:5-6; Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:27, 1 Peter 3:21; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13.*

**The Holy Spirit's Work:** Converted through faith in Jesus our human nature still threatens our unity with God and each other. Reconciliation, that is repentance and faith, is the daily rhythm of believers. Guilt and sorrow are promptings of the Holy Spirit for us to speak with God confessing thoughts, words, and actions asking Him for forgiveness in Jesus' name. *Ephesians 4:30-32; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Hebrews 10:19-25.*

**The Lord's Supper:** or Holy Communion is Christ's True Body and Blood, where He is really present in the bread and wine to assure us of forgiveness. We gather to receive Jesus often because we daily sin much and are in constant need of His power to live the Christian life of faith, hope, and love/charity. *John 6:53-59; 15:5; Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-29; 1 Corinthians 10:16.*

**Scripture:** is inspired by God, without error and is our solid guide to life. *John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16.*

**Creation:** happened according to Genesis 1-2. Evolution is unscriptural, unscientific, and unnecessary. *Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 33:6.*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Coming:** of Jesus will be sudden/unexpected. *2 Peter 3:10; Mark 13:32; Matthew 24.* We are living in the New Testament era where we rule with Jesus in the activity of sharing His message of love. *1 Corinthians 15:23-26; Ephesians 2:1-7; Matthew 28:19-20; Revelation 20:4-6*