



Sunday, March 3, 2024
Third Sunday in Lent, Year B

All Saints
Lutheran Church,
ELCA

Meeting people where
they're at and
connecting them to the
Full LIFE of Christ.

Centering Song

Don't Be Afraid

ACS 1027

Don't Be Afraid

Don't be a-fraid. My love is stron-ger, my love is stron-ger than your
fear. Don't be a-fraid. My love is stron-ger and
I have prom-ised, prom-ised to be al-ways near.

Announcements

Introduction

The third covenant in this year's Lenten readings is the central one of Israel's history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God's liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.

Call to Worship

People of God, we gather for worship to practice joy:
not because our lives are perfect, but because joy is resilient,
God's gift for every season and the wellspring at the heart of our
faith.

When our sins feel heavy,

we practice joy.

When floods rise and fall,

we practice joy.

When hope surprises us,

we practice joy.

When God sets people free,

we practice joy.

When Jesus heals us,

we practice joy.

When we are called,

we practice joy.

When we endure,

we practice joy.

We practice joy together,
and God is with us.

Confession and Forgiveness

People of God, the Merciful One already knows everything we confess. By naming our sins and hearing words of forgiveness, we are drawn deeper into relationship with God and one another. Let's bring before God what we have done wrong and what we've failed to do, trusting that we will receive the joy of being forgiven.
(Selah)

God of abundant goodness,
**we have hurt those we love,
those far from us,
Ourselves, and your creation
by what we do and by what we neglect.
We cling to disappointments, judgments, and failures
and refuse to enjoy what you give.
We are too content when injustice, violence, and hardship
plague our neighbors.
We ignore the gift of your presence
in times both tragic and triumphant.
Forgive us for what we have done
and for what we have failed to do.
Pour out on us the joy of your presence
and heal what we have harmed.**

Friends, receive these joyful words:
You are entirely and completely forgiven for all of your sins.
You are entirely and completely welcomed as God's beloved child.
You are released to live out God's love in a world that needs such
joy. **Amen.**

- 1 Built on a rock the church shall stand,
even when steeples are falling;
crumbled have spires in ev'ry land,
bells still are chiming and calling—
calling the young and old to rest,
calling the souls of those distressed,
longing for life everlasting.

- 3 Christ builds a house of living stones:
we are his own habitation;
he fills our hearts, his humble thrones,
granting us life and salvation.
Where two or three will seek his face,
he in their midst will show his grace,
blessings upon them bestowing.

- 4 Yet in this house, an earthly frame,
Jesus the children is blessing;
hither we come to praise his name,
faith in our Savior confessing.
Jesus to us his Spirit sent,
making with us his covenant,
granting his children the kingdom.

- 5 Through all the passing years, O Lord,
grant that, when church bells are ringing,
many may come to hear your Word,
who here this promise is bringing:
"I know my own, my own know me;
you, not the world, my face shall see;
my peace I leave with you. Amen."

Confession and Forgiveness

We gather because God brought us here. We meet because Jesus sets the table. We worship because the Holy Spirit + gives us life.

Amen.

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

We wander. We run away.

**We think we can do things our own way
but we end up in messes of our own making
and problems we can't solve.**

**Find us when we are stuck,
in a Pit of despair or on a boat to nowhere.**

Reveal our faults and forgive our sin.

**Send us back out with words and actions
to help the world that you love so much.**

None of us can flee from the love of God, not in the heights of heaven or the pit of grief in loss.

God will always find us with love that beckons us home. So hear the words that each of us need:

You are loved beyond all knowing.

You are forgiven in the name of Jesus. +

You are free. You are unfinished. You are beloved.

Amen.

Kyrie and Canticle (ELW Setting 3)

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, **our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Children's Sermon and Song

I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy....

Hear The Word of God through Scripture

First Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.

1God spoke all these words:

2I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 3you shall have no other gods before me.

4You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, 6but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses God's name.

8Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 10But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns.

11For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

12Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

13You shall not murder.

14You shall not commit adultery.

15You shall not steal.

16You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 from The Message

The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.

18-21 The Message that points to Christ on the Cross seems like sheer silliness to those hellbent on destruction, but for those on the way of salvation it makes perfect sense. This is the way God works, and most powerfully as it turns out. It's written,

I'll turn conventional wisdom on its head,
I'll expose so-called experts as shams.

So where can you find someone truly wise, truly educated, truly intelligent in this day and age? Hasn't God exposed it all as pretentious nonsense? Since the world in all its fancy wisdom never had a clue when it came to knowing God, God in his

wisdom took delight in using what the world considered stupid—**preaching, of all things!**—to bring those who trust him into the way of salvation.

22-25 While Jews clamor for miraculous demonstrations and Greeks go in for philosophical wisdom, we go right on proclaiming Christ, the Crucified. Jews treat this like an anti-miracle—and Greeks pass it off as absurd. But to us who are personally called by God himself—both Jews and Greeks—Christ is God’s ultimate miracle and wisdom all wrapped up in one. Human wisdom is so cheap, so impotent, next to the seeming absurdity of God. Human strength can’t begin to compete with God’s “weakness.”

