

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, March 5, 2023 •

Second Sunday in Lent



WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *O Man, Bewail Thy Grievous Fall*

J.S Bach

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism,
as the presiding minister begins.*

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

C Amen.

P Let us acknowledge before God and one another our need for repentance and God's
mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Holy God,

**C we confess to you our faults and failings. Too often we neglect and do not trust
your holy word; we take for ourselves instead of giving to others; we spoil rather
than steward your creation; we cause hurt though you call us to heal; we choose fear
over compassion. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, as we seek to follow in your way
of life. Amen.**

P Hear the good news: God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that all
may receive life. This promise is for you! God embraces you with divine mercy, ☩
forgives you in Christ's name, and revives you in the Spirit's power.

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *This is the Spirit's Entry Now*

All Stand & Sing



- 1 This is the Spir - it's en - try now: the wa - ter and the word,
- 2 This mir - a - cle of life re - born comes from the Lord of breath;
- 3 Let wa - ter be the sa - cred sign that we must die each day
- 4 Re - new - ing Spir - it, hear our praise for your bap - tis - mal pow'r



the cross of Je - sus on your brow, the seal both felt and heard.
the sin - less one from life was torn; our life comes through his death.
to rise a - gain by his de - sign as fol - l'wers of his way.
that wash - es us through all our days. Come, cleanse a - gain this hour.

Text: Thomas E. Herbranson, b. 1933

Music: LAND OF REST, North American traditional

Text © Thomas E. Herbranson, admin. Augsburg Fortress

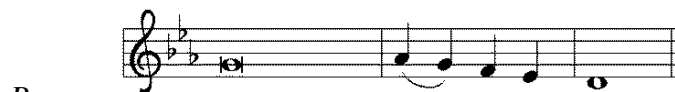
GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

KYRIE

All Sing



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



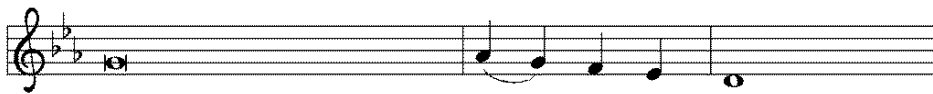
P For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



P Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men, a - men.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

We invite children to come forward for a children’s message before moving to children’s church.

FIRST READING

Genesis 12:1-4a

A reading from Genesis, the twelfth chapter.

God’s call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

¹The LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” ^{4a}So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

A reading from Romans, the fourth chapter.

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God’s promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

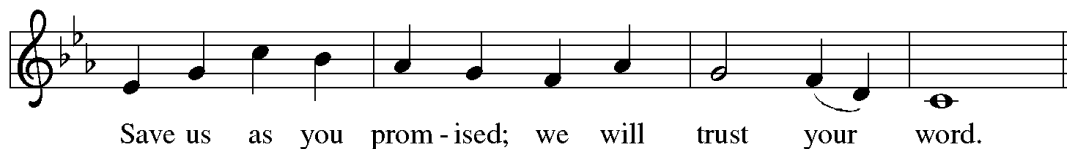
¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

John 3:1-17

P The holy gospel according to St. John, the third chapter.

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

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” ³Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated

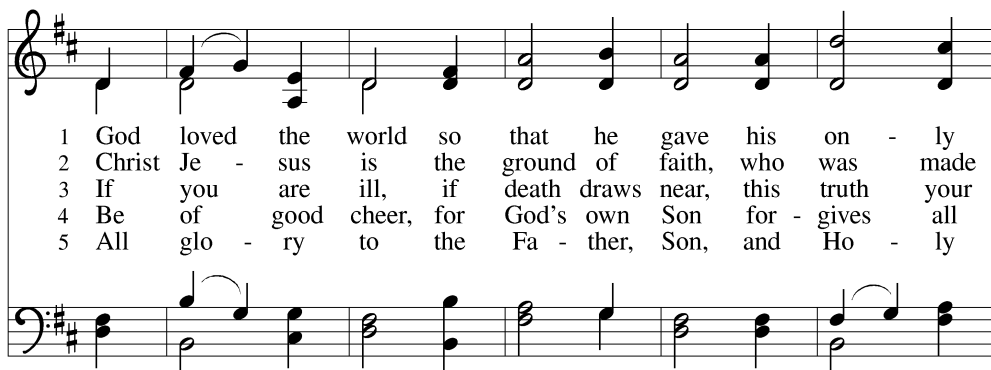
SERMON

Pastor Micah

Silence is Kept for Reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *God Loved the World*

All Stand & Sing



1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly
 2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, who was made
 3 If you are ill, if death draws near, this truth your
 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son for - gives all
 5 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly



Son the lost to save, that all who would in
 flesh and suf - fered death; all who con - fide in
 trou - bled heart can cheer: Christ Je - sus res - cues
 sins that you have done, and jus - ti - fied by
 Spir - it, Three in One! To you, O bless - ed



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
 Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
 us from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.
 Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.
 Trin - i - ty, be praise now and e - ter - nal - ly!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt.
 Music: ROCKINGHAM OLD, Edward Miller, 1731–1807, adapt.

