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*“...For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?”<sup>8</sup> He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it.<sup>9</sup> If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”*

*Luke 13: 7-9*

**St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Third Sunday in Lent – February 28, 2016**

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Jacob Gordon, Director of Music Ministries

*We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church. We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning. Should you have no permanent church-home in this community, why not consider making this one your own? Please sign the guest book as you leave worship today. You are most welcome here at St. John! Most elements of our service can be found in the bulletin, everything else is in the hymnal. Page refers to the numbered pages towards the front of the hymnal, hymns are bold and towards the back. Please rise when there is an \*, congregational responses are in **bold**, and underlined elements of the service are found in the hymnal.*

### **HOLY COMMUNION**

#### **Third Sunday in Lent – February 28, 2016**

*The warnings are plentiful and blunt on the third Sunday in Lent. Lent is a season of repentance. Cut it out or get cut down! The warnings are accompanied by God's invitation to attentiveness: "Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live." The landowner's ultimatum is forestalled by the gardener's readiness to till the ground one more year. That is good news for all of us. Thanks be to God!*

**PRELUDE:** *As the Deer Runs to the River* – Kristina Langlois

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **\*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,  
who brings us safely through the sea,  
who gives us water from the rock,  
who leads us into the land of milk and honey.  
**Amen.**

Let us come home to God, confessing our sin.

Merciful Father,  
**we have sinned against heaven and before you.**  
**We do not fully live as your sons and daughters.**  
**We use your gifts to our own ends.**  
**Forgive us and restore us,**  
**that we may resist all that draws us away from you,**  
**and be at peace with one another.**  
**Amen.**

We are reconciled to God through Christ;  
for his sake, God does not count our trespasses against us.  
Once dead in sin, we are now alive to God.  
Once lost, we now are found.  
God clothes you in the finest robe of all,  
the righteousness of + Jesus Christ,  
forgiving you all your sins  
and making of you a new creation.  
**Amen.**

#### **\*GATHERING SONG #321: Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church**

#### **\*GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## \*KYRIE

The image shows a musical score for a Kyrie. It consists of three staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff is labeled 'Leader' and the second and third are labeled 'Assembly'. The lyrics are: 'Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.' for the first staff; 'Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.' for the second staff; and 'Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.' for the third staff. The music is written in a simple, melodic style with a steady rhythm.

## \*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

**Eternal God,**

**your kingdom has broken into our troubled world  
through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son.**

**Help us to hear your word and obey it,  
and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

## FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:1-9

*To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to the Lord will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.*

<sup>1</sup>Ho, everyone who thirsts,  
come to the waters;  
and you that have no money,  
come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without price.

<sup>2</sup>Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,  
and delight yourselves in rich food.

<sup>3</sup>Incline your ear, and come to me;  
listen, so that you may live.  
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
my steadfast, sure love for David.

<sup>4</sup>See, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and commander for the peoples.

<sup>5</sup>See, you shall call nations that you do not know,  
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,  
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near;

<sup>7</sup>let the wicked forsake their way,  
and the unrighteous their thoughts;  
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM 63:1-8

1. O Lord, you are my God, for you I long.  
2. My spir - it seeks your glo - rious maj - es - ty.  
3. I pray to you and in your help con - fide.  
Your life with - in me makes my spir - it strong.  
Your con - stant love gives more than life to me.  
You feed my soul and I am sat - is - fied.  
For you I thirst like des - erts parched and dried.  
Thus will I bless your name through all my days.  
O keep me in the shel - ter of your throne;  
With - in your care my soul is sat - is - fied.  
and lift my hands to you in thank - ful praise.  
to you I cling, my joy, my God a - lone.

### SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

*Paul uses images from Hebrew story and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.*

<sup>1</sup>I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup>and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup>and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup>and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

<sup>5</sup>Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup>Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup>Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." <sup>8</sup>We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup>We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup>And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup>These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup>So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.

<sup>13</sup>No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## \*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*The cantor sings the refrain, and all repeat it.*



Praise to you, Lord Je-sus Christ, King of e-ter-nal glo - ry!

