



Return  
from  
EXILE

**LENTEN MIDWEEK 3**

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
*"A Church for Families, a Family for Everyone"*  
March 23, 2022

## LENTEN MIDWEEK 3

March 23, 2022

**Welcome** to all who are attending our service today. We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

**NURSERY AVAILABLE** We have an unstaffed nursery for your convenience and privacy. The nursery has audio and video so you may hear and see the worship service while attending to your child.

**Holy Communion** is celebrated at the 8:30 service on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month, and at the 11:00 service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays.

(**P**) = Pastor, (**C**) = Congregation, (**A**) = Reader/Assisting)

✠ PREPARATION ✠

RETURN FROM EXILE

“OUT OF EGYPT: THROUGH THE WATER”

**AS WE GATHER:** How does one escape from a bad situation? Where does one turn when surrounded by brutality, slavery, and death? We desire to flee, to find refuge. We need to begin a journey that will set us free, but the result of our efforts is nothing more than going in circles. We seek freedom; we receive greater slavery. We journey toward light; we end up in deeper darkness. How do we escape? It is God who leads us on the journey out of this slavery to sin and death. Where does He take us? To the water—to the banks of the Red Sea, or the River Jordan, or to the baptismal font; here, we are set free. The bondage of sin and death, the claws of Satan, no longer hold us, for we have been through the water. These are the waters of death for our enemies, and they are the waters of life for us. The enemy of our old Adam is drowned in these waters, but the New Adam comes through to new life. We have been rescued from the enemy by the waters and made the children of God.

## HYMN

### **“We Are Exiles From The Garden”** (Tune: “Stricken, Smitten And Afflicted”)

We are exiles from the garden,  
Banished by our sinful choice,  
Terrified to seek His pardon,  
Hiding from our Father’s voice.  
Underneath the branches swaying,  
Sweat and blood fall to the ground.  
In the darkness, Christ is praying;  
He comes forward to be bound.

Leaves will fail our vain concealing  
Our true nakedness and shame.  
We must rend our hearts, revealing  
All our guilt and sinful blame.  
Jesus takes our flesh and sentence  
As His clothes are claimed below.  
We fall down in true repentance;  
His new robe He will bestow.

On the mount, the Lord is waiting  
For the proper sacrifice.  
What is worth His wrath abating?  
Who could pay the dreadful price?  
God the Son will be the scion.  
God the Father will provide.  
God the Spirit points to Zion;  
There, with God, we will abide.

On this journey we are taking,  
We fear not what lies in store.  
Though our feeble wills are breaking,  
We know Christ has gone before.  
As we walk the way completed,  
On His throne, the Savior waits.  
Death and hell have been unseated.  
We behold the open gates!

## INVOCATION

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

## OPENING SENTENCES

- P** Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; hold not Your peace at my tears!
- C** **For I am a sojourner with You, a guest, like all my fathers.**  
*Ps. 39:12*
- P** Thus declares the Lord of hosts: Return to Me, says the Lord of hosts,
- C** **and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts.** *Zech. 1:3*
- P** Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
- C** **let him return to the Lord, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.**  
*Is. 55:7*

## CONFESSION

- P** We are on a journey from a deserved exile to a gracious promised land. Although we merit nothing, because our heavenly Father promises forgiveness and mercy to all who call on Him for Jesus' sake, let us go to Him, confessing our sin.
- Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination*
- P** Heavenly Father, we are fallen creatures, prone to hiding our faults from one another, yet knowing our sins are laid bare before You.
- C** **Forgive us and clothe us with Christ's own righteousness.**
- P** We have erred and strayed from Your way.
- C** **Forgive us and turn our feet toward the paradise You promise.**

- P** We have attempted to placate Your just demands by our own efforts.
- C** **Forgive us for the sake of Your Son's sacrifice in our stead.**
- P** We have often failed to reflect the new life You granted us in our Baptism.
- C** **Forgive us and drown the old Adam within us.**
- P** We have eaten "forbidden fruit" in our disobedient thinking, speaking, and acting.
- C** **Forgive us and grant us the new life won on the tree of the cross.**
- P** We have failed to trust Your care and protection as we journey through this wilderness.
- C** **Forgive us and accompany us on our pilgrim way.**

## FORGIVENESS

- P** Our gracious God, even when we were dead in our trespasses, has made us alive together with Christ (*Eph. 2:5*). You who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ (*Eph. 2:13*). May He who began this good work in you bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (*Phil. 1:6*). In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

## † THE WORD †

### PSALM 66



- <sup>1</sup> Shout for joy to God, | all the earth;\*
- <sup>2</sup> sing the glory of His name;  
give to Him | glorious praise!

