

# Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## The Third Sunday of Lent



### WELCOME

**PRELUDE:** *Let All Together Praise The Lord* . . . . . 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 In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage.

**C Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Holy One,

**C we confess that we have wandered far from you: we have not trusted your promises, we have ignored your prophets in our own day, we have squandered our inheritance of grace, we have failed to recognize you in our midst. Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you. Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbor. Amen.**

P Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love. In ☩ Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven. God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love.

**C Amen.**

# GATHERING SONG: *Through The Night Of Doubt and Sorrow . . . All Stand & Sing*



1 Through the night of doubt and sor - row, on - ward  
 2 One the light of God's own pres - ence on the  
 3 One the strain that lips of thou - sands lift as  
 4 On - ward, there - fore, sis - ters, broth - ers; on - ward,



goes the pil - grim band, sing - ing songs of ex - pec -  
 ran - somed peo - ple shed, chas - ing far the gloom and  
 from the heart of one; one the con - flict, one the  
 with the cross our aid. Bear its shame, and fight its



ta - tion, march - ing to the prom - ised land. Clear be -  
 ter - ror, bright - ning all the path we tread. One the  
 per - il, one the march in God be - gun. One the  
 bat - tle till we rest be - neath its shade. Soon shall



fore us through the dark - ness gleams and burns the  
 ob - ject of our jour - ney, one the faith which  
 glad - ness of re - joic - ing on the far e -  
 come the great a - wak - 'ning; soon the rend - ing



guid - ing light; pil - grim clasps the hand of  
 nev - er tires, one the ear - nest look - ing  
 ter - nal shore, where the one al - might - y  
 of the tomb! Then the scat - t'ring of all



pil - grim step - ping fear - less through the night.  
 for - ward, one the hope our God in - spires.  
 Fa - ther reigns in love for - ev - er - more.  
 shad - ows, and the end of toil and gloom.

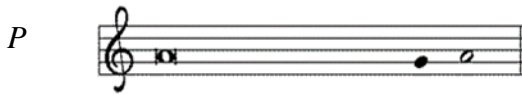
Text: Bernhard S. Ingemann, 1789–1862; tr. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924, alt.  
 Music: EBENEZER, Thomas J. Williams, 1869–1944

## GREETING

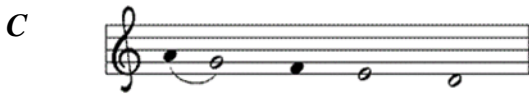
**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** And also with you.

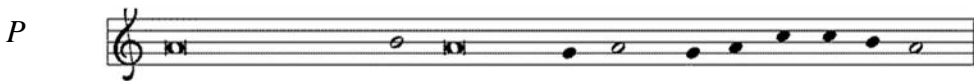
## KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



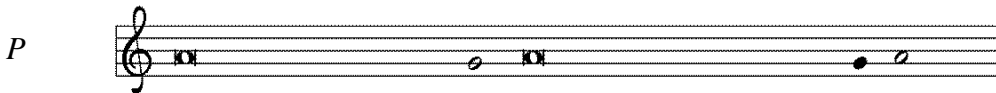
Lord, have mer - cy.



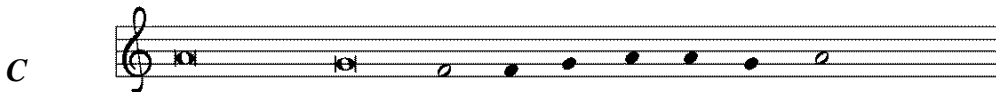
For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



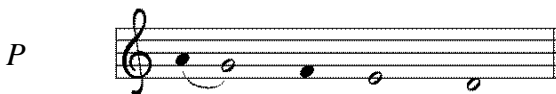
Lord, have mer - cy.



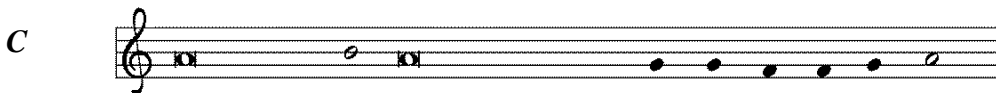
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,





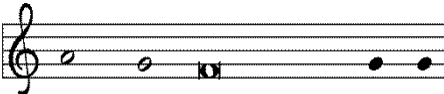

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,

<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Congregation</i>
 <p>let us pray to the Lord.</p>	 <p>Lord have mer - cy.</p>
 <p>Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord.</p>	 <p>A - men.</p>

## 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.

## FIRST READING:

**Isaiah 55:1-9**

A reading from the fifty fifth chapter of Isaiah.

