

you're Back!



4th Sunday in Lent
March 27, 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.

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 God of love and justice,
as once again,
we face a time of war.
The meek and humble
try amid the crisis—
to love and build,
to nurture and restore.
May leaders hear
the truth the prophets teach us—
that gifts of peace
are well worth struggling for.

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 Each week of this Lenten season, we are focusing on ways that we can practice *a counter-cultural theology* that emphasizes the beauty and grace of the reality of life-right-now rather than waiting with increasing judgment to reach some vision of a perfected existence.

Our endless climbing efforts sometimes end up taking us back a step or two as things don't work out just right.

And so let us again turn our efforts away from climbing,

nurturing our souls

and embracing 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-points us and yet,

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

Calling on God

L Let us pray:

Holy One, God of Forgiveness,
we call out to you and you surround us with deliverance.

***All* You love us infinitely more than we love ourselves or others.**

Open us this day to your counsel,

helping us be more merciful, more grace-filled,

so that we might rejoice in simple and good enough moments

that fill our days.

Amen.

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling

- 1 Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me.
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching,
watching for you and for me.

Refrain

"Come home, (Come home,) come home! (come home!)

You who are weary, come home."

Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, "O sinner, come home!"

- 2 Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,
pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,
mercies for you and for me? *Refrain*

- 3 Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised,
promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,
pardon for you and for me. *Refrain*

Honest Questions, Compassionate Response

P Today we will hear how the Prodigal Son lives high on the hog and then famine strikes in the land of his dream vacation. And so he heads home, tail between his legs, expecting that he has lost it all. To his surprise, his extravagant failure is met with extravagant love and grace.

We can be pretty hard on ourselves when things don't go as planned.

Guilt, shame, and fear of being seen as a failure
can leave us wallowing in the pig pen.

Our delusions of a perfectible life keep us disappointed in ourselves.

Truth is, life is a big ole risk every single day and facing whatever each day holds is not only good enough, but worthy of love and grace.

Do you find yourself being unrealistically hard on yourself?
Let us take a moment of silent reflection...

Silence is kept for self reflection.

Hear this compassionate word from the Second Letter to the Corinthians:

“From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way.

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

Know that already, God is offering us freedom from
the guilt and shame of our past failings
and our present unrealistic expectations.

We are invited to rejoice that each day is a new beginning,
so that we might enjoy, and not dread, the life before us.

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 2 Corinthians, the 5th chapter

One way to describe the gospel is the promise that in Christ everything is transformed into newness. All mistakes, all deliberate sins, all old history is reconciled with Christ’s resurrection. This is Paul’s strong message to the congregation in the city of Corinth.

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

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.

Public Domain

Gospel Reading

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 15th chapter.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.

¹Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.]

²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³So he told them this parable: ^{11b}"There was a man who had two sons.

¹²The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them.

¹³A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.

¹⁴When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs.

¹⁶He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' ²⁰So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and

before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.’²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.”²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on.²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him.²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.’³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.’³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

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

“We often believe we are the problem.”

You Are Mine

- 1 "I will come to you in the silence, I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice.
Be still and know I am here."
- 2 "I am hope for all who are hopeless, I am eyes for all who long to see.
In the shadows of the night, I will be your light.
Come and rest in me."

Refrain

"Do not be afraid, I am with you.
I have called you each by name.
Come and follow me, I will bring you home;
I love you and you are mine."

- 3 "I am strength for all the despairing,
healing for the ones who dwell in shame.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free,
and all will know my name."
- 4 "I am the Word that leads all to freedom,
I am the peace the world cannot give.
I will call your name, embracing all your pain.
Stand up, now walk and live!" *Refrain*

Text: David Haas, b. 1957

Text © 1991 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

All rights reserved. OneLicense.net A-705915 Used by permission.

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
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.”

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.*

Communion Songs

[You may be Seated](#)

Freely, Freely

Verse 1

God forgave my sin in Jesus' name. I've been born again in Jesus' name.
And in Jesus' name I come to you to share His love as He told me to.

Chorus

He said freely, freely you have received. Freely, freely give.
Go in My name and because you believe others will know that I live.

Verse 2

All pow'r is giv'n in Jesus' name, In earth and heav'n in Jesus' name.
And in Jesus' name I come to you to share His pow'r as He told me to.

CCLI Song # 13209
Carol Owens © 1972 Bud John Songs, Inc. (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)
CCLI License # 1924512

This Is The Gift Of God

Verse 1

Because of His love rich in mercy, He made us alive in Him.
Saved us from death rescued the sinners, this is the gift of God.

Chorus

Holy is the Lamb of God. Holy is the One who loved
Not by works but by His blood. This is the gift of God.

Verse 2

Before the creation we were chosen, adopted into His love.
Glorious grace lavished upon us, this is the gift of God. Chorus

CCLI Song # 5360280

Carl Cartee | Jon Abel © 2008 45 Degrees Music (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.)

CCLI License # 1924512

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, especially the broken 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.

All Amen.



Dismissal

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

All Thanks be to God.

A Blessing for Becoming Real

"Blessed are you who do not despise your realness.

It may hurt. You may not recognize yourself in the mirror.

But this is what we hoped for, right?

To live and love. To be loved.

To have our experiences show on our faces and in our cells.

It is the real life of Jesus in us, being made visible, as all our seams show."

Front Cover:

Photo by [Joe Caione](#) on [Unsplash](#)
Used with permission

All liturgy and leader parts Marcia McFee © www.worshipdesignstudio.com/goodenough. Used and adapted with permission.

"Good Enough" theme song by Marsha Charles, Marcia McFee, Chuck Bell. Used with permission of Worship Design Studio.

Music licenses covered by these subscriptions

Used by Permission OneLicense.net A-705915

Used by Permission CCLI LiscenSing License # 1924512