

# ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

## FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT



March 21, 2021

10:00 a.m.

## INTRODUCTION

*God promises Jeremiah that a “new covenant” will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God’s heart through Christ and draws God’s love and truth into our hearts. We join together in worship, sharing in word, song, and meal, and leave strengthened to share God’s love with all the world.*

## PRELUDE



+ GATHERING +

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

**Congregation (C) Amen.**

P God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Fountain of living water,

**C pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.**

P Beloved, God’s word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are ☩ forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus.

**C Amen.**

1 As rain from the clouds will your word come to earth,  
3 As rays of the sun shall your word light the world,

as snow from the heav - ens re - fresh - ing the land.  
a - wak - ing and warm - ing and heal - ing our land.

Then soft - en our soil that the good seed may grow  
Then shine in our hearts that the good seed may grow

and rip - en rich fruit to re - turn to your hand.  
and rip - en rich fruit to re - turn to your hand.

We praise you, our God, for the dew of your word;  
We praise you, our God, for the light of your word;

we thank you, good gar - d'ner, for your ten - der toil.  
we thank you, good gar - d'ner, for your ten - der toil.

We bless you, best farm - er, for hun - dred - fold yield,  
We bless you, best farm - er, for hun - dred - fold yield,

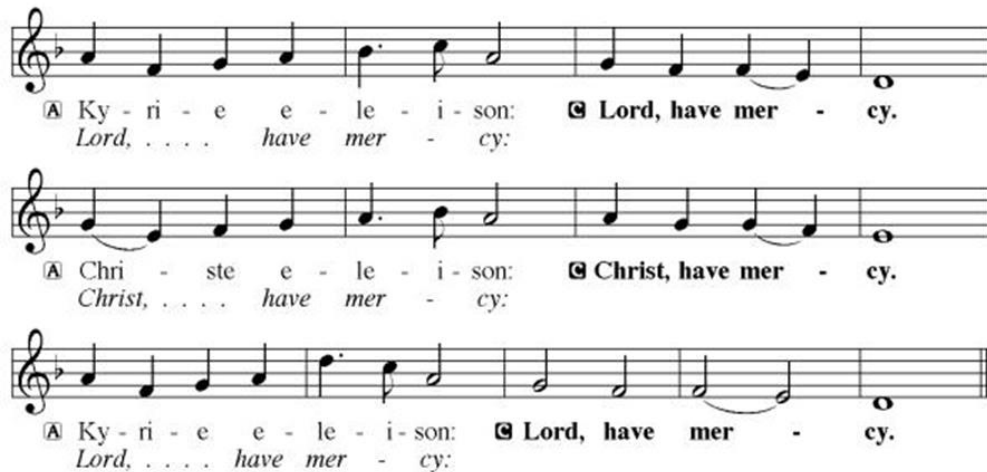
for har - vest of grace in our once - bar - ren soil.  
for har - vest of grace in our once - bar - ren soil.

## GREETING

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

**C** And also with you.

## KYRIE



**A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    **C** Lord, have mer - cy.  
*Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:*

**A** Chri - ste e - le - i - son:    **C** Christ, have mer - cy.  
*Christ, . . . . have mer - cy:*

**A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    **C** Lord, have mer - cy.  
*Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:*



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Let us pray.

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.



+ WORD +

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

*The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.*

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says 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. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Reader           The word of the Lord.

**C               Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 51:1-12**       *We sing the psalm responsively.*



Leader <sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your | steadfast love;  
in your great compassion blot out | my offenses.

**C       <sup>2</sup>Wash me through and through | from my wickedness,  
and cleanse me | from my sin.**

L       <sup>3</sup>For I know | my offenses,  
and my sin is ev- | er before me.

**C** <sup>4</sup>Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil | in your sight;  
so you are justified when you speak and right | in your judgment.

**L** <sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born | steeped in wickedness,  
a sinner from my | mother's womb.

**C** <sup>6</sup>Indeed, you delight in truth | deep within me,  
and would have me know wisdom | deep within.

**L** <sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I | shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be pur- | er than snow.

**C** <sup>8</sup>Let me hear | joy and gladness;  
that the body you have broken | may rejoice.

**L** <sup>9</sup>Hide your face | from my sins,  
and blot out | all my wickedness.

**C** <sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean | heart, O God,  
and renew a right spir- | it within me.

**L** <sup>11</sup>Cast me not away | from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spir- | it from me.

**C** <sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of | your salvation  
and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit.

