

Lord, have mercy.

P *For your people here who have come to give you praise,
for the strength to live your word, let us pray to the Lord.*

C **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**

P *Help, save, and defend us, O God.*

C **Amen.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P *Eternal God,*

C **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. Amen!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Text by Robert Robinson, Tune by J Wyeth

Jim Pierce

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:1-9

*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.

Reflection

Have you ever been hungry? This text is written to people who are hungry. I'm not talking about hungry so go to the refrigerator and see what you can find. I'm talking about hungrier than I have ever been (thankfully), and not sure where the next bit of food would come from. I've read about hunger like that. God speaks to those who are that hungry, not necessarily for food, but for something that only God can provide. God says to those who are that hungry something that we seldom hear in our culture: Come, buy and eat! Even if you have no money, come and eat your fill of what will satisfy you! (verse 1) To whom is God speaking? (verses 2-3) This is God renewing the covenant of graciousness and mercy with the people. What was God's covenant with David? (2 Samuel 7:4-17) What is "steadfast love"? God promised that to David, but now who are the people God is making this promise to? (verses 4-5) One of the reasons that we don't hear this much is that we respond to those who have done bad things (or what we consider bad things) with anger and punishment. Why does God want to call those who are wicked and unrighteous? (verses 6-7) What will God do to them, the ones that we would punish in anger? Why does God not react the way we would? (verses 8-9) Have you ever experienced the merciful kindness and abundant pardon of God? What does that inspire in you? What if, this Lent, we did not so much dwell on our sins, or the sins of others, as on God's love for us? How might that change our Lenten journey?

Psalm 63:1-8

¹O God, you are my God; eager- | ly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there | is
no water.

²**Therefore I have gazed upon you in your | holy place,
that I might behold your power | and your glory.**

³For your steadfast love is better than | life itself;
my lips shall | give you praise.

⁴**So will I bless you as long | as I live
and lift up my hands | in your name.**

⁵My spirit is content, as with the rich- | est of foods,
and my mouth praises you with | joyful lips,

⁶**when I remember you up- | on my bed,**

and meditate on you in | the night watches.

⁷For you have | been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I | will rejoice.

⁸**My whole being | clings to you;
your right hand | holds me fast.**

Reflection

As you read this psalm, reflect on the invitation from God we hear in the Isaiah text. As you think about this, remember or experience the kind of hunger and thirst described in verse 1. The psalmist reflects on what Isaiah has written about, God's steadfast love for us. What is the psalmist's response? (verses 2-4) Is the psalmist still hungry and thirsty? (verse 5) Why not? (verses 6-8) How might this psalm guide us in our response to God's love on our Lenten journey?

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

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.

Reflection

Paul reflects on Israel's history. What did the Israelites receive, how did they live, as they left Egypt and went through the wilderness? (verses 1-4) How did the Israelites respond? (See, for example, Exodus 32) As we read the Isaiah text and the Psalm, we might be under the impression that God will be pleased with us whatever we do. Paul wants to disabuse the Corinthians of that notion. What was the result of the Israelites' disobedience? (verse 5) What does Paul warn the Corinthians about? (verses 6-10) Why does he remind them (and us) of these things? (verses 11-12) Verse 13 is often misquoted as saying that God will not "put more on us than we can handle," mostly by people who feel they are at the end of their rope. I heard it a lot when I was a chaplain, listening to people who didn't think they could do it themselves, and they were right! What is the promise that God makes to us that Paul reminds us of here?

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

pg. 189

Let your steadfast love
come to us, O Lord.
Let your steadfast love
come to us, O Lord.
Save us as you promised;
we will trust your word.
Let your steadfast love
come to us, O Lord.

***GOSPEL**

Luke 13:31-35

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.’”

