

*If
you...
can...*

*1st Sunday in Lent
March 6, 2022*



Ascension Lutheran Church
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Welcome to Worship...

Welcome to all God’s guests, including those who call themselves “members” of this church named Ascension Lutheran Church more than 50 years ago.

A special welcome to guests who are here for the first time or who call yourselves “visitors” among the people of this community. It is at God's invitation, through worship, the Holy Spirit calls each of us to come to a place of **community, communion** and **commitment**. Each of us brings a different lens to worship, and yet, in a worshipping community, these differences become celebrations of diversity.

Children are always welcome in worship services;
however please know
a nursery is provided for children under 4 years of age.

Please silence your cell phones at this time.

Introduction—It’s always something...

A year ago we were hoping to be in a final “season of recovery” from the pandemic that kept us apart physically and halted our best efforts in planning and resuming our “normal” lives.

But we are still in the midst of great disturbance from “the way we imagined” life to be. In many cases, dreams have been thwarted by the pandemic through loss of life, health, and economic security. And then there’s all the other hard stuff, unrelated to the pandemic, that just keeps rollin’ along.

The Good News certainly is that God loves us deeply and is present to us powerfully, even and especially in the midst of the imperfect and down-right crummy moments of life.

Welcome

Call to Worship

sung by cantors

♪ ♪ **What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, ♪ ♪
void of sorrow?**

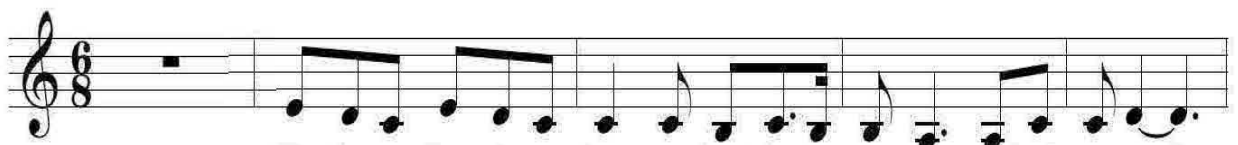
**Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays,
mistakes we made?**

**Sometimes we get what we get,
life disappoints us and yet,
God is still here and somehow,
this faith is good enough.**

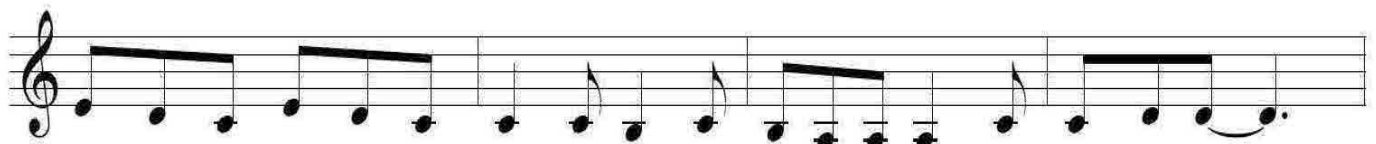
P The liturgical season of Lent developed over the centuries as a time of deepened reflection. Originally a period of preparation for baptisms on Easter Eve, it later became a time for all Christians to take stock of their lives and examine how the connection to their faith was progressing—or not—and to recommit to a life of goodness.

This year we will indeed open up and take stock. But rather than feel guilty (a popular Lenten pastime) about what we haven't accomplished in our lives and faith, we will spend some time questioning how our culture's obsession with achievement and perfection actually keeps us from the true depths of life and faith.

This Lent, we'll take some time for nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives.



What in our lives do we dream a - bout for to - mor - row, void of sor - row?



Time spent re - grett - ing de - ci - sions of our yes - ter - days, mi - stakes we made?



Calling on God

L Let us pray: Holy One, Our Refuge and Shelter,
All we call out to you,
sometimes in praise,
sometimes in distress—as life goes.
Whether we perceive it or not, you are there.
Open us this day to your presence
in the smile of a friend, in the call of a bird—
in the simple and good enough moments that fill our days. Amen.

Blessed Assurance

1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
 Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior, all the day long:
 this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

2 Perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
 angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love. Refrain

3 Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest,
 watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his love.

Refrain

Honest Questions, Compassionate Response

P We find ourselves hungry for many things that we believe will bring us satisfaction. In today's Gospel, the devil lays a bet that Jesus will jump at the chance for glory, fame, and the quick fix. Who wouldn't? But Jesus keeps up the pithy one-liners long enough that the Tempster just has to slink away. What are the temptations that catch your ear, singing out promises that your life should be more special than it is? What if ordinary life is already holy—as is? Let us take a moment of silent reflection...

Silence is kept for self reflection.

Hear this compassionate word from the Letter to the Romans: “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart... Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the temptations of the “not enough-ness” of our time, inviting us to love and revere the seeming ordinariness of the day-to-day so that we might recognize its true beauty.

And know, that despite our sometimes faltering steps, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now.