*Spoken after the psalm is sung:*

**C** **Amen.**

## **SECOND READING: Hebrews 5:5-10**

*Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.*

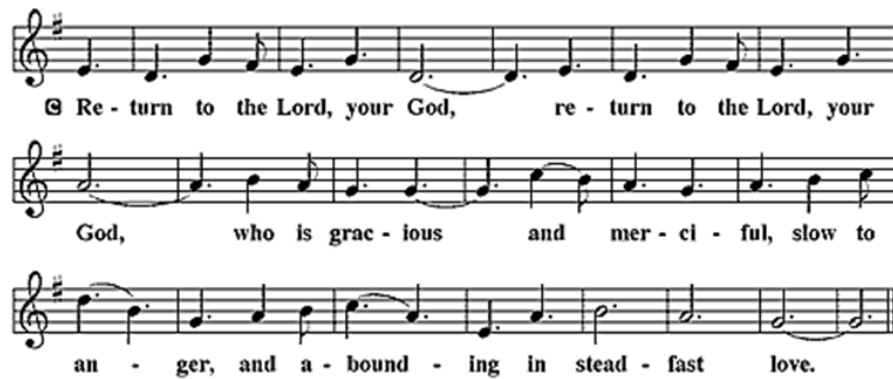
<sup>5</sup>Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."

<sup>7</sup>In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup>Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; <sup>9</sup>and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, <sup>10</sup>having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Reader           The word of the Lord.

**C               Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



### GOSPEL:   John 12:20-33

*Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Passover festival. Here Jesus' words about seeds planted in the ground turn the disaster of his death into the promise of a harvest in which everyone will be gathered.*

P           The holy gospel according to John, the twelfth chapter.

**C           Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>20</sup>Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup>They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

<sup>22</sup>Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

<sup>23</sup>Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single

grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup>Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

<sup>27</sup>“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour?’ No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. <sup>28</sup>Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” <sup>29</sup>The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” <sup>30</sup>Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. <sup>31</sup>Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. <sup>32</sup>And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup>He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

**P** The gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to you, O Christ.

**SERMON** *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**      **330**      *Seed That in Earth Is Dying (vs. 1 & 2)*



1 Seed that in earth is dy - ing grows in - to ears of  
 2 We were bap - tized in Je - sus, in - to his death and  
 3 Seed that in earth is dy - ing ris - es to bear much

grain. Grapes that are crushed in the ves - sel  
 grave, to res - ur - rec - tion's prom - ise:  
 fruit. Christ, as we meet at your ta - ble,

turn in - to gold - en wine. God, through this mys - ter - y grant us  
 praise and e - ter - nal life. Heav - en's own prais - es be - gin here  
 give us the bread of life. Lord, we do thank and a - dore you!

faith in our deep - est dark - ness, life in our night and death.  
 where you your - self are near us. deep in our night and death.  
 Un - ceas - ing praise of the a - ges ris - es from night and death.

Text: Svein Ellingsen, b. 1929; tr. Hodwig T. Durnbaugh, b. 1929  
 Music: Harald Herrestal, b. 1944  
 Tr. © Hodwig T. Durnbaugh  
 Music © Norsk Musikforlag

## APOSTLES' CREED

P Let us confess our faith.

C 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.

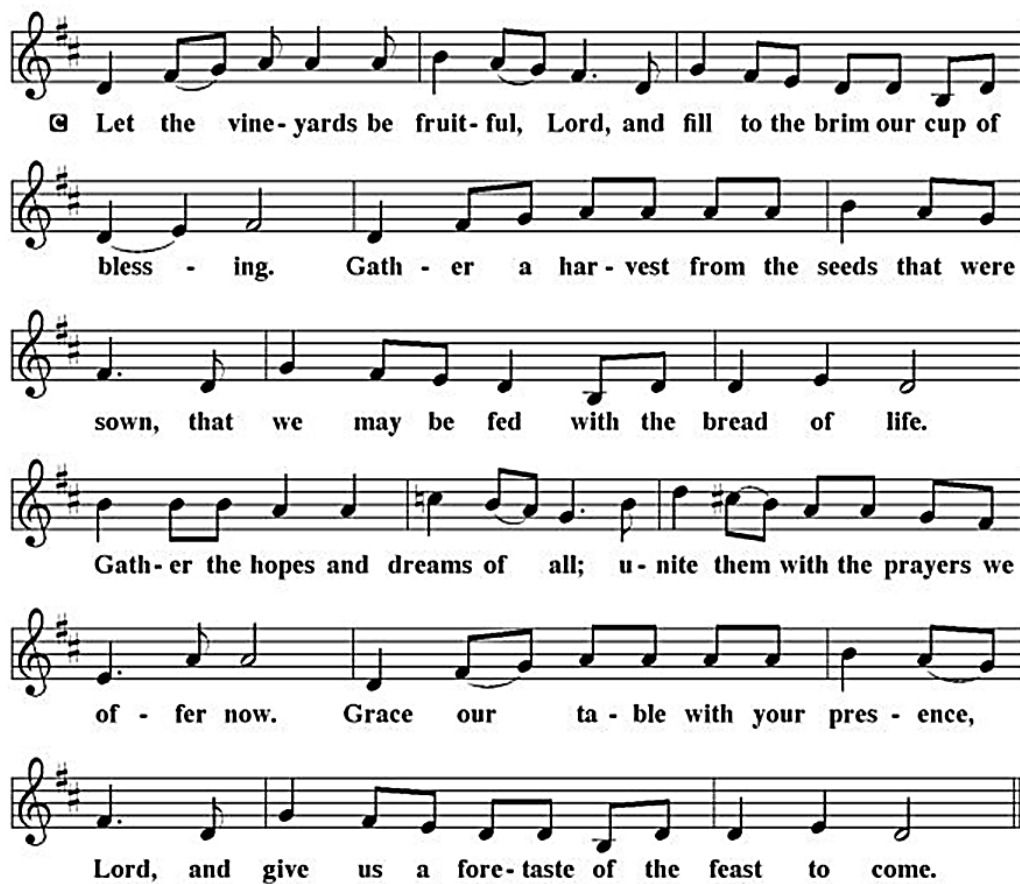
## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.*

