



Lenten Midweek Three

Ascension Lutheran Church
"A Church for Families, a Family for Everyone"
Lenten Midweek Three – March 6, 2024

LENTEN MIDWEEK THREE

“You Meant It For Evil, But God Meant It For Good”

Each year on Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion, we read the full Passion account at the end of the service. The Passion narrates Jesus’ last hours of life, including His crucifixion and burial. Throughout most of the Church’s history, Palm Sunday solely focused on Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. Church services typically featured a processional of palms, accompanied by an atmosphere of excitement as the Savior had arrived. However, many Christians attending only Sunday services missed the profound experience of the Passion, an integral part of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. In response, the Church incorporated the complete Passion account reading at the conclusion of Palm Sunday services to remind those who attend only on Sundays of the suffering and death that Jesus endured for our redemption.

This year, we will dedicate additional time to the Passion account. Each midweek service in Lent will include a reading from the Gospel of Luke. Commencing with Ash Wednesday, we will journey through the final hours of Jesus’ life. Luke provides unique insights into this important time, offering much to gain from contemplation and meditation on this writing. Our readings will be drawn from Luke 22-24, exploring instances where evil sought to prevail, but God’s will ultimately triumphed for good. Rather than confining your exposure to the Passion account to Palm Sunday alone, we invite you to join us every Wednesday to reflect on our Savior’s last hours. Your Lenten journey promises to be enriched with new insights and a deeper appreciation for the saving grace of God.

Theme: “When You See Such Blind Ignorance, What Do You Think?”

In Luke’s Gospel, the part about Jesus’ trial before the religious leaders is kept short. Unlike other parts of the Gospel where Luke gives many details, he chooses to focus on the fact that these people had already condemned Jesus. No big show or listing the accusers, just a brief story about their minds already being made up. Jesus had no chance for escape because evil would have its way. This ignorance and unbelief are signs of evil, but God could even use these horrible events for good.

Welcome

I Need Thee Every Hour

I need Thee ev'ry hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like
Thine Can peace afford.
I need Thee, O, I need Thee,
Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to Thee.

I need Thee ev'ry hour,
Stay Thou near by;
Temptations lose their power
When Thou art nigh.
I need Thee, O, I need Thee,
Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to Thee.

I need Thee ev'ry hour,
In joy or pain;
Come quickly and abide,
Or life is vain.
I need Thee, O, I need Thee,
Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to Thee.

I need Thee ev'ry hour,
Teach me Thy will;
And Thy rich promises
In me fulfill.
I need Thee, O, I need Thee,
Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to Thee.

Invocation

Opening Prayer

- P** Lord, in this Lenten season, as we walk through the wilderness of our lives in this world,
- C** **give us Your strength and peace for the journey as we look to Jesus and His cross.**
- P** In this hour of worship and prayer, we come humbly before You and ask that You would draw near to us.
- C** **Fill us with Your love, create in us clean hearts, and restore to us the joy of Your salvation as we fix our eyes on Jesus. Amen.**

Confession and Forgiveness

Psalm 123:1-3a

- P** I lift up my eyes to You, to You whose throne is in heaven. As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He shows us His mercy.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.**
- P** God, our Father, our lives are plagued by trouble. We are showered with the violence and arrogance all around us.
- C** **We are humbled by the selfishness and complacency of our own hearts. O Lord, have mercy on us.**
- P** Our wives, our husbands, our children are in need. Our communities are row after row of houses filled with broken families and hurting people. Many are desperate, plummeting through despair.
- C** **Our work places are dark, crying out for the light of Your guidance and hope and love. O Lord, have mercy on us.**

Have Mercy (sung)

In our arrogance and pride we come to You.
In our weakness and our guilt we look to You.

Refrain

O Lord, our Lord, have mercy.
O Lord, our Lord, have mercy.

In our trouble and our pain we come to You.
In our darkness and our grief we look to You. **(refrain)**

Mighty God of love and power we come to You.
You are here, and You are now - we look to You. **(refrain)**

P Lord, we lift our eyes to You and wait. Our hope is You alone.

C **I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1-2)**

P Give thanks, for the Lord is rich in mercy and His compassion toward us is everlasting. He is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. This love is so great that He sent His only Son, Jesus, who knows your every need and struggle, and loved you so much that He gave His very life to give you pardon, peace, righteousness and joy forever. As your pastor, I declare this promise of forgiveness to you today in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore. (Psalm 121:8)

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Psalm 56

- ¹Be gracious to me, O God, for man tramples on me;
all day long an attacker oppresses me;
- ²my enemies trample on me all day long,
for many attack me proudly.
- ³When I am afraid,
I put my trust in You.
- ⁴In God, whose word I praise,
in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can flesh do to me?
- ⁵All day long they injure my cause;
all their thoughts are against me for evil.
- ⁶They stir up strife, they lurk;
they watch my steps,
as they have waited for my life.
- ⁷For their crime will they escape?
In wrath cast down the peoples, O God!
- ⁸You have kept count of my tossings;
put my tears in Your bottle.
Are they not in Your book?
- ⁹Then my enemies will turn back
in the day when I call.
This I know, that God is for me.
- ¹⁰In God, whose word I praise,
in the LORD, whose word I praise,
- ¹¹in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can man do to me?
- ¹²I must perform my vows to You, O God;
I will render thank offerings to You.
- ¹³For You have delivered my soul from death,
yes, my feet from falling,
that I may walk before God
in the light of life.

