

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 17, 2024

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, FALLS CHURCH, VA



PRELUDE

Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain
Setting: Donald Rotermund

WELCOME

ENTRANCE HYMN (Stand)

Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain

LSB 435

- 1 Come to Calv'ry's holy mountain,
Sinners, ruined by the fall;
Here a pure and healing fountain
Flows for you, for me, for all,
In a full, perpetual tide,
Opened when our Savior died.
- 2 Come in poverty and meanness,
Come defiled, without, within;
From infection and uncleanness,
From the leprosy of sin,
Wash your robes and make them white;
Ye shall walk with God in light.
- 3 Come in sorrow and contrition,
Wounded, impotent, and blind;
Here the guilty, free remission,
Here the troubled, peace may find.
Health this fountain will restore;
They that drink shall thirst no more.
- 4 They that drink shall live forever;
'Tis a soul-renewing flood.
God is faithful; God will never
Break His covenant of blood,
Signed when our Redeemer died,
Sealed when He was glorified.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

(We kneel and reflect on our need before God)

O almighty God, merciful Father,

I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto 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.

Amen.

INTROIT (Stand)

Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and `merciful,
 Slow to anger and abounding in `steadfast love.

**Jesus said: If any man would come `after me,
 Let him deny himself and take up his cross and `follow me.**

Christ was wounded for our `transgressions;
 He was bruised for our `iniquities.



☐ Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen.

KYRIE



☐ Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

HYMN OF PRAISE (omitted during Lent)

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Almighty God,

by Your great goodness mercifully look upon Your people that we may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST LESSON (Be seated)

Jeremiah 31:31–34

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

10:30 PSALM 119:9-16 (Sung Responsively)

How can a young man keep his way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

With my whole heart I seek you;

let me not wander from your commandments!

I have stored up your word in my heart,

that I might not sin against you.

Blessèd are you, O LORD;

teach me your statutes!

With my lips I declare

all the just decrees of your mouth.

In the way of your testimonies I delight

as much as in all riches.

I will meditate on your precepts

and fix my eyes on your ways.

I will delight in your statutes;

I will not forget your word.

Every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him,

“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”;

as he says also in another place,

“You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek.”

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

10:30 CHILDREN’S SERMON

GOSPEL VERSE (Stand)

from One and All Rejoice

**O come, let us fix our eyes on Jesus,
the founder and perfecter of our faith,
who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross,
despising the shame,
and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the 10th chapter
Glory to You, O Lord.

And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.”

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.” And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen. Dear friends in Christ:

The conversation just read between Jesus and his disciples happened right before Jesus entered into Jerusalem for the final time. Today, on this Sunday before Holy Week, the church has us hear this conversation so that we can see Jesus pointing ahead to what

will happen to him. As his words make clear, Jesus knows that he has difficult days ahead and doesn't try to avoid them.

Regarding this pointing ahead, you probably noticed that some of it is stated very directly while some of it is done with words and statements that are a bit more cryptic. In today's sermon I'll walk us through these words and statements so that we can better appreciate what Jesus is saying and better act on the call his words and actions give.

Jesus' more direct words come at the beginning of our reading. There Jesus tells how the Son of Man – who is Jesus himself – will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, condemned to death, suffer and die, and after three days rise.

This is not the first time Jesus has mentioned these things. He's hinted at them on several occasions and stated them specifically two other times. After one of those earlier mentions, Peter rebuked him for saying such things. We read about this three Sundays ago.

In today's reading, James and John – the two disciples who, along with Peter, formed a sort of inside circle with Jesus – say something which shows that they, too, were ignorant of Jesus' intentions. They ask to sit at Jesus' right and left hands when he comes into his glory. And in this they show that they don't yet understand what Jesus has come to do.

Hearing their words in isolation, we might conclude that James and John were thinking about the life to come – that time when Jesus would enter into his full glory of power and authority. And in that case, their request would mean that they simply wanted to be gathered around his throne with all the other disciples, much like the Book of Revelation describes. But Jesus' response to them shows that, no, they were thinking about an earthly glory instead.

James and John probably thought that Jesus would be "killed" in a more metaphorical sense. They seem to take his words as: "things will be tough for a while, but we'll eventually come out on top." Perhaps they thought Jesus would simply need to endure a short time of pain and distress. Or maybe they thought he would be "cancelled" for a while – in the manner in which that word is used today – only to be back in public favor in due time. In such cases, his "killing" might be a difficult ordeal, but in the end, not really all that bad.

Believing this, James and John then wanted to be in positions of leadership with Jesus when he ultimately prevailed. And they no doubt reasoned that this is what Jesus had been preparing them to do.