*Verse (cantor): Jesus began to proclaim,  
Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. (Matt. 4:17)*

## \*GOSPEL READING: Luke 13:1–9

*Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.*

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup>[Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?” <sup>3</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup>Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

<sup>6</sup>Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup>So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ <sup>8</sup>He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. <sup>9</sup>If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## CHILDREN’S SERMON

### SERMON

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY #331: *As the Deer Runs to the River***

### \*APOSTLES’ CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Hearing the call to return to the Lord, let us join the whole people of God in prayer for all who cry out in pain and in hope.

Incline our ears to you, faithful God. Open us to receive your word. Transform our thoughts into your thoughts and our ways into your ways for the glory of your kingdom. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Send rain to dry and weary lands, faithful God. Quench the thirst of the earth and every living creature. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make all governments thirst for your justice, faithful God. Bring citizens and elected officials together to create communities where all people may live in peace. Sustain us by your grace in this work. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Fill the cups of the thirsty, faithful God. Fill the plates of the hungry. Give peace to all who mourn and healing to all who live with mental illness. Be with all who suffer. We pray especially for Frieda, Raymond, Wanda Jean, Francis & Grace, Kathryn, Fred & Jane, David & Ellen, and all those we remember aloud or in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gather the hungry around your table, faithful God. Satisfy and unite us with the body and blood of your Son. Send us out to share the bountiful feast you give to us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Keep us in your steadfast love, faithful God. We give thanks for all who mentored each of us in the faith and now celebrate life eternal with you. By their witness we know you more fully. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

To you, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your boundless mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

**\*PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

**OFFERING**

**OFFERING HYMN #679: *For the Fruit of All Creation***

(All stand for the final stanza as the gifts are brought forward)

**\*OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.  
God our provider,  
you have not fed us with bread alone,  
but with words of grace and life.  
Bless us and these your gifts,  
which we receive from your bounty,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

**\*DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**\*PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,  
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
we may come to the fullness of your grace.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**\*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,  
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

**\*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting

and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness  
to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup  
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Bless this feast.  
Grace our table with your presence.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.  
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.  
Breathe new life into us.  
Send us forth,  
burning with justice, peace, and love.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places,  
with the earth and all its creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars,  
we praise you, O God,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
now and forever.  
**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**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All who thirst, all who hunger,  
come and be filled with the goodness of God.

## COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

*In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. All are invited forward for communion or a blessing. The area of cups bordered by green tape has grape juice.*

## COMMUNION SONG: *Lamb of God*

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you  
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

## COMMUNION HYMN #328: *Restore in Us, O God*

Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love;  
O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r;  
Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy;  
Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace,  
re - new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.  
from fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.  
bap - tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.  
that we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

## \*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in grace.

**Amen.**

**\*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

O God, we thank you for gathering and feeding us  
as a mother hen embraces her young.

Release us now to go on our way in these forty days,  
ready to see our work as prayer,  
ready to fast from complacency,  
and ready to share with those in need;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**\*LENTEN BLESSING**

May you go from this place having acknowledged yourselves  
as sinners in word and deed and in what has been left undone. **Amen.**

May you know always that God’s response to our repentance  
is never less than grace-filled and loving forgiveness. **Amen.**

May you be given the grace to forgive others as God has forgiven  
you. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, + the Son,  
and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**

**\*SENDING SONG #342: *There in God’s Garden***

**\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE: *Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church* – David Maxwell**

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**8:00 am**

**Assisting Minister:** Matt Claus  
**Communion Assistant:** Ruth Ann Tully  
**Acolyte:**  
**Lector:**  
**Usher:** Larry Werner  
**Attendance Last Week:** 61  
**Weekly Budgeted Expense:** \$ 3,374.14  
**YTD Budgeted Expenses:** \$ 30,367.23  
**YTD Actual Expense:** \$ 21,811.09

**10:30 am**

**Assisting Minister:** Melissa Kramer  
**Communion Assistant:**  
**Acolyte:** S. Brower  
**Lector:**  
**Usher:** Cardinal’s  
**Attendance Last Year:** 50  
**Last Week’s Giving:** \$ 2,315.00  
**YTD Receipts:** \$20,558.00

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*O Lord, You Are My God* – Text: Psalm 63:1-8, para. by John G. Dunn, alt.; music: SURSUM CORDA by Alfred Morton Smith. Text  
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*Restore in Us, O Lord* – Text: Carl P. Daw, Jr.; music: SOUTHWELL, by W. Daman, *The Psalmes of David*, 1579. Text ©1989 Hope  
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