**Worship Plan for Sunday, March 3, 2024** **\* Third Sunday in Lent**

**Introduction to the day**

The third covenant in this year’s Lenten readings is the central one of Israel’s history: the gift of the law to those God freed from slavery. The commandments begin with the statement that because God alone has freed us from the powers that oppressed us, we are to let nothing else claim first place in our lives. When Jesus throws the merchants out of the temple, he is defending the worship of God alone and rejecting the ways commerce and profit-making can become our gods. The Ten Commandments are essential to our baptismal call: centered first in God’s liberating love, we strive to live out justice and mercy in our communities and the world.

**GOSPEL MESSAGE: God’s Zeal Makes Us Clean**

In this penitential season, we hear the words of God’s law revealed on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:1-17). The law was given to guide Israel, newly rescued from slavery in Egypt, to become a community reflecting God’s love and holiness. However, this law, no matter how full of love it is, will always carry the sting of accusation for us because our hearts have strayed from God’s gracious purpose. We aren’t capable of fully following the law because we are still captive to the powers of sin and death, so the commandments will always reveal our trespasses. We should not be surprised that God’s word convicts even those who have been called into the community of faith. After all, Jesus cleansed even the temple, reacting against sin within the very heart of religious life.

These scenes on Mount Sinai and in the temple don’t just concern people of times long past. They draw us in as well. In the mysteries of holy baptism and holy communion, we become the house of the Lord. Joined to Christ by grace, we are, together, the body of Christ and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is zealous for the holiness of his body, desiring that those who have been united to him would walk in love and truth.

Our great assurance, though, is that the living Word of Jesus is greater even than the revelation on Sinai. Where the law can only convict, Jesus forgives. Where the law reveals our bondage to fear and pride, Jesus brings joyful freedom. In Christ, his body the church dies to sin and then, by grace, rises to new life, made clean and holy.

Let us not fear the one who calls us into holiness and cleanses the temple with zeal. The law reveals where sin has brought death to our souls. But Jesus has passed through death into a glorious resurrection to make us into a living temple, where God’s mercy can be found in abundance for us and for the world.

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Welcome**

Welcome to Faith Lutheran Church, where grace and love abound. While we wait and prepare for a new pastor, we invite you to participate fully in the vibrant life of the congregation, and to join us in prayer as we continue to serve God and God's people during this time of transition. Today our guest pastor is Rex Wignall.

**ASSISTING MINISTER: ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Tomorrow, the 4th, at 1:00 we are hosting a community meeting here at Faith with the City of Menifee about the park project. The City will be providing all the information about the park, including renderings, and will be available to answer questions. We will be providing refreshments and would like to encourage all members to attend.

Tuesday, the 5th: Worship & Music meets at 10:00

Wednesday, the 6th: Lent Soup & Study begins at 5:00

Thursday, the 7th: Snip 'N Stitch meets at 9:00

Friday, the 8th: Al-Anon meets at 10:30

Today’s altar flowers were given by Frank and Debbie Ehrig in thanksgiving for family and friends.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 16th at 10:00 to help Altar Guild clean up the Sanctuary in preparation for Palm Sunday and Easter. Many hands make lighter work. We need vacuums with attachments, cleaning cloths, and elbow grease. Cleaning products will be provided, as well as coffee and donuts! Please plan on helping out!

For the month of March, we are collecting 16 oz jars of peanut butter, grocery bags, and empty egg cartons for the Community Cupboard. Please place donations in the wire basket in the foyer.

For more information and a complete monthly calendar, contact the church office. You can also go to the narthex and sign up to have the Forecaster and weekly announcements sent to you via email or via phone call. Thank you!

**INSTALLATION**

At this time, I would like to invite forward the new members of the Church Council, WELCA Board, and Endowment Fund Board for their installation.

P: The Lord be with you.

I have been authorized to install these members who have accepted the call as faithful leaders for the Congregational Church Council of Faith Lutheran Church.

1. Diane Swarts: President
2. Amy Sinclair: Vice-President
3. Mike McGavran: Treasurer
4. Connie Gibson: Secretary
5. Pat Adams: Council Member
6. Arlene Dressler: Council Member
7. Sarge Hunter: Council Member
8. Steve Kent: Council Member
9. Jean Miles: Council Member and Financial Secretary
10. Harold Whitford: Council Member

I also have been authorized to install these members, who have accepted the call as faithful leaders for the Women of the ELCA (WELCA) board of Faith Lutheran Church.