*Congregational response: Your mercy is great.*

## OFFERING HYMN

*The assembly stands to sing the offering hymn as the collection and gifts are brought forward.*



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were  
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.  
Gath - er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we  
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,  
Lord, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

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.**

+ SENDING +

**BLESSING** *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you ☩ that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

C Amen.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**SENDING HYMN**                    772    *Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways (vs. 1-3)*

1 Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways to keep his stat - utes still!  
2 Or - der my foot - steps by your word and make my heart sin - cere;  
3 As - sist my soul, too apt to stray, a strict - er watch to keep;  
4 Make me to walk in your com - mands, 'tis a de - light - ful road;

Oh, that my God would grant me grace to know and do his will!  
let sin have no do - min - ion, Lord, but keep my con - science clear.  
and should I e'er for - get your way, re - store your wan - d'ring sheep.  
nor let my head or heart or hands of - fend a - gainst my God.

## DISMISSAL

P We believe out loud that God's mission for us is:

**C to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God's call.**

P Go in peace. Share the good news.

**C Thanks be to God.**

+ + +

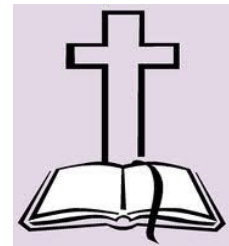
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### Calendar for March 21 - 28

March 21	Sun.	10:00 a.m.	Worship (online), Fifth Sunday in Lent
24	Wed.	Noon	Bible study (online)
28	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship (online), Sunday of the Passion/ Palm Sunday

Next Sunday's Readings, Sunday of the Passion:

*Passion of the Lord According to Mark*



## PRAYER REQUESTS

**New concerns:** Mark Canning recovering from heart surgery; Mark Eagelfeld (friend of Judi Duffy), being treated for COVID.

**For the sick:** Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor); being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Jamie Ann Meyers (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White); Gerhard Hofer (brother-in-law of Ridy Hofer).

***In treatment for cancer:*** Stephanie Barber; Cathie Nitti (niece of Sharon Simmons); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Isabell Cintron (friend of Sharon Simmons); Sarah Lucas (friend of Cassandra White); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Tiffany Nuce and unborn baby (family of Barbara ODonnell); Chris Dickman (synod councilmember); child of Pr. Katrina Foster (friend of Cheryl).

***For health and protection:*** For all affected by coronavirus: those experiencing mental health difficulties due to isolation; those with the disease struggling to recover; those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personal, EMTs, the millions of unemployed people, etc; all immigrant families split apart by US Government; for the unaccompanied children entering the US, including those unaccounted for”.

***For prisoners:*** Femi and Eddie; all those on death row.

***Other concerns:*** Karen Olson; Blanche White (Melissa Barton).

***Church concerns:*** St. Stephen’s Congregational Council; The Florida-Bahamas Synod Council all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

***World concerns:*** For all recovering in the Florida Panhandle from Hurricane Michael, including Messiah Lutheran Church; the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands continuing to recover from hurricanes; migrants fleeing violence in Central America; all those migrants and asylum seekers imprisoned by the US government; the people of Venezuela (birthplace of Bp. Suarez) and Hong Kong; for the Supreme Court as it considers cases involving the LGBTQ community.