Reflection

What story does Jesus hear from “some present”? (verse 1) This short story reminds us that Pontius Pilate was a very horrible ruler. That reminds Jesus of another story of bad things happening. (verse 4) Why do bad things happen? Is it the fault of those they happen to? Who will escape bad things, especially death? This is a reminder (as Paul’s reminder of the Israelites in the wilderness) of our need to repent. So Jesus tells a parable. It’s tempting to try to assign a character to each character in the parable. Why is the owner frustrated? (verses 6-7) What does the gardener do? (verse 8) “One more year.” Perhaps we can hear God pleading with us for those with whom we have lost patience, “One more year....” What is God’s desire for us? (remember Isaiah and the Psalm?) How will God’s mercy and love guide our Lenten journey?

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

“Seek Christ”

Rev. Roger Lenander

O Christ the same, through all our story's pages--
our loves and hopes, our failures and our fears;
eternal Lord, the king of all the ages,
unchanging still amid the passing years:
O living Word, the source of all creation,
who spread the skies and set the stars ablaze;
O Christ the same, who wrought our whole salvation,
we bring our thanks for all our yesterdays.

O Christ the same, the friend of sinners, sharing
our inmost thoughts, the secrets none can hide;
still as of old upon your body bearing
the marks of love in triumph glorified.
O Son of Man, who stooped for us from heaven--
O Prince of life, in all your saving power;
O Christ the same, to whom our hearts are given:
we bring our thanks for this the present hour.

O Christ the same, secure within whose keeping
our lives and loves, our days and years remain;
our work and rest, our waking and our sleeping,
our calm and storm, our pleasure and our pain:
O Lord of love, for all our joys and sorrows,
for all our hopes when earth shall fade and flee;
O Christ the same, beyond our brief tomorrows,
we bring our thanks for all that is to be.

***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!**

***PRAYER SONG**

"Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying"

ELW 752

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.**

***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 Phil, Sarah, Linda, Roxanna, Dorothy, Trina, Linda, Elaine, Lisa and her baby Lara, and for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (pause for 10 seconds)*. 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!

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

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

C **And also with you!**

OFFERTORY

“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”

arr. Mark Hayes

Praise Band

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

“Fill My Cup, Lord”

Fill my cup, Lord,
I lift it up, Lord.
Come and quench
this thirsting of my soul.
Bread of heaven,
feed me till I want no more;
fill my cup,
fill it up and make me whole.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

P *Generous God,*

C **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!**

***DIALOGUE**

P *The Lord be with you.*

C **And also with you.**

P *Lift up your hearts.*

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

***PREFACE**

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You call your people to cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,*

*with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

**Holy, holy, holy
Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.
Hosanna in the highest.**

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P *In 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.*

*Again, 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.*

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P *Gathered together in one baptism, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

C **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen!**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P *Christ has prepared the feast. Come to the table where all are welcomed home.*

LAMB OF GOD

Steven Eulberg

Lamb of God
Lamb of God
you take away the sin,
you take away the sin,
you take away the sin of the world
Lamb of God
Lamb of God
you take away the sin,
you take away the sin,
you take away the sin of the world
Grant us peace,
grant us peace,
grant us peace
grant us peace.

***BLESSING**

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

C **Amen!**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P *Tender and merciful one,*

C **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!**

***BENEDICTION**

P *God, who fills the creation with abundance,
Christ, who spreads his arms in forgiveness,
Holy Spirit, who draws ever near to us,
✠ bless you and bring you to life everlasting.*

C **Amen!**

***SENDING SONG**

"Go Make a Difference"

Refrain

Go make a diff'rence
We can make a diff'rence
Go make a diff'rence in the world
Go make a diff'rence
We can make a diff'rence
Go make a diff'rence in the world

We are the salt of the earth
Called to let the people see
The love of God in you and me
We are the light of the world
Not to be hidden but be seen
Go make a diff'rence in the world *Refrain*

We are the hands of Christ
Reaching out to those in need
The face of God for all to see
We are the spirit of hope
We are the voice of peace
Go make a diff'rence in the world *Refrain*

So let your love shine on
Let it shine for all to see
Go make a diff'rence in the world
And the Spirit of Christ
Will be with us as we go
Go make a diff'rence in the world *Refrain*

***DISMISSAL**

℘ *Go in peace. Remember the poor.*

☩ **Thanks be to God!**