

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 23, 2025

Welcome/Announcements

What's the Deal with Eating and Drinking?

As We Gather

A main emphasis of our Lenten discipline is our struggle against temptations to sin and toward true repentance that leads to living faithful Christian lives. As our physical well-being depends in part on healthy choices of diet, in today's Readings God uses the metaphor of eating and drinking to warn and encourage His people to avoid the temptations of the world and our own sin that leads us away from God and to rely constantly on the forgiveness and faith that God provides to enable us to lead godly lives. In the Epistle, Paul has in mind how God provides for us in His Word and Sacraments. We are to remember not only that we *were* baptized but that we *are* baptized, meaning God still provides us with saving, bold faith that relies on His mercy and grace because we belong to Him now. The center of the Divine Service is the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood, through which we are given forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation—all the benefits won for us by the cross and sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf. Today we are encouraged to receive and rely on God's gifts and provision constantly, that we may maintain a healthy and strong faith in the face of all adversities and challenges.

PREPARATION

Opening Hymn

LSB 696 O God, My Faithful God

1 O God, my faithful God,
True fountain ever flowing,
Without whom nothing is,
All perfect gifts bestowing:
Give me a healthy frame,
And may I have within

A conscience free from blame,
A soul unstained by sin.

- 2 Grant me the strength to do
With ready heart and willing
Whatever You command,
My calling here fulfilling;
That I do what I should
While trusting You to bless
The outcome for my good,
For You must give success.
- 3 Keep me from saying words
That later need recalling;
Guard me lest idle speech
May from my lips be falling;
But when within my place
I must and ought to speak,
Then to my words give grace
Lest I offend the weak.
- 4 Lord, let me win my foes
With kindly words and actions,
And let me find good friends
For counsel and correction.
Help me, as You have taught,
To love both great and small
And by Your Spirit's might
To live in peace with all.
- 5 Let me depart this life
Confiding in my Savior;
By grace receive my soul
That it may live forever;
And let my body have
A quiet resting place
Within a Christian grave;
And let it sleep in peace.

6 And on that final day
When all the dead are waking,
Stretch out Your mighty hand,
My deathly slumber breaking.
Then let me hear Your voice,
Redeem this earthly frame,
And bid me to rejoice
With those who love Your name.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
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Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 85:4, 7

P Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
C and put away Your indignation toward us!

P Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,
C and grant us Your salvation.

Confession and Absolution

1 Corinthians 10:13

P God has made us His people by our Baptism into Christ. He graciously provides us with all we need to live in true faith, confidence, and hope. Let us present ourselves before Him, confessing our sins and need for His mercy, and receive His promised help.

C Almighty God, our Father in heaven, we come to You seeking Your forgiveness and the strengthening of our faith that we may live and serve You faithfully. We confess all our sins against You and against those whom we have hurt or failed to help. Even our very thoughts and desires have been soiled with sin. In true sorrow, we ask for Your grace, Your forgiveness, and that You strengthen our faith, all for the sake and in the praise of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

P “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful.” Upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and

by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

WORD

Introit for Lent 3

Psalm 5:4–8; antiphon: Psalm 1:6

C For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

A For You are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil may not dwell with You.

The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes;
You hate all evildoers.

You destroy those who speak lies;
the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

But I, through the abundance of Your steadfast love, will enter Your house.

I will bow down toward Your holy temple in the fear of You.

Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies;
make Your way straight before me.

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

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Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Ezekiel 33:7–20

⁷“So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

¹⁰“And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said: ‘Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away because of them. How then can we live?’ ¹¹Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

¹²“And you, son of man, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his wickedness, and the righteous shall not be able to live by his righteousness when he sins. ¹³Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in his injustice that he has done he shall die. ¹⁴Again, though I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, ¹⁵if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ¹⁶None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live.

¹⁷“Yet your people say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just,’ when it is their own way that is not just. ¹⁸When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it. ¹⁹And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by them. ²⁰Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Epistle

1 Corinthians 10:1–13

¹I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers 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, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and 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, ¹⁰nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. ¹¹Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹²Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse

2 Peter 3:9b, c

P The Lord is patient toward you,

C not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Holy Gospel

Luke 13:1–9

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the thirteenth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹There were some present at that very time who told [Jesus] about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

⁶And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it

down. Why should it use up the ground?’⁸ And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. ⁹Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day

LSB 423 Jesus, Refuge of the Weary

- 1 Jesus, refuge of the weary,
Blest Redeemer, whom we love,
Fountain in life’s desert dreary,
Savior from the world above:
Often have Your eyes, offended,
Gazed upon the sinner’s fall;
Yet upon the cross extended,
You have borne the pain of all.

- 2 Do we pass that cross unheeding,
Breathing no repentant vow,
Though we see You wounded, bleeding,
See Your thorn-encircled brow?
Yet Your sinless death has brought us
Life eternal, peace, and rest;
Only what Your grace has taught us
Calms the sinner’s deep distress.

- 3 Jesus, may our hearts be burning
With more fervent love for You;
May our eyes be ever turning
To behold Your cross anew
Till in glory, parted never
From the blessed Savior’s side,
Graven in our hearts forever,
Dwell the cross, the Crucified.

Text: Girolamo Savonarola, 1452–98; tr. Jane F. Wilde, 1826–96, alt.
Text: Public domain

Sermon

Guest Pastor, Rev. Ted Rellstab
“Passing the Test”
1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✝ everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs. For the faithful proclamation of Christ's saving name, that God's people be strengthened in the true faith and His kingdom extended, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the Holy Christian Church throughout the world and for all who confess the name of Christ, that God guard and defend us from the temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For all who partake this day of Christ's holy body and blood, that in our eating and drinking we receive the benefits of forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life and a foretaste of the feast to come, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the government and all who have been set into positions of leadership, that they use the authority entrusted to them honorably and for the good of all people, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For those who are sick, all who are injured or suffer in body or soul, that God grant healing to their bodies and strength to bear their infirmities with patience and trust, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Offering: If you were prepared to bring an offering today, you may leave it as you exit the sanctuary. Member/Visitor and Prayer Request cards may be left with your offering as well. Thank you

Lord's Prayer

C **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.**

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
- C** Amen.

Closing Hymn

LSB 433 Glory Be to Jesus

- 1 Glory be to Jesus,
Who in bitter pains
Poured for me the lifeblood
From His sacred veins!
- 2 Grace and life eternal
In that blood I find;
Blest be His compassion,
Infinitely kind!
- 3 Blest through endless ages
Be the precious stream
Which from endless torment
Did the world redeem!
- 4 Abel's blood for vengeance
Pleaded to the skies;
But the blood of Jesus
For our pardon cries.
- 5 Oft as earth exulting
Wafts its praise on high,

Angel hosts rejoicing
Make their glad reply.

6 Lift we, then, our voices,
Swell the mighty flood;
Louder still and louder
Praise the precious blood!

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