Were they being greedy in asking for this? They probably didn't think so. Had not Jesus once named them "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17)? Leadership seemed like their destiny. But their fellow disciples saw it very differently. When they heard what James and John had asked, they became very angry.

And we must admit, their request does sound pretty gutsy. Who were they to say to Jesus: "we want you to do for us whatever we ask?" That seems pretty forward.

And yet, recall that Jesus had also said: "If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). Perhaps they had these words of his in mind.

Whatever the case, we should hear in this request of James and John a belief that Jesus would turn their work together into a march of glory – an earthly glory in which they would be in positions of power.

And this belief paralleled the belief of the crowds who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The crowds that day joyfully cheered Jesus in hopes that he would do something powerful – like dealing with those dreaded Romans who ruled them, or at least making their life better in some tangible way.

But the fact of the matter was that Jesus was coming into town to die. Literally die. His death would not be just a difficult trial to endure before an eventual happy ending. Rather, it would be an actual, physical death. And it would involve great pain.

Still, that actual, physical death would also have great meaning and accomplish great things.

Jesus speaks to this meaning and accomplishment with his closing words in this conversation. He says to his disciples: "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

In examining these profound words of Jesus, let's look at the last of them first. When Jesus states the phrase: "give his life as a ransom for many," he is using words from Isaiah 53 – that great chapter of the Old Testament which caps off God's description of his suffering servant. Note especially the very last verses:

Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;

by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,
because he poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and makes intercession for the transgressors. (53:11-12)

In particular, note how Isaiah, three times, uses the word “many.” The last use, especially, parallels Jesus’ statement that he will “give his life as a ransom for many.”

In a recent Wednesday Lenten service I quoted these words of Jesus and explained that they are not – as some Christians claim – words which speak to a limited atonement. The limited atonement doctrine claims that Jesus didn’t die for everyone but only those who are being saved. But other scriptures make abundantly clear that Christ’s atonement is for everyone and not just limited to some.

Jesus uses the word “many” here to contrast with the “one” and the “few.” We know this because the Isaiah passage he quotes speaks very specifically about the “one” servant who makes “many to be accounted righteous.”

Jesus also used the word this way when he instituted his holy supper. According to Matthew and Mark’s accounts, Jesus said: “this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many” (Mt. 26:28).

Jesus wishes that all people would come to faith in him and receive the blessings he offers. In this he agrees with the desire of his Father who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. But Jesus also knows that some people won’t be saved, for they will reject the salvation God has prepared.

The salvation offered in Jesus comes from his service. We see this in Jesus’ statement: “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve.” These words about service point ahead to Jesus’ suffering and death.

Jesus' service on the cross would make possible the forgiveness of sins. For his death would pay sin's price. As Jesus put it – using another common Old Testament term – his death would serve as a “ransom” for our sin.

When we think of Jesus serving, we should recall that Jesus once taught about this using an illustration as well. John's Gospel tells us that on the same night he instituted his Supper he also got down on his knees and washed his disciples feet. As he did this, he explained that they needed to be washed – for if they weren't, they would have no share with him. He also shared that his washing was a complete washing – meaning more than just the temporary type that is done with water.

Jesus further told his disciples that they would not understand what he was doing at that time, but only later. The full extent of his washing – that it was a complete washing of their souls from the stain of sin – would only be understood after he had risen from the dead.

As we today think about this message of Jesus, we certainly rejoice in the forgiveness that Christ's service on the cross gives us. Our sin is a constant trouble and its forgiveness is the greatest of all gifts.

But let's be sure to notice, too, that Christ's service is more than this as well. For as both the foot-washing illustration and his words in today's text make clear, Jesus also serves us by teaching and empowering us to serve one another.

In fact, the greater portion of today's text is meant to highlight this service. The conversation with James and John shows how people miss this message and need to be corrected. Jesus' kingdom will be about serving rather than ruling. Instead of exercising power and authority, leaders of the kingdom will sacrifice for the sake of others.

“You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them,” said Jesus. “But it shall not be so among you. Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.”

These are strong words of Jesus. And they are echoed in the strong statements he gives after washing his disciples' feet. There he said: “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. (John 13:14-15).

These words of Jesus show that he had come into the world not only to save the world from sin but to stand worldly power and authority on its head. If we doubt this, we have only to remember that the two men who did end up on Jesus' right and left when he

came into his glory were the two robbers crucified next to him. Jesus' glory is always seen best in the cross.

Today's Old Testament reading was no doubt chosen by the church to remind us of just how new the covenant Jesus brings to us is. His new covenant is different in that it is written in our hearts, upholds the Law, declares forgiveness, and helps us to know God in truth. And it teaches us that just as God loves to serve his children, so also, we are to love and serve one another.