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 INTERCESSION

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

O God, you so love your church. Raise up leaders who care for your people. Bless lay theologians, seminary and college professors, and all who are called to the ministry of teaching, that they form and inspire us for the work of the gospel. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

O God, you so love your creation. Breathe new life into our planetary home. Guide the work of researchers, scientists, and activists who love your earth and who inspire us to care for the natural world. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

O God, you so love the world. Uphold leaders who resist tyranny and oppression. Strengthen organizations that promote peace and harmony. Direct their work to alleviate human suffering and to address its root causes. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

O God, you so love your people. Draw near to all who live with mental illness, depression, or addiction, and accompany them in healing and recovery. Hear the cries of those who look to you in their distress. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

O God, you so love your children. Bless the young in our midst, and delight us with their joy, wonder, and curiosity. Enrich our ministries with children and youth and equip us all for faithful discipleship. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

O God, you so love your saints. As our ancestors in the faith have been a blessing to us, so inspire us by their example of holy living to be a blessing to those who come after us. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *Grant Peace We Pray*

Church Choir

Grant Peace, we pray, in mercy, Lord, In our time peace, oh, send us!

For there is none on earth but Thee, none other to defend us.

Thou only, Lord, can fight for us. But Thou Only!

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Let the Vineyards*

All Stand & Sing



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that



we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of

all; u - nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble
with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
 Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927
 Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray.

C God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.

DIALOGUE

Pastor

Congregation

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Cong.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

P ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

All Sing

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

C Thanks be to God.



COMMUNION

During communion the congregation is invited forward by rows, beginning in the back, and will receive the bread and wine at the front of the aisle. You may either eat and drink then, or return to your seat to do so, and place the cups in the bin in your pew.

LAMB OF GOD *All Sing*

The image displays the musical notation for the hymn "Lamb of God" in a single-staff format. The melody is written on a five-line staff with a treble clef. The notes are as follows: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The lyrics "Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have" are aligned under the first line. The second line begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The lyrics "mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the" are aligned under this line. The third line starts with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The lyrics "world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -" are aligned under this line. The final line begins with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The lyrics "way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace." are aligned under this line. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: *Children of the Heavenly Father* All Sing

The musical score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in a key of D major (two sharps). It consists of two systems of staves. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn, and the second system contains the next four lines. The lyrics are printed below the staves, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes. The music is a simple, hymn-like melody with a steady rhythm.

1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er;
2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour-ish.
3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er;
4 Though he giv - eth or he tak-eth, God his chil-dren ne'er for - sak - eth;

nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them.
un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth.
his the lov - ing pur-pose sole - ly to pre-serve them pure and ho - ly.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870–1958
Music: TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA, Swedish folk tune
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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

C Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Embodied God,

C at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love. Amen.

BLESSING

P God, the giver of love, ✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *Wash, O God, our Sons and Daughters*

All Stand & Sing



- 1 Wash, O God, our sons and daugh-ters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
- 2 We who bring them long for nur-ture; by your milk may we be fed.
- 3 Oh, how deep your ho-ly wis-dom! Un-im-ag-ined, all your ways!



Num-ber them a-mong your peo-ple; bless as Christ blessed long a-go.
Let us join your feast, par-tak-ing cup of bless-ing, liv-ing bread.
To your name be glo-ry, hon-or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
God, re-new us, guide our foot-steps; free from sin and all its snares,
We your peo-ple stand be-fore you, wa-ter-washed and Spir-it-born.



Fill, a-noint them; send your Spir-it, ho-ly dove and heart's de-light.
one with Christ in liv-ing, dy-ing, by your Spir-it, chil-dren, heirs.
By your grace, our lives we of-fer. Re-cre-ate us; God, trans-form!

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

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SENDING

P Go in peace. Serve in love.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: *He Who Will Suffer God To Guide Him*

J.S Bach

*Thank you to our lector, Emilie Bruchon.

**The altar flowers were given by Emilie Bruchon to the glory of God.

This Weeks Schedule:

Sunday, March 5th

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:10 am – Church Choir

10:30 am – Worship

4:00 pm – Dwelling Fundraising Meeting

5:00 pm – HCY

5:00 pm – Adult Handbells

6:00 pm – Church Choir Practice

Wednesday, March 8th

5:30 pm – Youth Handbells

6:00 pm – Congregation Fellowship Dinner

6:45 pm – Holden Evening Prayer

7:15 pm – Chamber Choir

Thursday March 9th

10:30 am – Prime Timers

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"Journeying through faith in a joyful, safe community, welcoming and serving Belmont and beyond."

Our core values are: **Embrace, Grow, Connect, and Give**

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

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Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: mkearney@holyc.org
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Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster
Chelsea Spicer, Office Manager