Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, March 24, 2019

The Third Sunday in Lent



Micah Kearney Pastor Greg Cline Organist/Choirmaster

GATHERING/WELCOME

PRELUDE: Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness Bouman

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, \pm one God, who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us, anoint us, and make us new.

C Amen.

P In these forty days, let us be honest, confess our sin, and receive God's promise of mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

- P God at the margins,
- C We have wandered far from your home; again and again, we lose our way. We turn inward, afraid of the world around us. We forget that you have saved your people before and promise to do so again. Do not remember the deeds of our past, but turn our faces toward the future, where your forgiveness is sure, your welcome is clear, and your love overflows. Amen.
- P Like a hen who gathers her chicks, God embraces you in tender care. Like manna in the desert, God feeds you with surprising mercy. Like a loving parent, God runs to meet you again this day, forgiving your sins for the sake of + Christ, leading you from death into life.

C Amen.

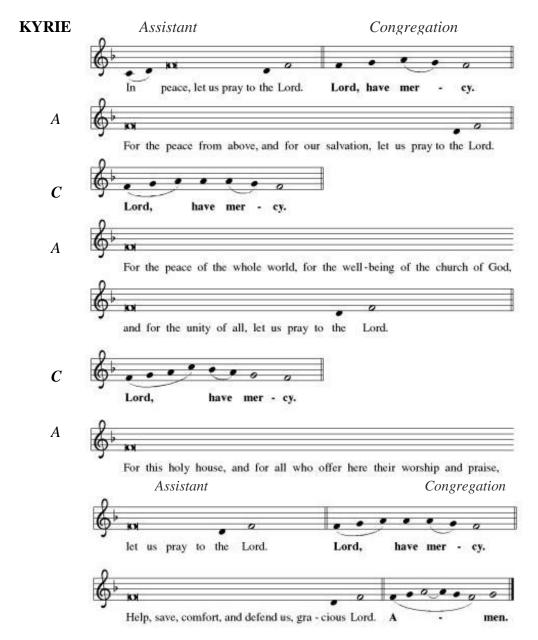
GATHERING SONG: Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross All Stand & Sing



Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915 Music: NEAR THE CROSS, William H. Doane, 1832–1915

GREETING

- P The free gift of grace in Jesus Christ, the reconciling love of God, and the life and peace of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C And also with you.





PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Congregation is Seated and are invited to sing "Jesus Loves Me" as the children come forward.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Children ages 4 to 8 years-old are invited to go to the Education building for a 20-minute (or so) time together immediately after the Children's sermon. Children will return to their parents during the hymn of the day. Children birth through 3 years-old are invited to join others their age in the nursery.

FIRST READING Isaiah 55:1–9

A reading from the fifty-fifth chapter of Isiah.

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 the Lord will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.

¹Ho, 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.
²Why 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.
³Incline 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.

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

⁵See, 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.

⁶Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;
⁷let 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.
⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 10:1–13

A reading from the tenth chapter of 1 Corinthians.

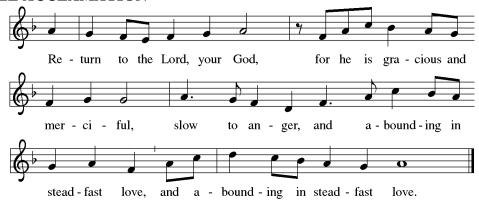
Paul uses images from Hebrew story and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.

¹I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

- A The word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL Luke 13:1–9

- P The holy gospel according to St. Luke, the thirteenth chapter.
- C 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.

¹At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²[Jesus] asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or 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? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."



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

- P The gospel of the Lord.
- C Praise to you, O Christ.

Congregation is seated.