True glory is achieved through service. And this will always be a counter-cultural idea and one that is constantly questioned. But it is the way of Jesus – and shown most powerfully in the cross.

May God teach us, then, to find this true glory in our service. And may we always be grateful for the way God serves us through his Son.

In his holy name. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY (Stand) Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed LSB 560

- 1 Drawn to the cross, which Thou hast blessed
With healing gifts for souls distressed,
To find in Thee my life, my rest,
Christ crucified, I come.**
- 2 Thou knowest all my griefs and fears,
Thy grace abused, my misspent years;
Yet now to Thee with contrite tears,
Christ crucified, I come.**
- 3 Wash me and take away each stain;
Let nothing of my sin remain.
For cleansing, though it be through pain,
Christ crucified, I come.**
- 4 And then for work to do for Thee,
Which shall so sweet a service be
That angels well might envy me,
Christ crucified, I come.**

**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.**

OFFERING

*Offerings support the church's mission work – both here and through our many partners. Offerings may be placed in the box at the sanctuary entrance or sent to the church through our website or the mail. **Fellowship Cards** help us welcome new people and track participation. Please fill one out and place it in the offering box following the service.*

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH (Kneel)

In peace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the gift of the Holy Spirit, that our heavenly Father would write His Word on our hearts and lead us to know Him as the God who forgives our iniquities and remembers our sins no more, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For Matthew, our Synod president; Bill, our district president; and for all pastors, who like all flesh are beset with weakness, that they may be preserved faithful to proclaim God's Word and deal gently with us according to God's grace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For humility, that after the example of Christ, we would not lord authority over one another but serve each other in our homes, communities and congregation, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all earthly authorities, that they may be guarded from the temptation to wield their power improperly, and be committed instead to good and faithful service, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For those on our prayer list, those we name in our hearts, and for all who walk the way of the cross among us, that as Christ learned obedience through His suffering, they also may be instructed in His ways, sustained by His blessings and, in His time, receive relief from His Fatherly hand, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who come to God's holy altar today, that he would prepare our hearts by His Spirit to worthily receive the body and blood of Christ; and that we would believe in His promise of the forgiveness of sins, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For grace to continue steadfast in this faith; and for the continued witness of saints like Patrick to inspire us to live and confess the faith boldly, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

Hear us, heavenly Father, for the sake of Christ Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



THE LITURGY OF HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERTORY

LSB 192-198

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

PREFACE TO HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is truly good right and salutary...evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth;

heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

THE 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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

AGNUS DEI

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
have mercy upon us.**

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world,
grant us Thy peace. Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION (Be seated)

Those wishing to commune at the foot of the steps should come forward first. Those wishing to commune at the altar rail should come forward after these, front rows first, from both sides of the aisle. After receiving, all should return to their seats. A common dismissal will be given at the end.

COMMUNION HYMN

Glory Be to Jesus

LSB 433

- 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!**

**Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word,
for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before
the face of all people,
a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

We Sing the Praise of Him Who Died

LSB 429

- 1 We sing the praise of Him who died,
Of Him who died upon the cross.
The sinner's hope let all deride;
For this we count the world but loss.**
- 2 Inscribed upon the cross we see
In shining letters, "God is love."
He bears our sins upon the tree;
He brings us mercy from above.**
- 3 The cross! It takes our guilt away;
It holds the fainting spirit up;
It cheers with hope the gloomy day
And sweetens ev'ry bitter cup.**
- 4 It makes the coward spirit brave
And nerves the feeble arm for fight;
It takes the terror from the grave
And gilds the bed of death with light;**
- 5 The balm of life, the cure of woe,
The measure and the pledge of love,
The sinner's refuge here below,
The angels' theme in heav'n above.**
- 6 To Christ, who won for sinners grace
By bitter grief and anguish sore,
Be praise from all the ransomed race
Forever and forevermore.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Be seated)

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

We Sing the Praise of Him Who Died
Setting: Tim Shrewmaker

FELLOWSHIP: Board of Elders

FLOWERS : By Jennifer Zambone

The flowers today are given in honor of Patrick—slave, missionary, and bishop—one of the weak things of the world chosen by God to shame the strong.

“I bind to myself to-day,
The strong power of an invocation of the Trinity,
The faith of the Trinity in Unity
The Creator of the Elements
Salvation is the Lord's
Salvation is Christ's
May thy salvation, Lord, be always with us!”

—Patrick of Ireland

Those serving:

8:00 a.m.:

Greeter: Jim Easterly
Comm. assist: Dede Dixon
Reader: Dede Dixon

10:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Aaron Siebrass
Comm. assist: Holly Siebrass
Reader: Aaron Siebrass
Acolyte: Daniel Wang
AV Assistants: Hannes Buuck, Andreas Buuck

Acknowledgements

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