



Sunday, March 23, 2025

Third Sunday of Lent

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Rooted in our Tradition, Open to Yours

Confession and Forgiveness Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.** Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love. *Silence is kept for reflection.* Compassionate One, **you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In ☩ Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn:

Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters (ELW 445)

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.**

Prayer of the Day: 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.**

Scripture:

Isaiah 55:1-9

Return to God with all your heart, the Source of grace and mercy; come seek the tender faithfulness of God.

Luke 13:1-9

Sermon

Hymn of the Day:

O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts (ELW 658)

The Small Catechism of Martin Luther (*attached page*)

Prayers of the People Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need. *A brief silence* We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. **Grant humility and wisdom to bishops, pastors, councils, and congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions.** God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly. **Teach your people the goodness of your generosity, that in sharing what we have been given, all life may flourish on the planet that is our shared home.** God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. **Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live.** God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for those in need, called to receive your compassion, especially Jacqui Jarmol, Ginny Dorsey, Jon Paul, Carl Ohnmeiss, Dan & Mary Gleghorn, John & Tacy Raymaley, Debbie, Katie, Shelly, Shari, and all those we hold in our hearts. Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict especially those in California, Oklahoma and the Carolinas. **Aid communities in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild.** God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.** We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. **Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst.** God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended. **May their witness inspire our own.** God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

The 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.**

*Preface

Create in Me a Clean Heart (ELW 186)

*Words of Institution:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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.**

Communion

ELW page 208

Post-Communion Prayer: Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. 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.**

Sending Hymn:

Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer (ELW 618)

Blessing & Dismissal