*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.

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 first Corinthians.

*Paul uses images from Hebrew Scriptures 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.*

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

down in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup>Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup>Do 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.” <sup>8</sup>We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup>We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup>And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup>These 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. <sup>12</sup>So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. <sup>13</sup>No 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

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and

mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in

stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

**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.*

<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.’”

**P** The gospel of the Lord.

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

**SERMON** ..... Pastor Micah

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

# HYMN OF THE DAY: *Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer.* . . . . . Stand & Sing



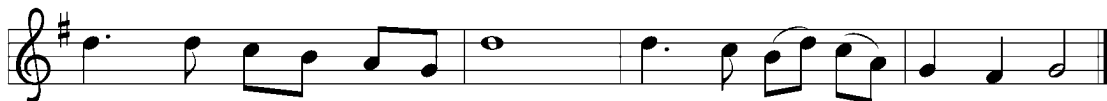
1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem-er, pil - grim through this  
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun-tain where the heal - ing  
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me  
 wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me  
 fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me



with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
 all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,  
 safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es



feed me now and ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.  
 shield me with your might-y arm, shield me with your might-y arm.  
 I will raise for - ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

Text: William Williams, 1717–1791; tr. William Williams and Peter Williams, 1722–1796, alt.  
 Music: CWM RHONDDA, John Hughes, 1873–1932

## 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

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

*A brief silence.*

We pray for the church around the world in all its forms: for pastors, deacons, bishops, chaplains, and mission developers; for church councils, committee chairs, and all lay ministry leaders; for congregations that contemplate difficult decisions about the future of their ministry. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

For the health of this planet and the well-being of its creatures: for lands impacted by droughts and at risk of wildfires; for fig trees and vineyards that produce fruit for our nourishment and delight; for animal habitats threatened by climate change. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

For those called into positions of civic responsibility: for judges, attorneys, and court administrators tasked with uncovering truth and delivering justice; for activists and community leaders who cast a vision of a more compassionate and equitable society. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

For those who call upon you for mercy: for all who live in poverty and experience hunger; for any who feel tested beyond their strength; for those who are hospitalized or near death, and for all in need of healing. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For the advocacy efforts of this congregation: for those whose faith leads them to speak difficult truths and engage in difficult conversations with policymakers; for those who promote mercy over vengeance or retaliation. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

For those whose earthly journeys have ended, we give thanks. With the saints, we praise you for the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

## **PEACE**

**P** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C And also with you.**

**ANTHEM** *Inside Your Kingdom* . . . . . Church Choir

In your image you have made me, beautiful within your sight. In your house I'll live forever. In your mercy I delight.

Not your anger, but your goodness follows me for all my days. And your strength preserves and shields me, and you hold for me a place:

*Refrain:* Inside Your Kingdom. I know that I will be inside your Kingdom.

The glory I will see, a place of rest for eternity,

Inside your kingdom waits for me.

You have set for me a banquet of a feast that never ends, And your love has freely given, on this truth I can depend. With your water you have cleansed me, by your cross and by your grace. I am washed in your forgiveness, and you welcome me by name: (*Refrain*)

## OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray.

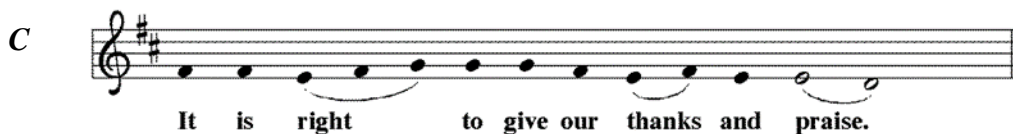
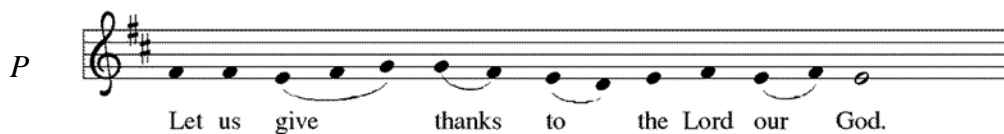
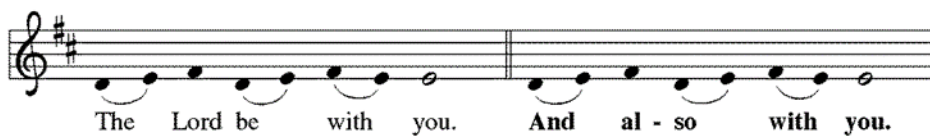
C Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation. Now we gather at your feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

### DIALOGUE

*Presider*

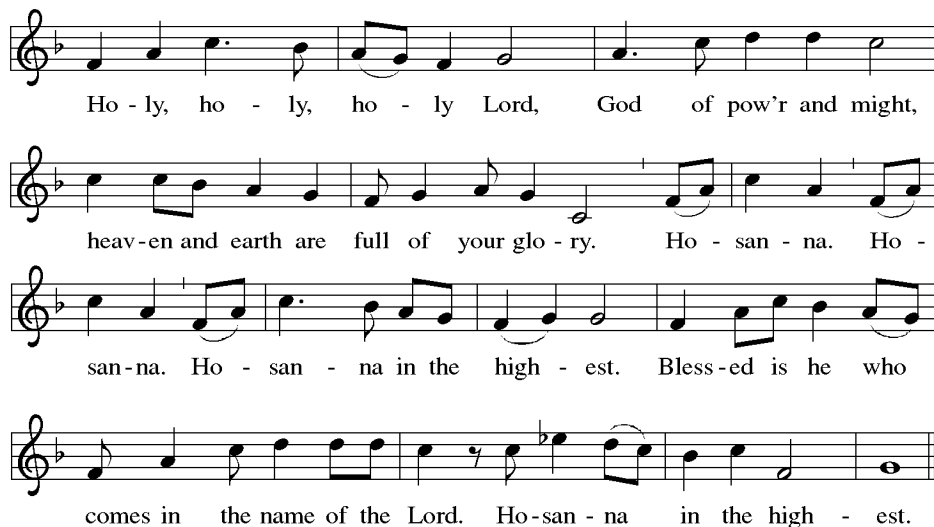
*Congregation*



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

C Thanks be to God.



## COMMUNION

*During communion the congregation will be invited forward by rows, starting in the back, and will receive the bread and wine at the front of the aisle. You will then return to your seat where you may briefly remove your mask to eat and drink, and then quickly replace it. Your cups may be placed in the small receptacle on the aisle side of each pew.*

## LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on

us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have

mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the

sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

**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** Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life. Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need. Amen.

## BLESSING

**P** You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey. Almighty God, motherly, majestic, and mighty, ✠ bless you this day and always.

**C Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN:** *Restore In Us, O God.* . . . . . Stand & Sing

1 Restore in us, O God,  
the splendor of your love;  
renew your image in our hearts,  
and all our sins remove.

2 O Spirit, wake in us  
the wonder of your pow'r;  
from fruitless fear unfurl our lives  
like springtime bud and flow'r.

3 Bring us, O Christ, to share  
the fullness of your joy;  
baptize us in the risen life  
that death cannot destroy.

4 Three-personed God, fulfill  
the promise of your grace,  
that we, when all our searching ends,  
may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

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## SENDING

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

**C Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE:** *Jesus Refuge Of The Weary* . . . . . Schack

\*A special thanks to our Lector Jim Buell

\*\* The Flowers are given by Jerri Wesson in honor of Mike Wesson's 71<sup>st</sup> birthday!

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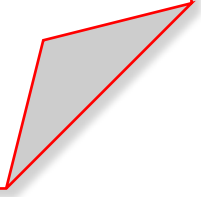
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# *Holy Doodles*



**Holy Comforter Lutheran Church**

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Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: [mkearney@holyc.org](mailto:mkearney@holyc.org)

Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - email: [rforst@holyc.org](mailto:rforst@holyc.org)

Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

Sandra Askey, Office Manager