HYMN OF THE DAY: There's a Wideness in God's Mercy....... All Stand & Sing



- There's a wide-ness in God's mer cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
- 2 There is wel-come for the sin-ner, and a prom-ised grace made good;
- 3 For the love of God is broad-er than the mea-sures of our mind; 4 'Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some-thing more than all:
- 4 IIs not all we owe to Je sus; it is some-thing more than all:



there's a kind-ness God's jus - tice which is more than lib - er - tv. in Sav-ior; there is there is mer-cy with the heal - ing in his blood. the E - ter - nal and the heart of is most won-der - ful - ly kind. e - vil, larg - er great - er good be - cause of mer-cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth's sor - rows are more felt than up in heav'n. There is grace e - nough for thou-sands of new worlds as great as this; But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own; Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg-ment giv'n. there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss. and we mag - ni - fy its strict-ness with a zeal God will not own. and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good-ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt. Music: LORD, REVIVE US, North American, 19th cent.

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

Seeking the grace, mercy, and love of almighty God, we offer our prayers for the church, for people in need, and for all of creation.

A brief silence.

Holy God, build up the body of Christ and cause the gifts of your Spirit to grow among us. Lead us to recognize your saving work through the spiritual practices you encourage. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Water the earth with gentle rains and melting snow. Provide clean water for drinking, washing, and nourishing plants that will bear fruit for your creatures. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Uphold people who speak your righteousness in the face of religious or political persecution. Receive martyrs into your everlasting peace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Provide relief for those suffering and in pain (*especially*). Grant wisdom to health care workers who seek to diagnose ailments, and bring healing to patients. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Promote unity within your church and among the nations. Uncover the common threads in our shared humanity, and keep us from making hasty judgments about others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Knit together the communion of saints, and bind us to Christ, our head. Through the diversity of gifts present in our communities, help us to overcome our limitations and increase our understanding of ourselves and others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Reveal your will as you receive our prayers, and conform our ways to your ways; through the saving work of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

- P The peace of Christ be with you always.
- C And also with you.

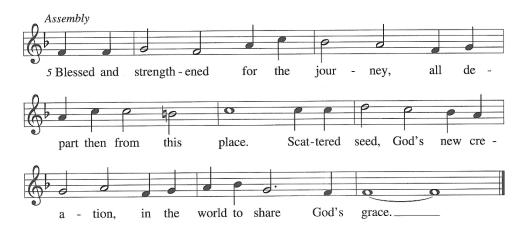


OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: Gathered Chosen, God's Creation (Congregation sings verse 5 as indicated)

Choir

- 1 Gathered chosen, God's creation, brought together by God's Son, friend and neighbor, known and stranger, in this service all are one.
- 2 One in voice, one in spirit, one with faithful everywhere, all united by a promise, held in God's unending care.
- 3 Care that sees beyond our failings, care that reaches great and small, care that changed a cross of torture into hope and life for all.
- 4 All are welcome at Christ's table, where the host is also guest. In the sharing of the banquet, those who bless are also blessed.



Tune: OMNI DEI, Gross Catholisch Gesangbuch, Nürnberg, 1631 Text and arrangement: Andrew Birling © 2106 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. 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 the dreams of all; u
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta-ble with your

OFFERING PRAYER

pres-ence, and give

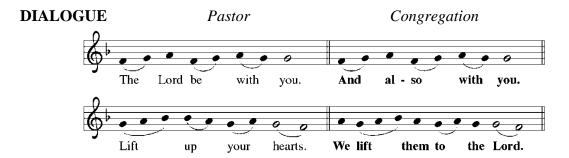
us

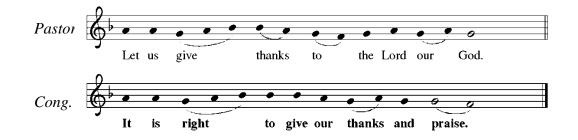
A Let us pray.

C Generous God, you feed us with the harvest of the land, and you provide for our every need. Receive our gifts of money, imagination, and labor, and transform them into a feast that welcomes all, in Jesus Christ, our host and our guest. Amen.

a fore-taste of the feast

come.

