



“RETURN TO THE LORD”

Wednesday Lenten Worship

February 28, 2024

7:00 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church, Schubert

RETURN FROM BETRAYAL

AS WE GATHER

In the Transfiguration hymn “Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory,” hymnwriter Thomas Troeger portrays the days of the Lord’s Passion as that time when Jesus’ disciples are to be “following the Savior Through the valley to the cross and . . . testing faith’s resilience Through betrayal, pain, and loss” (*LSB* 416, vs. 2). The weekly reading of the Gospel account of Holy Week reveals how the disciples do and do not meet the challenges of following their Lord. The witness of Scripture also shows how in every situation Jesus remains faithful to His own even in the face of betrayal, pain, and loss. The season of Lent gives us the opportunity to reflect on our discipleship and to test the resiliency of our faith as well.

+ PREPARATION +

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

“Come to Calvary’s Holy Mountain” (*TLH* 149)

**Come to Calvary’s holy mountain, Sinners, ruined by the Fall;
Here a pure and healing fountain Flows to you, to me, to all,
In a full, perpetual tide, Opened when our Savior died.**

**Come in poverty and meanness, Come defiled, without, within;
From infection and uncleanness, From the leprosy of sin,
Wash your robes and make them white; Ye shall walk with God in light.**

**Come in sorrow and contrition, Wounded, impotent, and blind;
Here the guilty free remission, Here the troubled peace, may find.
Health this fountain will restore; He that drinks shall thirst no more.**

**He that drinks shall live forever; ’Tis a soul-renewing flood.
God is faithful; God will never Break his covenant of blood,
Signed when our Redeemer died, Sealed when He was glorified. Amen.**

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

Joel 2:13; Titus 2:13b–14; 2 Timothy 2:11, 13

P Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful,
C **slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents over disaster.**
P Jesus Christ gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness
C **and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works.**
P The saying is trustworthy for: If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him;
C **if we are faithless, He remains faithful—for He cannot deny Himself.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

TLH, p. 5

P Let us make our confession to our God, seeking His grace and forgiveness.
Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto Thee that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Thine infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Thy grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All **O most merciful God, who hast given Thine only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee and of Thy Will and true obedience to Thy Word, to the end that by Thy grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, hath had mercy upon us and hath given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgiveth us all our sins. To them that believe on His name He giveth power to become the sons of God and hath promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

C **Amen.**

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.
All **O God, who gives strength to the weak and light to those who are in darkness, grant us to know Your Son, Jesus Christ, that through Him we may know You. By Your Spirit, direct our lives so that we never betray our Lord or turn away from following Him throughout our lives. This we ask through Jesus Christ, our blessed Savior. Amen.**

+ WORD +

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 15:12; 17:1-4

¹² And while Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

¹ Moreover, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. ² I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic, and all the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down only the king, ³ and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man, and all the people will be at peace." ⁴ And the advice seemed right in the eyes of Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalms 121

P Blessed is the one who considers the poor! In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;
C **the LORD protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land; You do not give him up to the will of his enemies.**

P The LORD sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness You restore him to full health.

C **As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against You!"**

P My enemies say of me in malice, "When will he die and his name perish?"

C **And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity; when he goes out, he tells it abroad.**

P All who hate me whisper together about me; they imagine the worst for me.

C **They say, "A deadly thing is poured out on him; he will not rise again from where he lies."**

P Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

C **But You, O Lord, be gracious to me, and raise me up, that I may repay them!**

P By this I know that You delight in me:
my enemy will not shout in triumph over me.

C **But You have upheld me because of my integrity,
and set me in Your presence forever.**

**Blessèd be the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting!**

Amen and Amen.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

SECOND READING

Acts 3:14-19

¹⁴ “But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, ¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And His name—by faith in His name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.

¹⁷ “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

“Christ, the Life of All the Living” (*TLH* 151; vs. 1-3)

**Christ, the Life, of all the living, Christ, the Death of death, our foe,
Who, Thyself for me once giving, To the darkest depths of woe,
Through Thy suff’rings, death, and merit I eternal life inherit:
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

**Thou, ah! Thou hast taken on Thee Bonds and stripes, a cruel rod;
Pain and scorn were heaped upon Thee, O Thou sinless Son of God!
Thus didst Thou my soul deliver From the bonds of sin forever.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

**Thou hast borne the smiting only That my wounds might all be whole;
Thou hast suffered, sad and lonely, Rest to give me weary soul;
Yea, the curse of God enduring, Blessings unto me securing.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

HOLY GOSPEL

John 18:1-11

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

A *When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with His disciples. So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to Him, came forward and said to them,*

P “Whom do you seek?”

A *They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them,*

P “I am He,”

A *Judas, who betrayed Him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them,*
P “I am He,”

A *they drew back and fell to the ground. So He asked them again,*
P “Whom do you seek?”

A *And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered,*
P “I told you that I am He. So, if you seek Me, let these men go.”

A *This was to fulfill the word that He had spoken:*
P “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost not one.”

