



3rd Sunday in Lent  
*March 20, 2022*



Ascension Lutheran Church  
1105 N. Washington Blvd.  
Ogden, UT 84404  
801.782.2810

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.

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*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.

**“We Pray for Peace”**

*(TUNE: Be Still My Soul”)*

We pray for peace,  
O Spirit here among us;  
your love emboldens,  
judges and restrains.  
Take any hate  
and acts of impulse from us;  
make leaders wise,  
amid competing claims.  
May we seek peace,  
O God of love and justice;  
may love and mercy  
be our highest aims.

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* This morning, we continue to examine what it means to release oppressive expectations. The voices that tell us we must be perfect in our lives and in our faith.

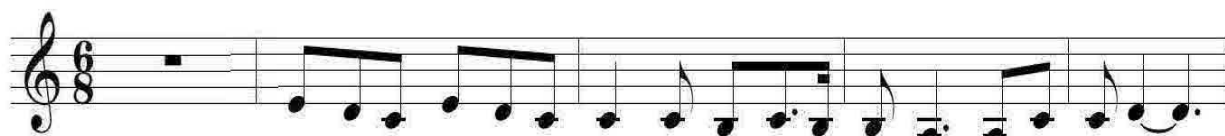
*Today, we confront the harmful idea that the remedy for our fear of failure is to simply work harder.*

We might feel as though we are climbing an ‘endless staircase’ toward achievement—for high grades or success in our work, our homes, our appearance, and even as we care for others.

Today, we are invited to stop climbing.

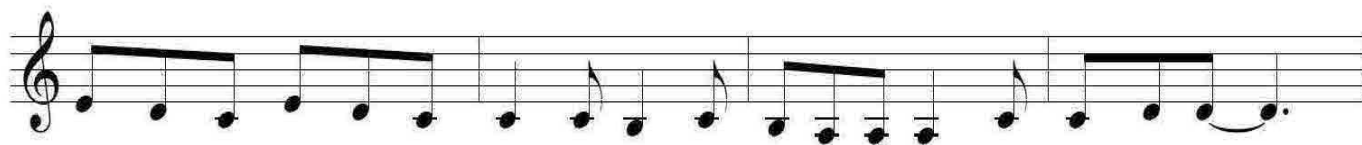
We are invited to tend our souls slowly and lovingly,  
tilling the soil so we may breathe in peace,  
receiving the fertilizer that will nourish our spirits  
and give us strength.

**Today, we embrace our holy, “good enough” lives.**



**(All)**

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?



Some-times we get what we get, life dis-ap-oints us and yet, \_\_\_\_\_



God is still here and some-how, this faith is good—e-nough.

*L* Let us pray together:

***All* Holy One, Our Balm, Our Feast**

**we lift our hands and call your name,  
in need of healing–thirsting and hungry.**

**Your steadfast love is better than life.**

**Open us this day to your nourishment**

**in the songs of the land, in the beauty of the sky–**

**in the simple and good enough moments that fill our days.**

**Amen.**

### **All You Who Are Thirsty**

Refrain

All you who are thirsty, come to the water!

All you who have no money, come, come and eat.

Come without money, come without cost.

All you who are thirsty, drink wine and milk.

1. Why spend your money for what is not bread;  
why spend your wages for what won't satisfy?  
Listen to me and you shall eat well,  
you shall delight in rich fare.
2. Come to me, says our God.  
Listen to me, that you may have life.  
I will renew my covenant with you.  
The treasures I have promised will be yours.

Text based on Isaiah 55:1–3. Text and music © 2014, Jaime Cortez. Published by OCP. All rights reserved.  
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## Honest Questions, Compassionate Response

P In our Gospel today, we will hear about the unproductive fig tree.  
Oh, the shame of being unproductive!  
Cut it down!  
Make room for a more dedicated and hard-working fig tree!

Who among us is living up to our fullest potential? Productivity experts will tell us they are able to diagnose what's wrong with us and then sell us the cure. It's available to us at a low-low price guaranteed to turn our lives around in just 3 simple steps!

In the story Jesus tells, we hear there is another way. The gardener offers an alternative medicine. Nurture the tree slowly; tend it - let it soak in the manure until all the nutrients are absorbed.