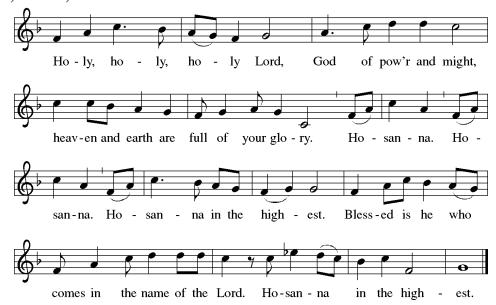




PREFACE

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

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER

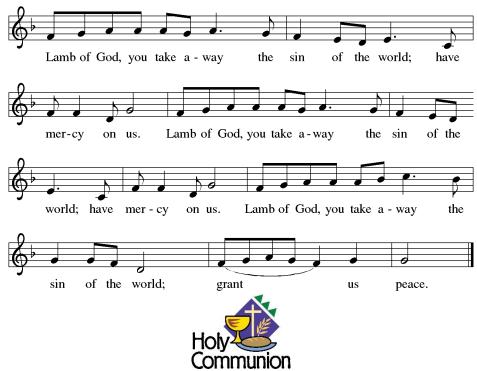
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

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

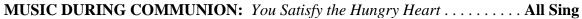
- P Christ has prepared the feast. Come to the table where all are welcomed home.
- C Thanks be to God.

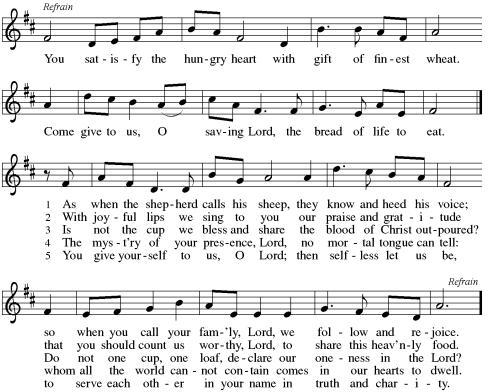
COMMUNION SONG



COMMUNION

A cordial invitation is extended to all baptized persons to participate in the celebration of the real presence of the Risen Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.





Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997 Music: BICENTENNIAL, Robert E. Kreutz, 1922–1996 Text and music © 1977 Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

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

C Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray.

C 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. Amen.

BLESSING

P May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth, and claimed us as children of the light, strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you + peace.

C Amen.

SENDING SONG: *In the Cross of Christ I Glory* All Stand & Sing



Text: John Bowring, 1792–1872 Music: RATHBUN, Ithamar Conkey, 1815–1867

SENDING

- P Go in peace. Remember the poor.
- C Thanks be to God.

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<u>A CORDIAL WELCOME</u> is extended to all our visitors on this **The Third Sunday in Lent.** We pray that you will find a warm fellowship while you are among us and that you will return home with a renewed sense of dedication to Jesus Christ. Please sign our guest register or a visitor's card so that we can become acquainted with you. If you are without a church home, we invite you to investigate membership in this family of God.

CHILDREN ARE WELCOME IN WORSHIP. Jesus said, "let the children come to me!" Parents are encouraged to utilize the Kids Worship Kits found in the Narthex for older toddlers through early elementary age. A nursery for children (infants through 3 years old) is in the Education building. Let an usher know if you need assistance.



<u>KIDS' WORSHIP CENTER:</u> Pick up kits as you enter for worship! **Please return the tote bag** with the plastic bag of crayons, scratch pads, and pencils to the stand in the narthex. The children may take any papers home with them.

PRAYER REQUESTS: A notebook has been placed in the narthex for your prayer requests during the week. The book will be in the narthex on Sundays and in the church office during the week. If you wish a name to be added to our prayer board, please fill out a form from the prayer book or fill in the form on line at www.holyc.org.

THE FLOWERS ON OUR ALTAR TODAY are given to the glory of God by Jerri & Mike Wesson in honor of Mike's birthday.

Those who have placed flowers on the altar may use the containers to take them home, but please return the containers to the church.

