

Second Sunday in Lent

March 5, 2023

9:15am - Hybrid Worship



Lutheran Church of the Living Christ

2725 Concord Dr, Florissant, MO 63033

Find us online: www.lc-livingchrist.org

The Word has been made real flesh. We are constantly reminded of Jesus' very real humanity throughout scripture: "who, though he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness." (Phil. 2:6-7).

We also remember how God chooses to dwell not in halls of power, but is born as a baby in an ordinary village. The Divine Presence dwells where we least expect it. For those who awaken to the true promise of the divine, a different way will be taken...sending us out in ways we least expect, by other roads.

Welcome to Lutheran Church of the Living Christ

Welcome! If you came as a guest today, we hope you leave as a friend. May this worship service surround you with the love of God through Christ and fill you with the Holy Spirit.

Invitation to Communion: We welcome all to commune at LCLC. It is not our table, nor this congregation's table, nor our denomination's table. It is the table of Jesus Christ. By his invitation there is a place for everyone. We believe that Jesus is present in the bread and wine that forgives sin, nourishes faith, and calls us to be witnesses to the gospel.

Notes about our worship service: Guidance is printed in *italics* throughout. "P" indicates the speaking part of the presiding minister; "L" indicates a speaking part of a lay leader; "C" and parts in **boldface** indicate speaking parts of the whole congregation. You may also follow along with the service by looking at the screen in the front of the sanctuary. Liturgical pieces are set to familiar Christmas tunes. This liturgy is provided by the Eastern Missouri Conference of the Central States Synod. Please be mindful of others' comfort with touch. Ask before giving a handshake or hug.

PRELUDE

"Amazing Grace"

by Harold DeCou

WELCOME

Please stand as you are able.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace.

C: Amen.

Let us acknowledge before God and one another our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Holy God,

C: we confess to you our faults and failings. Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word; we take for ourselves instead of giving to others; we spoil rather than steward your creation; we cause hurt though you call us to heal; we choose fear

over compassion. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, as we seek to follow in your way of life. Amen.

P: Hear the good news:

C: God so loved the world that God gave the only Son, so that all may receive life. This promise is for you! God embraces you with divine mercy, † forgives you in Christ's name, and revives you in the Spirit's power. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN "Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters" ELW#445

GREETING

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

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose – that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation. ¹The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ^{4a}So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

L: The Word of God still speaks.

C: Thanks be to God.

Choir Anthem "Amazing Grace"

Psalm: Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the LORD. (Ps. 121:1, 2)

L: ¹I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come?

C: ²**My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.**

L: ³The LORD will not let your foot be moved nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

C: ⁴**Behold, the keeper of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep;**

L: ⁵the LORD watches over you; the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

C: ⁶**the sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.**

L: ⁷The LORD will preserve you from all evil and will keep your life.

C: ⁸**The LORD will watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth forevermore.**

Second Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. ¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.

¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”) – in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

L: The Word of God still speaks.

C: Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (During Lent)

We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -

slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

Holy Gospel according to John the 3rd chapter vs 1-17

Glory to you, O Lord.

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God. ¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” ³Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you

believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Following the reading the assembly is seated.

SERMON Pastor Matt Helfrich

Please stand as you are able

HYMN OF THE DAY

“God Loved the World”

ELW#323

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

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

O God, you so love your church. Raise up leaders who care for your people. Bless lay theologians, seminary and college professors, and all who are called to the ministry of teaching, that they form and inspire us for the work of the gospel. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

O God, you so love your creation. Breathe new life into our planetary home. Guide the work of researchers, scientists, and activists who love your earth and who inspire us to care for the natural world. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

O God, you so love the world. Uphold leaders who resist tyranny and oppression. Strengthen organizations that promote peace and harmony (*especially*). Direct their work to alleviate human suffering and to address its root causes. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

O God, you so love your people. Draw near to all who live with mental illness, depression, or addiction, and accompany them in healing and recovery. Hear the cries of those who look to you in their distress (*especially*). Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

O God, you so love your children. Bless the young in our midst, and delight us with their joy, wonder, and curiosity. Revive our ministries with children and youth and equip us all for faithful discipleship. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

O God, you so love your saints. As our ancestors in the faith have been a blessing to us, so inspire us by their example of holy living to be a blessing to those who come after us. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Share a sign of peace by waving, flashing a peace sign, or another form of greeting. Please be seated following this time.