Theme Reading

Luke 22:63–23:1 (ESV)

⁶³ Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking Him as they beat Him. ⁶⁴ They also blindfolded Him and kept asking Him, “Prophecy! Who is it that struck You?”

⁶⁵ And they said many other things against Him, blaspheming Him. ⁶⁶ When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led Him away to their council, and they said, ⁶⁷ “If You are the Christ, tell us.” But He said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe, ⁶⁸ and if I ask you, you will not answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.” ⁷⁰ So they all said, “Are You the Son of God, then?” And He said to them, “You say that I am.” ⁷¹ Then they said, “What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from His own lips.”

¹ Then the whole company of them arose and brought Him before Pilate.

The Trial


(tune: *Thy Strong Word* – EBENEZER)

Hear the evil all around Him,
Anger, envy, greed, and pride;
Pilate, Judas, Peter, Herod
Driven by the fears inside.
See the Lamb in full submission.
Hear the silence in His soul.
No complaints and no defenses;
See the victim in control.

While their God is bound and bleeding,
Hear their blind and desperate scorn.
Feel His weight of grief and anguish,
Bowed and battered, bruised and torn.
Jesus, Jesus, Man of Sorrows,
Robed in suffering, crowned with blood,
Silently You speak Your mercy.
Through Your pain we hear Your love.

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When I Behold Jesus Christ



1 When I be - hold Je - sus Christ, True God who died for me,
2 For me You gave all Your love, For me You suf-fered pain;
3 You had no sin, ho - ly Lord, But You were tor-tured, tried;
4 What love is this? Great - er love No one has ev - er known.




I won-der much at His love As He hung on the tree.
I find no words, noth - ing can Your self - less - ness ex - plain.
On Gol - go - tha there for all My sins You bled and died.
My life with God— this I owe To You, and You a - lone.


Refrain




What kind of love is this? What kind of love is this?



You showed Your love, Je - sus, there To me on Cal - va - ry.



What kind of love is this? What kind of love is this?



You showed Your love, Je - sus, there To me on Cal - va - ry.

When I Behold Jesus Christ, Text (sts. 1, ref. 2–3): tr. Hartmut Schoenherr, with Jim and Aurelia Keefer; (st. 4): Joseph Herl, 1959, Text (sts. 1, ref. 2–3) and tune: Almaz Belhu, Text (st. 4): © 1998 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110004673, Text (sts. 1, ref. 2–3) and tune: © 1970 Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110004673

Tithes and Offerings

Please place your offering in the basket provided. (*Our offerings are made as an act of worship, given in loving response to all that God has graciously given us, both materially and spiritually.*)

Prayer

Lord, Listen To Your Children (sung)

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. (repeat)

(following each petition):

P Hear us, O Lord,
C for Your mercy is great.

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.

Luther's Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and

all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Closing Reflection ~ “Who Is on Trial?”

- P** Follow Jesus through His arrest and trial. Look around. Who do you see?
- C** **See the religious leaders, proud and self-righteous, anxiously scheming to murder an innocent man.**
- P** See Judas, grasping for silver, even though it means betraying an innocent friend.
- C** **See the other disciples scurrying away to protect themselves, fearfully cowering behind locked doors.**
- P** See Pilate, the Roman governor, knowing the truth but too weak to act on it.
- C** **Fear, jealousy, hatred, and pride.**
- P** Now watch Jesus. See Him calm and unresisting.
- C** **Hear His quiet authority, whether He speaks or remains silent.**
- P** He is never stirred to self-defense and remains unruffled by the injustice poured down on Him.
- C** **As the blood-thirsty furor intensifies, He allows Himself to be swept along.**
- P** The One persecuted is at peace in the Father.
- C** **The Victim is in control.**

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Blessing

- P** The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.
- C** **Amen.**

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'er take me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me;
Lo, it glows with peace and joy.

When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming
Adds more luster to the day.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure
By the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.

Acknowledgments

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Ascension Lutheran Church

1440 SE 182nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97233

Office Phone: 503-665-8821 · Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement:

~Go and Share Jesus Christ~

Our Vision Statement:

“Take part...Join Jesus on His mission.”

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God’s witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God— the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God’s Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

STAFF

Rev. Jim Sprengle, Pastor
pastor@alcportland.org

Ruberto Ek Yah, Pastor
pastorekyah@alcportland.org

Brad Hall, Worship and Music Coordinator
worship@alcportland.org

Michele Sprengle, Office Administrator
office@alcportland.org

Bonnie Webber and Rebecca Williamson, Treasurers
treasurer@alcportland.org

Wanda Cassetty,
Council Secretary
council@alcportland.org

Hana Laughton,
Deaconess Intern
deaconess@alcportland.org

Laura Potter, Property Management
property@alcportland.org