**3 Say to God, “How awesome | are Your deeds!\***  
**So great is Your power that Your enemies**  
**come cringing | to You.**

**4 All the earth worships You and sings prais- | es to You;\***  
**they sing praises | to Your name.”**

**5 Come and see what | God has done:\***  
**He is awesome in His deeds toward**  
**the chil- | dren of man.**

**6 He turned the sea into | dry land;\***  
**they passed through the riv- | er on foot.**

**There did we rejoice in Him, <sup>7</sup> who rules by His might**  
**forever, whose eyes keep watch on the | nations—\***  
**let not the rebellious ex- | alt themselves.**

**8 Bless our God, O | peoples;\***  
**let the sound of His | praise be heard,**

**9 who has kept our soul among the | living\***  
**and has not let our | feet slip.**

**Glorify be to the Father and | to the Son\***  
**and to the Holy | Spirit;**  
**as it was in the be- | ginning,\***  
**is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING**

## **Exodus 14:13–31 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. <sup>14</sup> The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.” <sup>15</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. <sup>16</sup> Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. <sup>17</sup> And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. <sup>18</sup> And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.” <sup>19</sup> Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them,

<sup>20</sup> coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night. <sup>21</sup> Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

<sup>22</sup> And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. <sup>23</sup> The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. <sup>24</sup> And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, <sup>25</sup> clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians." <sup>26</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen." <sup>27</sup> So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. <sup>28</sup> The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. <sup>29</sup> But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. <sup>30</sup> Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup> Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## EPISTLE

## Hebrews 3:12–4:3a (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. <sup>14</sup> For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. <sup>15</sup> As it is said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

<sup>16</sup> For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? <sup>17</sup> And with whom was He provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

<sup>4:3</sup> Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. <sup>2</sup> For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. <sup>3</sup> For we who have believed enter that rest, as He has said, “As I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest,’” although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

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

## **HOLY GOSPEL**

**Mark 1:9–13 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> And when He came up out of the water, immediately He saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased.” <sup>12</sup> The Spirit immediately drove Him out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> And He was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And He was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to Him.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

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

## **HYMN “All Christians Who Have Been Baptized”**

All Christians who have been baptized  
Who know the God of heaven  
And in whose daily life is prized  
The name of Christ once given.  
Consider now what Christ has done  
The gifts he gives to everyone  
Baptized into Christ Jesus.

But all of that was washed away  
Immersed and drowned forever.  
The water of your Baptism  
Restored again whatever  
Old Adam and his sin destroyed  
And all our sinful selves employed  
According to our nature.

So use it well! You are made new,  
In Christ a new creation!  
As faithful Christians live and do  
Within your own vocation!  
Until that day when you possess  
His glorious robe of righteousness  
Bestowed on you forever.

**SERMON**  
**Genesis 22:1–14**

**“Out of Egypt: Through the Water”**  
**Pastor Jim Sprengle**

**CANTICLE**

**“Come, My Soul, With Every Care”**

**Come, my soul, with ev’ry care, Jesus loves to answer prayer.  
He Himself has bid thee pray, Therefore will not turn away.**

**While I am a pilgrim here, Let Thy love my spirit cheer;  
As my guide, my guard, my friend, Lead me to my journey’s end.**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**P** We are returning from exile, listening to the inviting Word of God, full of grace and truth. Let us respond to Him in prayer.

Gracious God, offering full and free forgiveness, we come in spiritual sackcloth and ashes, painfully aware of our sins and failings. Graciously wash us and clothe us with the robe of Christ’s own righteousness,

**C** **so that we may live eternally with all Your saints.**

- P** Eden's Lord and ours, hear us and all who call out to You in pain and sorrow, sweat or tears. Remind us of Your painful victory over every temptation,
- C** **and strengthen us to follow where You have led the way.**
- P** Loving Father, calling us to Mount Calvary, remove from us our fear of Your righteous judgment for our sins; strengthen our faith
- C** **in the all-availing sacrifice of Your Son in our stead.**
- P** Spirit of life, remind us again of our Baptism, in which our old Adam was drowned; strengthen us
- C** **to live in the freedom of the children of God.**
- P** Lord Jesus, Savior and Guide, give us the eyes of faith to see the tree of life awaiting us in heaven, and guide us
- C** **to follow where You have led the way.**
- P** Protecting Father, assure us of Your presence on our journey through the desert of this world and bring us at last
- C** **to the paradise purchased by Your Son.**
- P** O Holy Spirit, nourish our faith and restore our souls each time we come to the Table of the Lord and receive His body and blood,
- C** **a foretaste of the feast to come.**
- P** Holy and merciful Lord over all, we feel the burden of our sin; renew in us the firm faith that Your Son has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows,
- C** **giving His life for ours.**
- P** Everlasting Father, our Savior has conquered death. Fill us with rejoicing, confident that we shall therefore gather around the eternal throne of the Lamb, Your Son, who with You and the Holy Spirit are one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## 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.**

## BENEDICTION

- P** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, and † Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you
- C** Amen.

## HYMN “To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord”

To Jordan came the Christ, our Lord,  
To do His Father's pleasure;  
Baptized by John, the Father's Word  
Was given us to treasure.  
This heav'nly washing now shall be  
A cleansing from transgression  
And by His blood and agony  
Release from death's oppression.  
A new life now awaits us.

These truths on Jordan's banks were shown  
By mighty word and wonder.  
The Father's voice from heav'n came down,  
Which we do well to ponder:  
“This man is My beloved Son,  
In whom my heart has pleasure.  
Him you must hear, and Him alone,  
And trust in fullest measure  
The word that He has spoken.”

To His disciples spoke the Lord,  
“Go out to ev’ry nation,  
And bring to them the living Word  
And this My invitation:  
Let ev’ryone abandon sin  
And come in true contrition  
To be baptized and thereby win  
Full pardon and remission  
And heav’nly bliss inherit.”

## DISMISSAL

**P** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  
**C** Thanks be to God!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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