Julia Gunter, Worship & Music

Attendance & Budget Report for Sunday, March 17, 2019:

Attendance: 149

March 17, 2019 **Budget Report** Year-to-Date Offering \$ 5,255.00 \$ 56,795.01 \$ 5,774.35 \$65,290.76 Expenses Offering less Expenses 519.35) (\$8,495.75)**Budgeted Expenses** 64,067.75 Offering less Budgeted Expenses (\$7.272.74)

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

LECTOR: Billy Joye **GREETER:** Volunteer

ACOLYTES & CRUCIFERS: CHILDREN'S CHURCH: Jill Cassel

Volunteers

NURSERY: (10:30-11:45 am) Brandy Milton

ALTAR GUILD: (Team 1)

Bev & Charles Mauney, Co-Captains **TELLERS:** Amanda & Nathan Kelly

Carmen De Nicholas

Deb Williams USHERS: Volunteers

FLUTE: Julia Gunter

BIRTHDAYS FOR THIS WEEK: March 24-30

March 28 Aiden McGinnis Today, March 24 Molly Caldwell

March 25 Pat Koehler March 26 Hailey Ange

Cheryl Grant

Callum Nance

THIS WEEK'S MEETINGS:

Today, Sunday, March 24

8:45 am Children's Ensemble 9:30 am Sunday School

10:10 am Church Choir prep

10:30 am The Service with Holy Communion

5:00 pm Handbells

6:00 pm Church Choir

Wednesday, March 27

5:30 pm Youth Handbells 6:00 pm Lenten Dinner

6:45 pm Holden Evening Prayer

7:15 pm Chamber Choir

Thursday, March 28

7:00 pm PEP Class in Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, March 26

6:00 pm Worship & Music meeting

7:00 pm Nar-Anon





A signup sheet for the *Isle of Palms Retreat* is in the church office hallway. The dates for the retreat are Thursday, May 23 — Monday, May 27. Checks for reservations are due and deposited on Easter Sunday.

Cost: \$99 per room with 2-night minimum stay. Checks payable to Holy Comforter.



MISSION TRIP: Shelia Kelly is part of a team heading to Kitwe, Zambia. The team is busy preparing duffle bags of clothes, shoes, and much needed baby items for the poor. Contact Shelia or Tim Kelly to purchase raffle tickets to raise funds for the trip.

Purchasing and installing a water tank for the village is the big project the team is doing. That is where most of the cost of the tickets will go.



PRAYERS FOR OUR FAMILY OF HOLY COMFORTER

Cathleen Allen
Cynthia Buchanan
Brenda Dabrowski
Becke Featherstone
Sarah Tench Helms
Kay Holden
Zac Hullander
Sue Lahr
Ben Moose
Sherry Perry

Marguerite Shive Denise Taylor Beverly Reynolds Jerri & Mike Wesson

GREATER FAMILY OF GOD

Amy Beale Blythe Doug Brewer Ron de la Vega Nancy Dickson Dallas Foscue Carol Fox Earl Gardner Larry "Poss" Garrett Meredith Hovis Steve Leonard Jennifer Lineberger Ronnie Lunsford Ruth Lyerly Cookie Lynn Jane Marino
Clarence McLain
Anne Murdy
Richard Peters
Tommy Smith
Brody Thornburg
Dennis Yates

OUR SERVICEMEN

Beau Carroll Tom Ka

Tom Kasmer

Leo Kasmer

Colton Parker



Please remember these people in your prayers.

If anyone has a person who needs to be added or removed from this list, please inform the church office.

The sign-up prayer forms are in the narthex and online at www.holyc.org.



Listen! You know, part of "good health" is listening to our bodies – our bodies tell us we are tired, or may have worked too hard the day before, when we wake with aches and pains. They tell us we are getting ill when we get that "run down" feeling where it's hard to put one foot in front of the other. They tell us we've done the right things for ourselves when we feel energetic, have good color in our cheeks, and our weight

stops yoyoing up and down. But, another part of "good health" is also having good "spiritual" health. Do you hear God talking to you? Do you take the time to read the Bible or to simply just "listen" for God? My father used to take me on walks in the woods and we would just sit side by side on a rock or cliff ledge and "listen" to God speaking to us – in the sounds of the wind gently rustling the leaves in the trees, the sounds of small "cracks and pops" as some forest creature walked through the forest, in the sounds of the river babbling quietly as it tumbled over the rocks in the riverbed, or in simply the "sound of sheer silence." God talks to us in so many ways and all of them are good. When you hear His voice, it is peaceful. May His whisper flow over and around you as we continue our Lenten journey and may you begin, today, to set 10 minutes a day aside to simply "listen" – to your body and to God!