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

ELW page 142, Setting 3

Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love,
and abounding in steadfast love.

Holy Gospel according to St. John 2:13-22 from the Message Tear Down This Temple...

13-14 When the Passover Feast, celebrated each spring by the Jews, was about to take place, Jesus traveled up to Jerusalem. He found the Temple teeming with people selling cattle and sheep and doves. The loan sharks were also there in full strength.

15-17 Jesus put together a whip out of strips of leather and chased them out of the Temple, stampeding the sheep and cattle, upending the tables of the loan sharks, spilling coins left and right. He told the dove merchants, “Get your things out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a shopping mall!”

That's when his disciples remembered the Scripture, "Zeal for your house consumes me."

18-19 But the Jews were upset. They asked, "What credentials can you present to justify this?" Jesus answered, "Tear down this Temple and in three days I'll put it back together."

20-22 They were indignant: "It took forty-six years to build this Temple, and you're going to rebuild it in three days?" But Jesus was talking about his body as the Temple. Later, after he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this. They then put two and two together and believed both what was written in Scripture and what Jesus had said.

This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ! **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Liberating Joy!

Pastor Jules

Canticle of the Turning

ELW 723

- 1 My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.**

- 2 Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn. **Refrain**

Refrain

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.**

- 3 From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. **Refrain**
- 4 Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around. **Refrain**

Prayers of Intercession | O God We Call – ACS 1075

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

You alone are God. We thank you for the gift of sabbath rest. Awaken the church to the mystery of your presence and give us glad hearts as we receive the good news of your deliverance. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You renew creation. Drive out those who would make the earth a marketplace. Protect rainforests, mountaintops, oceans, and wilderness areas from commercial exploitation. Unite nations, policymakers, and businesses in efforts to reduce carbon emissions. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You judge the nations. We pray for an end to war and strife in every land (regions in conflict may be named). Strengthen international efforts to negotiate peace and provide humanitarian aid to people fleeing from conflict. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring healing and hope. We give thanks for physicians, nurses, researchers, therapists, and public health workers who prevent and treat illness. We pray for any who are sick (especially). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You abide with your people. Sustain any in this community undergoing life transitions: marriage, divorce, childbirth, adoption, moving, graduation, employment change, or a death in the family (especially). We pray for those preparing for baptism. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring life from death. We remember our loved ones who have died, confident that they have new life in you. May we trust that nothing can separate us from your love. Hear us, O God. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Peace is Shared

Offering Prayer

Jesus, you are the bread of life
and the host of this meal.

Bless these gifts that we have gathered
that all people may know your goodness.

Feed us not only with this holy food
but with hunger for justice and peace.

We pray this in your name.

Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

God is with you.

And also with you.

Rejoice with full hearts.

We offer them to God.

Let us give thanks to our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

God, there is no time, no place where you are not present,
and there is no time, no place where we should not practice the
joy of praising you: even here, even now, in our ordinary lives.
As we give thanks, we join the choir of our ancestors and our
heirs and all God's angels as they tune their breath to the rhythm
of joy and sing of heaven despite the world.

The Sanctus is Sung!

ELW 144, Setting 3

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna,
hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

On the last night of his life, as evening fell,
Jesus sat down to dinner with his friends.
He took the bread, gave thanks, broke it,
and passed it around the table for everyone to eat, saying,
 This is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

When the meal had ended, the shadows closing in,
Jesus took the cup, blessed it,
and invited everyone 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.

In the heart of fear and pain,
God plants the seed of our joy:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Send your Spirit upon this bread and cup, Christ's body and
blood, the food that gives us the strength to persist until joy
appears.
Send your Spirit upon us and fortify us to be your body, too,
a wellspring of hope for a world in need.

Communion Music

Lamb of God

ELW 146, Setting 3

Create in Me a Clean Heart ELW 185

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

How Great Thou Art

ELW 856

1 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed;

Refrain

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!

2 When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; Refrain

3 But when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross my burden gladly bearing
he bled and died to take away my sin; Refrain

4 When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art!"
Refrain

Blessing of The Meal

Prayer After Communion

Heavenly Creator, we come to You in unity and reverence. We thank You for the gift of communion and the bond we share in our faith. May our love for You and each other draw us closer together. Guide us in our faith journey and help us remain humble and accepting of one another. May we be united in spirit, mind, and heart to honor You with our lives. Keep us in Your loving embrace, and let Your mighty power flow through us so that our unity can be a source of strength and **joy** for all. Amen.

Benediction

Go with blessing.

The One who wove joy throughout the whole cosmos
weaves joy within your own heart.

The One who experienced all our human joys and sorrows
travels right beside you.

The One who whispers joy to our hearts
is present within you.

You are blessed in the name of God, Holy Three in One.

Amen.

Closing Hymn:

In Christ alone, my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm

What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
'Til on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live, I live

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

Sending of You, the Disciples of Christ

Go now and proclaim the Persistent JOY of God in your lives.
Thanks be to God. Amen.