Sometimes, lying fallow – being fertilized with laughter and tears at – dare I say – the crappy stuff of life – sometimes that is exactly what can help heal our grief, our hopelessness, our fear – the deepest longings of our souls.

Is this not sometimes productive enough?

What productivity expectations are holding you captive?

Take a breath – be still – and reflect ...

*Silence is kept for self reflection.*

My friends, hear this compassionate word from Isaiah:

“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.”

Know that already, God is offering us love enough

no matter how much we attain or achieve.

We are invited to release oppressive expectations of ourselves and others so that we might recognize true worth afforded to all.

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.

## We Proclaim

### A reading from Isaiah, the 55<sup>th</sup> chapter

*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.*

<sup>1</sup>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.

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>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.

<sup>4</sup>See, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and commander for the peoples.



<sup>5</sup>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.

<sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;  
<sup>7</sup>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.

<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

*Isaiah 55:1-9*

*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 13th chapter.

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

*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.*

<sup>1</sup>At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.<sup>2</sup>[Jesus] asked them, “Do



you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?<sup>3</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup>Or 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? <sup>5</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

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

*Luke 13: 1-9*

*P* The Word of God that is still speaking,

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

[You may be Seated](#)

Thoughts about an Imperfect Life and Faith

Pr. Debra Jimenez

“Lots of things can be medicine.”

**Hymn of the Day**

[Please stand as you are able.](#)

## Lord I Need You

Verse 1

Lord I come I confess, Bowing here I find my rest  
And without You I fall apart, You're the one that guides my heart

Chorus 1

Lord I need You oh I need You  
Ev'ry hour I need You  
My one defense my righteousness  
Oh God how I need You

Verse 2

Where sin runs deep Your grace is more  
Where grace is found is where You are  
And where You are Lord I am free, Holiness is Christ in me  
Where You are Lord I am free, Holiness is Christ in me

Bridge

So teach my song to rise to You when temptation comes my way  
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You, Jesus You're my hope and stay  
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You, Jesus You're my hope and stay

Chorus 2

Lord I need You oh I need You  
Ev'ry hour I need You  
My one defense my righteousness, Oh God how I need You  
My one defense my righteousness, Oh God how I need You

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## 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* Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church,  
the world, and all who are in need.

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

Text: Ralph C. Sappington, b. 1952  
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*(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.**

## **The Invitation**

*P Here is food and drink for the journey.  
Take and be filled.*

## As The Deer

Verse 1

As the deer panteth for the water so my soul longeth after Thee  
You alone are my heart's desire And I long to worship Thee

Chorus

You alone are my strength my shield  
To You alone may my spirit yield  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship Thee

Verse 2

You're my friend and You are my brother even though You are a King  
I love You more than any other, so much more than anything Chorus

Verse 3

I want You more than gold or silver, Only You can satisfy  
You alone are the real joygiver and the apple of my eye Chorus

CCLI Song # 1431

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## Your Name

Verse 1

As morning dawns and evening fades You inspire songs of praise  
That rise from earth to touch Your heart and glorify Your Name

Chorus

Your Name is a strong and mighty tower  
Your Name is a shelter like no other  
Your Name let the nations sing it louder  
'Cause nothing has the power to save  
But Your Name

Verse 2

Jesus in Your Name we pray come and fill our hearts today  
Lord give us strength to live for You and glorify Your Name

CCLI Song # 4611679

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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,

**All** 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. 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, and you—without price, 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.

**All** Amen.





## Dismissal

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

**All** Thanks be to God.

### A Blessing for Slowing Down

*"...blessed are we who stop—okay, maybe not stop entirely,  
who are we kidding—but who slow down.*

*We who discover rest and new life and renewal  
when we step off the treadmill (or at least turn it down).*

*We who remember that the world keeps spinning without us. And thank God  
for that. We who remember we are loved, loved, loved. Just being us."*

Readings for next Sunday,  
March 27<sup>th</sup>  
Fourth Sunday in Lent

**First Reading:**

Joshua 5:9-12

**Psalm:**

**Psalm 32**

**Second Reading:**

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

**Gospel:**

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

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