Gathering of Offering - *Gifts and offerings are collected in the back before service and also during the service in thanksgiving for the gifts God first gave to us.*

Please stand as you are able

Offering Prayer

God of good gifts,
receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service
for the sake of your gospel.
Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal
as you pour out your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

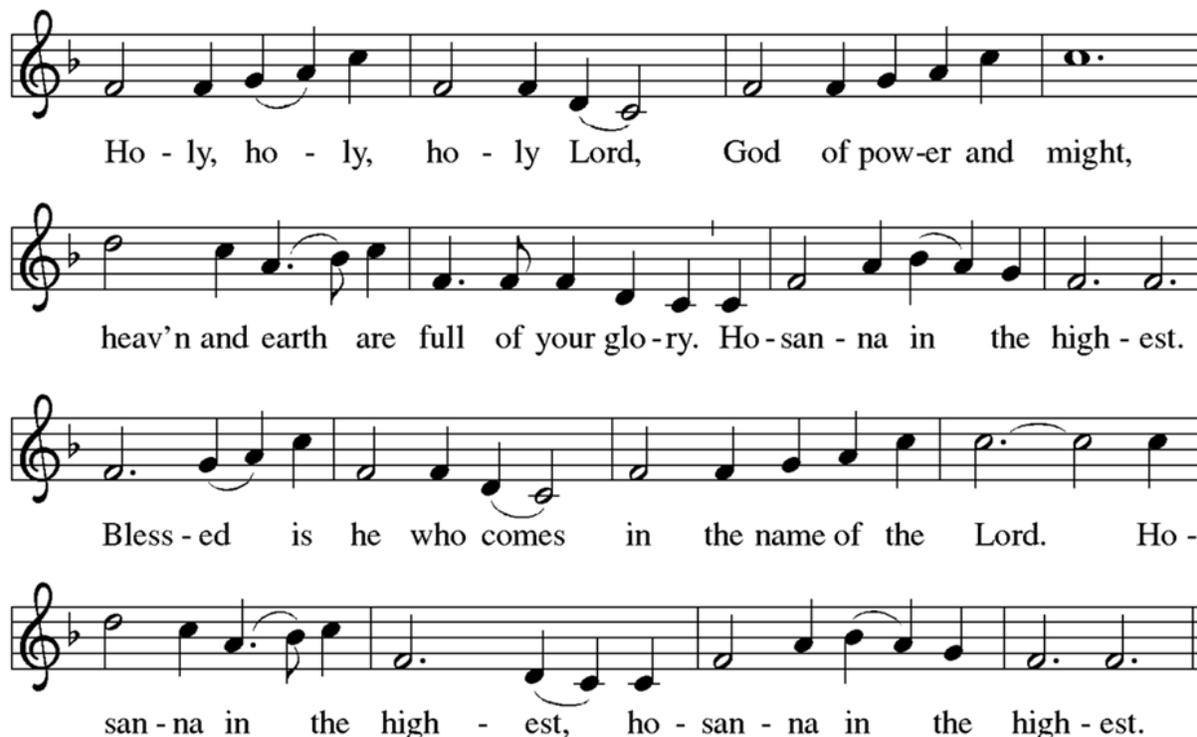
Lift up your hearts.

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



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n 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.

