



“Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

~Luke 15:31-32

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Fourth Sunday in Lent – March 30, 2025
420 Beaver St., PO Box 411
Mars, PA 16046-0411
www.stjohnchurchmars.org

Phone: 724-625-1830 email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org

Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister
Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries

*We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning!
Know that you are welcome here just as you are.*

If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time worshipping at St. John, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.

*Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an * and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**. All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.*

*During the time of **Peace**, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.*

*At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift. Envelopes are available in the pews if you prefer. Online gifts may be made using the QR code below:*



*You may also offer updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates. **Visitor information cards** and member attendance cards (attached to the front of the bulletin) may also be placed in the offering plates.*

*As Lutherans, we believe Christ is truly present in the elements of the Lord's Supper. At the time of **Holy Communion**, all baptized individuals are welcome to come forward via the center aisle, receive the elements, and return via the side aisles. We begin at the front of the right side, commune all on the right side, then we will invite the left side forward. When you come forward, you may receive the bread from the pastor (gluten free wafers are available), then pre-filled cups with wine or grape juice from the assisting minister. You may consume the elements after receiving them then place the empty cup in the tray held by the acolyte. Those who do not receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

*If you need a **restroom**, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.*

*A **playroom** is available downstairs for children who need a break from the worship service.*

This room is by the elevator on the lower level. An adult must remain with the child. Children are also welcome to utilize the books and puzzles available in the Greeting Area on the top level by the elevator.

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of intercession.

PRELUDE and ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Jesus went to the mountaintop to pray.

Jesus went into the city to heal.

Jesus walked to Samaria to extend love.

Jesus went to the water's edge to teach.

Jesus went to places of peace and connection,

but Jesus also went to the wilderness.

There is nowhere we can go that God does not walk with us.

We are in God's house. Let us worship God.

***GATHERING SONG *What Is The World Like* (ACS 1047)**



1 What is the world like when God's will is
 2 What is the world like when God's will is
 3 What is the world like when God's will is
 4 What is the world like when God's will is
 5 These are the sto - ries that Je - sus im -



done? Mus - tard seeds grow more than
 done? Wit - ness the wan - der - ing
 done? No more is neigh - bor just
 done? Read - y for feast - ing, we
 parts, filled with the Spir - it who



we can con - ceive: roots thread the
 child com - ing home; watch as the
 al - ly or friend; peace thrives in
 watch through the night, tend - ing our
 joins us as one. Born through our



soil; branch - es reach for the sun.
 par - ent breaks in - to a run.
 plac - es where once there was none.
 lamps till the new day's be - gun.
 voic - es, our hands, and our hearts,



This is how God moves us each to be - lieve.
 This is how God longs for us when we roam.
 This is how God works when ri - val - ries end.
 This is how God read - ies us for the light.
 this is a new world where God's will is done.

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

We come to confession not to wallow in our own guilt. God wants a life for us so expansive that faith, joy, and hope flow over the edges. So, we come to confession not because we have to suffer our way through Lent, but because we know that change starts with being honest. There is healing here. There is life to be gained here. Let us speak truth into our lives, asking for God's help where we need it, trusting in God's abundant, overflowing grace.

Holy God,

We confess: we do not turn to you fully. Instead of trusting that we are made good, instead of trusting that we are loved simply because we are yours, we stockpile our value in earthly things – in trophies and awards, in likes and follows, in wealth and power. We share with you only the pieces of our lives that are convenient. We forget that we are called, invited, and loved with all that we are – including our mess, our beauty, our faith, and our doubt. Forgive us. Teach us a new way. Teach us your way. Teach us to love as you love. Give us hearts that long to turn fully to you.

Amen.

Family of faith, God sees you. God hears you. God loves you. No matter how many times we mess up, no matter how far we wander, no matter how lost we feel, God's grace is full to the brim. It overflows in desert places. It finds us where we are and it covers us in mercy. For even when we stumble, even when we take the easy way out, even in our fear or shame, even when we sin, we belong to God. Siblings in Christ, know this: in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, you are freed, forgiven, and claimed with all that you are.

Now say it with me:

God loves us, chooses us, and wraps us in grace.

We are claimed. We are drenched in mercy. We are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

Amen.

*KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Glory To God

Assisting minister



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav'n-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa - ther, we wor -



ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, O Lord God,



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world: have



mer-cy on us; you are seat - ed at the right hand of the



Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer. For you a - lone are the



Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone



are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray,

God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, 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: Joshua 5:9-12

A reading from Joshua.