Did you forget to sign up for P.E.P.

(People Exercising with Purpose)?

It's ok...come join us anyway!

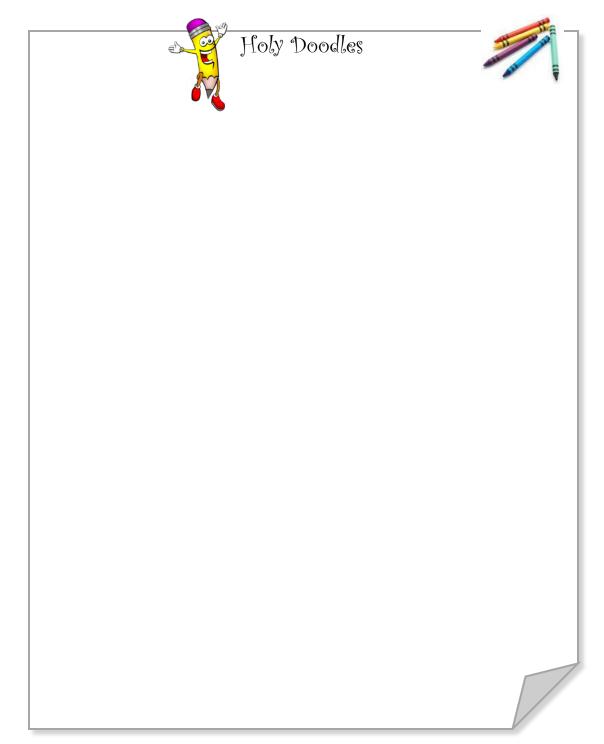
Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm in the fellowship hall.

See you then!

Please place your Easter Lily Order by filling in the form below. You may then return the form to the church office or place in the offering plate. All orders must be accompanied by payment at time of order so that we can keep a proper accounting of your gifts and reduce the possibilities of errors. Please PRINT CLEARLY your name and the name of person/persons you are *honoring* or placing the Easter lilies *in memory of*. The cost of each lily is \$15.00. Deadline to place your order is Sunday, April 14, 2019.

Easter Lily Order Form		
Your Name:		Today's Date:
Telephone Number: Number of lilies ordered:		
☐ In Memory Of:	☐ Paid Cash	

Make checks payable to Holy Comforter with "Easter Lily" on memo line.



The Lillian E. Lineberger Scholarship Ministry



Applications for the 2019-2020 academic year are now available in the church office or via email at holycomforter@gmail.com. Include *Lineberger Scholarship* in the subject line. The office manager will send you an application that you can complete. The deadline for your completed application, transcript, and typed essay is April 30. Any applications received after that date will not be considered.

The Lillian E. Lineberger Scholarship was established as an endowment by Mrs. Lineberger to the congregation to reinforce students of the church in their learning and in the accomplishment of an undergraduate or graduate degree. Her hope was that this bequest would help improve their lives, and in turn, serve and enrich the lives of others. Modest scholarships will be awarded to students of the congregation from the fund.

Authorized by the Holy Comforter Church Council, the Scholarship Ministry accepts applications from candidates who have been communing and contributing members of the church for at least one year. The annual deadline April 30th and the awards are announced in May or early June.

The amount of the award depends on the following:

- Number of students applying for, and receiving, an award
- Total amount in the fund
- Recent fund performance

Other donations to this fund can be made as memorials or tributes to friends and family on their special occasions. Please make checks payable to *Holy Comforter* and write *Lineberger Scholarship Ministry* on the memo line to ensure your gift is credited appropriately.

As the fund grows, we will be able to give more help to students.

Thank You, The Scholarship Ministry

Holy Comforter Lutheran Church

216 N. Main Street Belmont, NC 28012 704-825-2483 <u>holycomforter@gmail.com</u>

SUNDAY SCHEDULE: 9:30 am Sunday School, 10:30 am The Service Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30 am — 3:00 pm

Micah Kearney, Pastor email: MKearney@holyc.org Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster Beka Forst, Director of Youth & Family Ministries Dianne Lail, Communications/Office Manager Teresa Keller, Parish Nurse