Illuminating God, source of creation, our salvation and our hope, we praise you for your creative labor, bearing expectations for life and love. When we strayed from your path and chose cruelty and despair, you spoke to us through unexpected prophets: Isaiah envisioned a blossoming desert; Mary proclaimed a world turned upside down; John the Baptist cried out for repentance. At this expectant hour, your Son Jesus came to bring us extraordinary love and to heal all the suffering world.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his life among us, his death as one of us, and his resurrection, the first of all of us, we anticipate his coming in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us and on this meal we share: that we may work for justice, build hope for your already but not yet reign, and share the anticipated love and joy of your Son. All glory and honor is yours, in your holy creation, both now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us.

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

P: Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

C: Amen

The assembly is seated.



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

DISTRIBUTION

Time is given for the sharing of bread and wine. You may come forward to receive communion at the altar or partake with prepackaged elements at your seat. However communion is given and received, we trust Jesus is present in the bread and cup we share as a gathered community.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

“In the Cross of Christ, I Glory”

ELW#324

Please stand as you are able

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you God's grace into life everlasting.

Amen

Prayer after Communion

P: Embodied God,
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors
and touch the world with your love.

C: Amen.

The assembly is seated

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able

BLESSING

P: God, the giver of love,
✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth
bless you in this Lenten journey.

C: Amen.

SENDING HYMN

"Lift High the Cross"

ELW#660

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Serve in love.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

"Lift High the Cross"

by Paul Manz

Announcements for the week of 3/5/23

1. **Please remember to bring your food donations for TEAM. Please see the set up in the great room. See Bill Kaepfel for more details.**
2. **Congregational Vitality Team (CVT)** are in the process of planning our annual spring community Easter Event and.....**WE NEED HELP !!!!!!!** Please consider volunteering to help with:
 - Obtain Thrivent Funding
 - Purchase Easter egg hunt supplies
 - Prepare Easter eggs
 - Manage Easter egg hunt
 - Assist with food/drink purchase, preparation, and distribution
 - Plan, purchase supplies, and assist with cake walk
 - Coordinate with neighboring communities with event

planning **Additional assistance as identified** ***SAVE the DATE: Saturday, April 1***

3. ****Fifty Plus March Activity** A tour of the *Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum* is scheduled for *Thursday, March 16 at 11:30 am* with lunch to follow at a restaurant to be determined. The address is 36 Millstone Campus Dr., St. Louis. The ticket price per person is \$10 and can be purchased that day. Please see the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board.
4. **The Lunch Bunch** will meet Thursday, March 9, at 11:30 at Thai Kitchen 8458 Lindbergh Blvd 63031. For reservations, contact Judy Holmes at 314-355-1125 or mickey.holmes@att.net. All are welcome.
5. CVT Zoom Meeting at 7:00 pm. Monday 6th

March 5, 2023

Preaching/Presiding: Pr. Matt

Assisting Minister: Randy Henning

Lector: Terry Calderwood

Zoom & Slides: Erle Craig

Musician: David Eggers

Usher: Jim & Doris Stoehner

Greeter: Kathy Endorf

Altar Guild: Karen Haynes & Sheila Smart

March 12, 2023

Preaching/Presiding: Pr Matt

Assisting Minister: Bill Kaepfel

Lector: Gary Brown

Zoom & Slides: Laurie & Gary Brown

Musician: Greg Ott

Usher: Dave Endorf & Randy Henning

Greeter: Joyce Meyer

Altar Guild: Joyce Wolf & Ann Schultz

Coming Up at Living Christ

Monday 2/27	5:00pm Noble Guard
Tuesday 2/28	10:00am Bible Class 11:00am Exercise 7:00pm Bible Class (ZOOM)
Wednesday 3/1	
Thursday 3/2	11:00am Exercise
Friday 3/3	
Saturday 3/4	5:30pm Noble Guard
Sunday 3/5	8:00am Vocal Choir; 9:15am Worship 10:30am Adult Ed. Hour 11:00am True Vine Church of God