

# FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 30, 2025

## Welcome/Announcements

**Makes You Want to Sing!**

### As We Gather

Traditionally, the Fourth Sunday in Lent has been known as Laetare Sunday, from the Latin Introit *Laetare Jerusalem*: “Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her” (Isaiah 66:10). Though still in the penitential season of Lent, this Sunday is a relaxation from normal Lenten discipline. Flowers may appear, and ministers may wear rose-colored vestments as a lighter shade of violet.

Today’s service is inspired by the Old Testament Reading of Isaiah, the First Song of Isaiah: “Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth” (Isaiah 12:5). In the joy of the faithful father in Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son, the forgiveness of our sin and reconciliation with God as His baptized sons and daughters, well, it just makes you want to sing! So we shall!

## PREPARATION

### Opening Hymn

#### **LSB 528 Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing**

- 1 Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer’s praise,  
The glories of my God and King,  
The triumphs of His grace!
  
- 2 My gracious Master and my God,  
Assist me to proclaim,  
To spread through all the earth abroad,  
The honors of Thy name.

- 3 Jesus! The name that charms our fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease;  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,  
'Tis life and health and peace.
- 4 He breaks the pow'r of canceled sin;  
He sets the pris'ner free.  
His blood can make the foulest clean;  
His blood avails for me.
- 5 Look unto Him, ye nations; own  
Your God, ye fallen race.  
Look and be saved through faith alone,  
Be justified by grace.
- 6 See all your sins on Jesus laid;  
The Lamb of God was slain.  
His soul was once an off'ring made  
For ev'ry soul of man.
- 7 To God all glory, praise, and love  
Be now and ever giv'n  
By saints below and saints above,  
The Church in earth and heav'n.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-88, alt.  
Text: Public domain

### Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

### Opening Sentences

*Isaiah 12:2*

- P** Behold, God is my salvation;  
**C** I will trust, and will not be afraid;
- P** for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song,  
**C** and He has become my salvation.

## Confession and Absolution

*1 Corinthians 10:13; Psalm 96:2*

- P** Beloved in the Lord, Paul reassures us, saying, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability.” Let us with confidence and gladness enter God’s presence, confessing our sins and receiving His grace, assurance, and forgiveness.
- C** **Lord God, we are exceedingly glad to enter Your house this day, for we have heard and believe in the invitation of Your loving kindness and redemption through Jesus Christ, Your Son. In the trust and hope of the faith You have given us as Your baptized children, we confess to You all our sins and failures to share Your gifts of mercy with others. Grant us the forgiveness for which we ask and give us a renewed heart and spirit to sing Your praises in worship of You and to the joy of all.**
- P** “Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.” 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 4

*Psalm 51:2–6; antiphon: v. 1*

- C** **Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.**
- A** Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin!  
For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.  
Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight,  
so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.  
Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
and in sin did my mother conceive me.  
Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being,  
and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

**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.  
Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love;  
according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Text: ESV®

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## Salutation

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

## Prayer of the Day

**P** Let us pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; 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

*Isaiah 12:1–6*

<sup>1</sup>You will say in that day:

“I will give thanks to you, O LORD,  
for though you were angry with me,  
your anger turned away,  
that you might comfort me.

<sup>2</sup>“Behold, God is my salvation;  
I will trust, and will not be afraid;  
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song,  
and he has become my salvation.”

<sup>3</sup>With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. <sup>4</sup>And you will say in that day:

“Give thanks to the LORD,  
call upon his name,  
make known his deeds among the peoples,  
proclaim that his name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup>“Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;

let this be made known in all the earth.  
6Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion,  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## Epistle

*2 Corinthians 5:16–21*

16From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## Verse

*Luke 15:22a, 24a*

**P** The father said to his servants,

**C** **“This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.”**

## Holy Gospel

*Luke 15:1–3, 11b–32*

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

**C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

1Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear [Jesus]. 2And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”

3So he told them this parable: . . .

“There was a man who had two sons. 12And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. 13Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in

reckless living. <sup>14</sup>And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup>And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

<sup>17</sup>“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’” <sup>20</sup>And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. <sup>24</sup>For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup>“Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. <sup>27</sup>And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ <sup>28</sup>But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, <sup>29</sup>but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ <sup>31</sup>And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

## Hymn of the Day

### LSB 425 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

1 When I survey the wondrous cross  
On which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

- 2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
Save in the death of Christ, my God;  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to His blood.
- 3 See, from His head, His hands, His feet  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?
- 4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a tribute far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748  
Text: Public domain

## Sermon

Guest Pastor, Rev. Ted Rellstab  
A Tale of Two Idiots  
Luke 15:1-3, 11-31

## Apostles' Creed

**☩ 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. You are God; we praise You.

**C** **You are the Lord; we acclaim You,**

**P** You are the eternal Father;

**C** **all creation worships You.**

**P** To You all angels, all the powers of heaven, sing in endless praise.

**C** **The glorious company of apostles praise You.**

**P** The noble fellowship of prophets praise You.

**C** **The white-robed army of martyrs praise You.**

**P** You, Christ, are the king of glory, the eternal Son of the Father.

**C** **You became man to set us free,**

**P** You overcame the sting of death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

**C** **You are seated at God's right hand in glory.**

**P** Lord God, we pray for Your whole church on earth. Grant that Your life-giving, life-sustaining Word be rightly proclaimed and firmly believed, that many may come to repentance and faith and the eternal life of Your new creation. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**P** For Your whole creation, we praise and glorify You, almighty God. Let Your blessing be upon seedtime and harvest, commerce and industry, and all the realm of our life together as a nation. Preserve us, O Lord, in justice and honor that we may live in peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**



- P** For all who are in any need, the sick, the hospitalized, the homebound; for the lonely and abandoned; for the oppressed and the afflicted, come to all with healing, hope, and restoration of freedom and health. Lord, in Your mercy,  
**C** **hear our prayer.**

*Other intercessions may be added here.*

- P** Throughout the world the holy church acclaim You:  
**C** **Father, of majesty unbounded;**

- P** Your true and only Son, worthy of all worship;  
**C** **and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.**

- P** Come, then, Lord, and help Your people, bought with the price of Your own blood,  
**C** **and bring us with Your saints to glory everlasting. Amen.**

#### 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.**

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

## 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 686 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

- 1 Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for songs of loudest praise.  
While the hope of endless glory  
Fills my heart with joy and love,  
Teach me ever to adore Thee;  
May I still Thy goodness prove.
  
- 2 Here I raise my Ebenezer,  
Hither by Thy help I've come;  
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,  
Safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
Wand'ring from the fold of God;  
He, to rescue me from danger,  
Interposed His precious blood.
  
- 3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be;  
Let that grace now like a fetter  
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;  
Prone to leave the God I love.  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.
  
- 4 Oh, that day when freed from sinning,  
I shall see Thy lovely face;  
Clothed then in the blood-washed linen,

How I'll sing Thy wondrous grace!  
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry;  
Take my ransom'd soul away;  
Send Thine angels soon to carry  
Me to realms of endless day.

Text: Robert Robinson, 1735-90, alt.  
Text: Public domain

## Sunday School Song

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father  
Which 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, amen

Songwriters: Albert Hay Malotte  
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