A *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) So Jesus said to Peter,*
P “Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given Me?”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

WEEKDAY / CONFIRMATION CLASS READING

SERMON HYMN

“Christ, the Life of All the Living” (TLH 151; vs. 4-7)

**Heartless scoffers did surround Thee, Treating thee with shameful scorn
And with piercing thorns they crowned Thee. All disgrace Thou, Lord, hast borne
That as Thine though mightiest own me And with heav’nly glory crown me.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

**Thou hast suffered men to bruise Thee That from pain I might be free;
Falsely did Thy foes accuse Thee,— Thence I gain security;
Comfortless Thy soul did languish Me to comfort in my anguish.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

**Thou hast suffered great affliction And hast borne it patiently,
Even death by crucifixion, Fully to atone for me;
Thou didst choose to be tormented That my doom might be prevented.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

**Then, for all that wrought my pardon, For Thy sorrows deep and sore,
For Thine anguish in the Garden, I will thank Thee evermore,
Thank Thee for thy groaning, sighing, For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
For that last triumphant cry, And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high. Amen.**

SERMON

“Return from Betrayal”

The OFFERINGS are presented

OFFERTORY

“Take My Life and Let It Be” (*TLH* 400; vs. 1, 3)

**Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

**Take my voice and let me sing Always, only, for my King;
Take my lips and let them be Filled with messages from Thee. Amen.**

THE LITANY

L O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

L O Christ,

C **have mercy.**

L O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

L O Christ,

C **hear us.**

L God the Father in heaven,

C **have mercy.**

L God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

C **have mercy.**

L God the Holy Spirit,

C **have mercy.**

L Be gracious to us.

C **Spare us, good Lord.**

L Be gracious to us.

C **Help us, good Lord.**

L From all sin, from all error, from all evil;

From the crafts and assaults of the devil; from sudden and evil death;

From pestilence and famine; from war and bloodshed; from sedition and from rebellion;

From lightning and tempest; from all calamity by fire and water; and from everlasting death:

C **Good Lord, deliver us.**

L By the mystery of Your holy incarnation; by Your holy nativity;

By Your Baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Your agony and bloody sweat; by Your cross and passion; by Your precious death and burial;

By Your glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter:

C **Help us, good Lord.**

- L In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the Day of Judgment:
 C **Help us, good Lord.**
- L We poor sinners implore You
 C **to hear us, O Lord.**
- L To rule and govern Your holy Christian Church; to preserve all pastors and ministers of Your Church in the true knowledge and understanding of Your wholesome Word and to sustain them in holy living;
 To put an end to all schisms and causes of offense; to bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are deceived;
 To beat down Satan under our feet; to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; and to accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spirit:
 C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**
- L To raise those who fall and to strengthen those who stand; and to comfort and help the weakhearted and the distressed:
 C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**
- L To give to all peoples concord and peace; to preserve our land from discord and strife; to give our country Your protection in every time of need;
 To direct and defend our president and all in authority; to bless and protect our magistrates and all our people;
 To watch over and help all who are in danger, necessity, and tribulation; to protect and guide all who travel;
 To grant all women with child, and all mothers with infant children, increasing happiness in their blessings; to defend all orphans and widows and provide for them;
 To strengthen and keep all sick persons and young children; to free those in bondage; and to have mercy on us all:
 C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**
- L To forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers and to turn their hearts; to give and preserve for our use the kindly fruits of the earth; and graciously to hear our prayers:
 C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**
- L Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
 C **we implore You to hear us.**
- L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
 C **have mercy.**
- L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
 C **have mercy.**
- L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
 C **grant us Your peace.**
- L O Christ,
 C **hear us.**

L O Lord,
C **have mercy.**
L O Christ,
C **have mercy.**
L O Lord,
C **have mercy. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

C **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.

CLOSING COLLECT

Luther's Evening Prayer

P Let us pray.
C **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

BLESSING

P The blessing of almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit be and remain with you always.
C **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Abide With Me! Fast Falls the Eventide” (*TLH* 552; vs. 1, 2, 6, 8)

**Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!**

**Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see.
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me.**

**I need Thy presence every passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the Tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!**

**Hold Thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies,
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me! Amen.**

SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

Acknowledgments

The Lutheran Hymnal: St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, © 1941.

Hymn #149: Scripture: Matthew 11:28; Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain; Author: James Montgomery (1819); Tune: Consolation; Composer: Ludvig M. Lindeman (1871).

Hymn #151: Scripture: Matthew 26:64-67; Jesu, meines Lebens Leben; Christ, the Life of All the Living; Author: Ernst C. Homburg (1659, ab.); Translator: Catherine Winkworth (1863, alt.); Tune: Jesu, meines Lebens Leben; Source: “Kirchengesangbuch”, Darmstadt (1687).

Hymn #400: Scripture: Ephesians 6:24; Take My Life and Let It Be; Author: Frances R. Havergal (1874); Tune: Patmos, Composer: William H. Havergal (1869).

Hymn #552: Scripture: Luke 24:29; Abide With Me! Fast Falls the Eventide; Author: Henry F. Lyte (1847, ?); Tune: Eventide; Composer: William H. Monk (1861).

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