**In the name of Jesus Christ, ✝ you are forgiven.
Glory to God! Amen.**

Sharing the Peace

In our continued physical distancing out of love for the health of one another, we will share the peace of our risen Lord by “speaking” that peace through sign language.

P Christ become Peace with you.

All And also with you.

A reading from Deuteronomy, the 26th chapter

The annual harvest festival, called the Feast of Weeks, provides the setting for this reading. This festival celebrates the first fruits of the produce of the land offered back to God in thanks. In this text, worshipers announce God's gracious acts on behalf of Israel.

¹When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, ²you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. ³You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us." ⁴When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, ⁵you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. ⁶When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, ⁷we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. ⁸The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; ⁹and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me." You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. ¹¹Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

L The word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation

Please stand as you are able.

*♪ ♪ Turn your eyes upon Jesus ♪ ♪
Look full in His wonderful face;
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.*

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Gospel Reading

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 4th chapter.

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Luke 4: 1-13

P The Word of God that is still speaking,

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

You may be Seated

“Ordinary lives can be holy.”

Hymn of the Day

Please stand as you are able.

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

- 1 I want Jesus to walk with me; I want Jesus to walk with me;
all along my pilgrim journey, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
- 2 In my trials, Lord, walk with me; in my trials, Lord, walk with me;
when my heart is almost breaking, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
- 3 When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when my head is bowed in sorrow, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

Text: African American spiritual

You may be Seated

Apostles' Creed

P Let us join together with the saints across the ages confessing our faith with the words of the 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.**

Prayers of the People

L The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

**♪ ♪ O Lord, hear our prayer we offer up to you;
O Lord, hear our prayer. ♪ ♪**

Text: Ralph C. Sappington, b. 1952
Text © 1999 Augsburg Fortress Used by permission

(each prayer petition ends with)

***L:* God of grace, *All:* You hear our prayer.**

Offering

While we still will not physically pass the offering plates we will continue to have the plates available at the entrance to receive your offerings and will lift them up in thanksgiving before the throne of grace.

**♪ ♪ I cast all my cares upon You ♪ ♪
I lay all of my burdens down at Your feet
And anytime that I don't know what to do
I will cast all my cares upon You**

Offertory Prayer

P Generous God,

***All* in light of your extravagant blessings—
no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives—
we offer our gifts and ourselves,
and know that you transform what we give
into the offering of Your love. Amen.**

Holy Communion

Please stand as you are able.

P Christ looks upon each one with love and says,

***All* “you are welcome at my table.”**

P Christ looks upon each one with compassion and says,

***All* “whatever troubles you, bring it here.”**

P Christ looks upon each one with grace and says,

***All* “whatever you’d like to leave behind, do it here.”**

P Will you come?

Will you bring your troubles?

Will you shed all that is unnecessary in your life?

This is the place where you need not be perfect,
you need not be sure of yourself or your faith,
you need not feel whole and right with the world.

Jesus invited many to his tables and in doing so, he assured them of their place in the illogical reign of love and grace.

He just wanted them to be hungry for relationship—
hungry to look across a table into another’s eyes,
to break open their lives,

and lift a cup in the midst of the hard times and hear,

“this is for all, and so this is for you, beloved.”

P On the night in which he was betrayed our Lord Jesus took bread
and gave thanks;
broke it and gave it to his disciples saying:
Take and eat; this is my body given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

After supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat this bread and drink of this cup
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.

All Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

The Lord's Prayer

*P I invite you to connect with the people around you—
Take a moment, look around, for as you look upon the Body of Christ,
you do indeed, turn your eyes upon Jesus.
Now gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught.*

**All 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.**

Communion Songs

You may be Seated

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Verse 1

O soul are you weary and troubled
No light in the darkness you see
There's light for a look at the Savior
And life more abundant and free

Chorus

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace

Verse 2

Through death into life everlasting
He passed and we follow Him there
Over us sin no more hath dominion
For more than conquerors we are

Verse 3

His Word shall not fail you He promised
Believe Him and all will be well
Then go to a world that is dying
His perfect salvation to tell

He Is Exalted

Verse

He is exalted, The King is exalted on high. I will praise Him!
He is exalted forever exalted, and I will praise His name!

Chorus

He is the Lord. Forever His truth shall reign.
Heaven and earth rejoice in His holy name
He is exalted, the King is exalted on high!

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Post Communion Blessing and Prayer

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All Amen.

P Let us pray.

Tender and merciful one,

at your feast, you fed us who brought nothing,

turning our emptiness into joy.

Filled with your abundant grace, send us now to be ministers of reconciliation, mending broken hearts, working for justice,

and striving for peace among all people,

in the name of Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

Stewardship of Life and Ministry Announcements

Benediction

Please stand as you are able.

P And now, may the God who loves all of creation,
especially the imperfect bits,
and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life,
and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways, †
go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy.



Dismissal

P Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.

All Thanks be to God.

Readings for next Sunday,
March 13th
Second Sunday in Lent

First Reading:

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm:

Psalm 27

Second Reading:

Philippians 3:17--4:1

Gospel:

Luke 13:31-35

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