⁹ The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 32

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions ¹ are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

² **Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸ **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you
with my eye.**

⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”

¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the
LORD.**

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

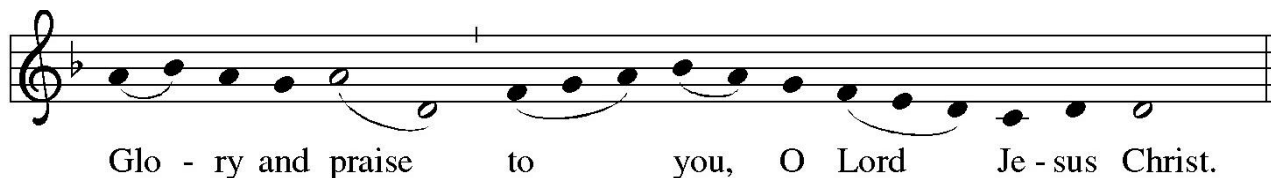
A reading from 2 Corinthians.

¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



***GOSPEL READING: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ^{11b} “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.

¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

**CHILDREN’S SERMON
SERMON**

***HYMN OF THE DAY *Beautiful Things* (ACS 925)**

(Blue prayer cards are collected during the song.)

1. All this pain
I wonder if I'll ever find my way?
I wonder if my life could really change at all?

Refrain

You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us

2. All this Earth
Could all that is lost ever be found?
Could a garden come up from this ground at all?

Refrain

You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us

3. All around
Hope is springing up from this old ground
Out of chaos, life is being found in You

Refrain

You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us

***APOSTLES' CREED**

Let us confess our faith in the words of the 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**

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.
A brief silence

God of faithful promise, make your church a new creation in Christ. As you reconcile us to yourself, guide us also in your way of reconciliation, that through confession and forgiveness, repentance and reparations, your church may bear witness to your love. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of new beginnings, restore balance to the earth. Send rain to places of drought and sunshine to places of flooding, that the produce of the land may again support life. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of prodigal grace, unite the nations as fellow members of the human family. Give leaders the courage to put aside pride and ego, to cease squandering lives and time, and to work for the well-being of all. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of boundless love, receive with open arms any in need of compassion especially Bob, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Ellen, Sally, Katie, Debi, Anne, Karen, Nan, Beverly, those on our prayer list, all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts and all who suffer in any way. Embrace all who are far from home or estranged from loved ones, and all who live with regret. Embolden your people to offer and to seek forgiveness. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of radical inclusion, widen human circles to welcome all who are excluded. Bless the work of disability ministries, ministries by and with neurodivergent people, and multicultural and ethnic-specific ministries; that the welcome of Jesus be extended to all. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection life, welcome home all who have died. We thank you for their lives and entrust them into your keeping, where true reconciliation and eternal peace are found. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of the wilderness, we give you thanks for your overflowing, abundant mercy and your steadfast presence. Receive the prayers of your people. (*blue prayer cards are read*) Draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

Amen.

***SHARING THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN *What Wonderful Love Is This* (ELW 666)

**rise on 4th verse*



- 1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What
- 2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when
- 3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing; to
- 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on; and



won - drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is this
I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when I was sink - ing down
God and to the Lamb I will sing; to God and to the Lamb,
when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and when from death I'm free,



that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dread-ful curse for my
be - neath God's righ-teous frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my
who is the great I AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will
I'll sing God's love for me, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing



soul, for my soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul?
soul, for my soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul.
sing, I will sing, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, I'll sing on; and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

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:

The musical score consists of five staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r 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 - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r 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.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your love never runs out, your hope never runs dry, your joy never gives up.

Even as your Son gathered with his friends for one more meal,
as he prepared to give the full measure of his devotion and love to this broken world,
just before his own friend betrayed him,
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.

God of Life, in a world that loves scarcity, your abundance is shocking.
In a world that knows fear, your joy is compelling.
In a world that knows anxiety, your peace is captivating.
We long for these things.

So today we ask you:
When compassion fatigue rears her head, **be with us.**
When stress makes it hard to breathe, **be with us.**
When self-doubt pushes in close, **be with us.**
When exhaustion becomes our constant or when loneliness becomes our norm, **be with us.**
Be with us, and show us the way to the life you long for us.

Show us a life of expansive faith.
Show us a life of overflowing joy.
Show us a life of absorbing beauty.
Show us a life of engrossing purpose.
Show us a life that is honest, abundant, and meaningful in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence. Breathe new life into us.
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.**

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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;

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

You are invited to this meal of grace. Every one of us – with our doubts, our fears, our scars, our joy, our dreams, our hopes, our questions – we are invited to God's table. For here we will be fed and given a taste of an expansive life that is full to the brim with love, overflowing with joy. Now come. Not because you must, but because you can. Come. You are invited. This meal is for you.

Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Those who do not receive the bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing.

Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request. Communion may also be brought back to the pews for those who are unable to come forward.

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*

The image shows a musical score for the Communion Song 'Lamb of God'. It consists of five staves of music in a single system, written in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with 'Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the'. The second staff continues with 'world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you'. The third staff continues with 'take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy'. The fourth staff continues with 'on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the'. The fifth staff concludes with 'sin of the world; grant us peace. A - men.' The music features a mix of quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some phrases marked with slurs.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound* (ELW 779)



1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

COMMUNION HYMN *We Sing to You, O God* (ELW 791)

- 1 We sing to you, O God,
the Rock who gave us birth,
let our rejoicing sing
your name in all the earth.
To you, O God, let songs be raised,
in joyful hymns, our feast of praise.
- 2 We wandered far from home
out in a desert land,
you shielded with your love
our fearful pilgrim band.
You kept us safe within your arms
and sheltered us against the storm.
- 3 You bear us through the world,
an eagle to its young;
you rise up on your wings
and bear us toward the sun.
We ride the vaults of light and air
and trust in your unfailing care.
- 4 O God, eternal God,
we hide within your wings,
the everlasting arms
to whom our praises ring.
Your word is true, your way is just,
You are the God in whom we trust.

*POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

Amen

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***BLESSING**

May God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, + fill you to the brim with grace and blessing now and forever **Amen.**

***SENDING SONG *My Life Flows On in Endless Song* (ELW 763)**



1 My life flows on in end-less song; a-bove earth's lam-en - ta - tion,
2 Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear that mu-sic ring - ing.
3 What though my joys and com-forts die? The Lord my Sav-ior liv - eth.
4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring-ing!



I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.
It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?
What though the dark - ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth.
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?

Refrain



No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm cling-ing.



Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?

***DISMISSAL**

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; and love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Go in peace. Serve in love.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

The flowers on the altar today were supplied by Cora and Barry Steigerwalt in honor of Barry's birthday.

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Valerie C

Acolyte: Carissa M

Ushers: Volunteer

Offering: Lydia M and Cate S

Attendance last week: 66 + 6 zoom

Notes for the day's texts:

Grumbling! The crowd around Jesus—the “in” crowd, that is—was grumbling. Grumbling because Jesus welcomed those who traditionally had been set apart: tax collectors and sinners. Who are those who cause us to grumble? Whose seemingly undeserved handout or unearned status change filled our hearts with resentment this week? Jesus speaks to us today because we too often see life as a game with winners and losers, points and playbooks, offense and defense. Can we open our hearts and minds to hear today's humbling good news? God's love is freely shared with all: we cannot earn it, we cannot deserve it. When we attend worship, we do so out of thanksgiving and praise for God's glory, hunger and thirst for God's word and sacrament. We do not attend worship to achieve some status within God's kingdom. When we help a neighbor, share with a stranger, assist the afflicted, or acknowledge the overlooked we do so because Christ first did the same for us. We respond to God's grace and mercy with our own feeble attempts to emulate God's perfect love. It is challenging, exhausting, never-ending, perspective-altering, radically humbling work. It's work that is impossible to do without the inspiration of Christ, the nourishment of wine and bread, and the strength of the saints who have gone before us and with whom we walk Christ's path today. Let us find those in our world who teach us about Christ's unending reconciliation, so that we can all celebrate and rejoice as the family of God.

Today's Music

What Is The World Like. Text: Adam M. L. Tice, b. 1979, Music: Sally Ann Morris, b. 1952. GIA Publications, Inc.

Beautiful Things. Text: Michael Gungor, b. 1980, and Lisa Gungor, b. 1982, Music: Michael Gungor and Lisa Gungor. Capitol CMG Publishing.

What Wonderous Love Is This. Text: North American folk hymn, 19th cent., alt., Music: W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835; arr. Paul J. Christiansen, 1914-1997, alt.. Public Domain / Augsburg Fortress.

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound. Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt., sts. 1-4; anonymous, st. 5, Music: W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835; arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1851-1921, alt. Public Domain.

We Sing to You, O God. Text: Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, Music: John Ireland, 1879-1962. Selah Publishing Co., Inc..

My Life Flows On in Endless Song. Text: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899, Music: Robert Lowry, alt. Public Domain

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Next Week's Readings:

Isaiah 43:16-21 *The Lord gives water in the wilderness to the chosen people*

Psalm 126 *Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy*

Philippians 3:4b-14 *To know Chris and his resurrection, to share in his sufferings*

John 12:1-8 *Mary anoints Jesus for his burial*