1. Bea Olsen: President
2. Diane Molina: Vice President
3. Arlene Dressler: Treasurer
4. Connie Gibson: Secretary

I also have been authorized to install these members, who have accepted the call as faithful leaders for the Endowment Fund board of Faith Lutheran Church.

1. Lesly Culp: Treasurer
2. Ron Biggs
3. Freddericka Bradshaw
4. Bill Brauer
5. Sandy Chandler

**Address and Questions**

A reading from First Peter: Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 4:10-11)

In the presence of this assembly will you accept this commission and commit yourselves to this new trust and responsibility, in the confidence that it comes from God?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you carry out this ministry in accordance with the holy scriptures and with the confessions of the Lutheran church and in harmony with the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you endeavor in all things to conduct yourselves as is fitting for an ambassador and servant of Jesus Christ?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be faithful, understanding, and loving as you accompany the people you will serve?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

And let the church say amen:

**A: Amen.**

People of God, will you support these servants of Jesus Christ, sent by God to serve all people with the gospel of hope and salvation? Will you pray for them, help and honor them for their work's sake, and in all things strive to live in peace and unity in Christ?

**C: We will, and we ask God to help us.**

**Prayer**

Let us pray.

Gracious God, as you have called workers to varied tasks in the world and in your church, so you have called these members to this ministry. Grant them joy and a spirit of bold trust, that their work may stir up each of us to a life of fruitful service; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Blessing**

P:Almighty God guide, bless, and keep you, that you may be faithful in the ministry to which you have been commissioned.

May the blessings of God go with us, as we engage in active ministry in the church and in the world, to bring wholeness and healing in Christ's name.

May the blessings of God go with us, as we work interdependently with one another and in partnership with God’s children from around the world.

May the blessings of God go with us, as we proclaim to all people the inclusive and all-embracing love and grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And let all of the people of God say:

**All: Amen.**

Please welcome your new Church Council, Women of the ELCA Board and Endowment Fund Board!

**Silence**

Let us take a moment of silence to quiet our hearts and minds and prepare for worship.

**Gathering**

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

**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.**

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

**And now please turn to hymn 324**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Gathering Song:*In the Cross of Christ I Glory* (ELW 324)**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

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

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Holy God, through your Son you have called us to live faithfully and act courageously. Keep us steadfast in your covenant of grace, and teach us the wisdom that comes only through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Children's Chat**

**Word**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**First Reading:** Exodus 20:1-17

### 1God spoke all these words: 2I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 3you shall have no other gods before me. 4You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, 6but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. 7You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. 8Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 10But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 11For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. 12Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. 13You shall not murder. 14You shall not commit adultery. 15You shall not steal. 16You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 17You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PsalmODY:** Psalm 19

1The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims its maker’s handiwork.

2**One day tells its tale to another, and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

3Although they have no words or language, and their voices are not heard,

4**their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world, where God has pitched a tent for the sun.**

5It comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber; it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

6**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again; nothing is hidden from its burning heat.**

7The teaching of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.

8**The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.**

9The fear of the Lord is clean and endures forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10**More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.**

11By them also is your servant enlightened, and in keeping them there is great reward.

12**Who can detect one’s own offenses? Cleanse me from my secret faults.**

13Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.

14**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.**

**Amen.**

**Second Reading:** 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

18I know very well how foolish the message of the cross sounds to those who are on the road to destruction. But we who are being saved recognize this message as the very power of God. 19As the Scriptures say, “I will destroy human wisdom and discard their most brilliant ideas.” 20So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world’s brilliant debaters? God has made them all look foolish and has shown their wisdom to be useless nonsense. 21Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never find him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save all who believe. 22God’s way seems foolish to the Jews because they want a sign from heaven to prove it is true. And it is foolish to the Greeks because they believe only what agrees with their own wisdom. 23So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended, and the Gentiles say it’s all nonsense. 24But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the mighty power of God and the wonderful wisdom of God. 25This “foolish” plan of God is far wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is far stronger than the greatest of human strength.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation (ELW p. 151)**

**Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

**Gospel:** John 2:13-22

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

13The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. 15Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 16He told those who were selling the doves, “Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!” 17His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” 18The Jews then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” 19Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” 20The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” 21But he was speaking of the temple of his body. 22After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon:** The Message of the Cross

(The series, "Pastor and People" will resume on the first Sundays of April and May)

**And now please turn to hymn 723**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Hymn of the Day:*Canticle of the Turning* (ELW 723)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Apostle's Creed**

We continue as we confess our faith using the words of the Apostle's Creed.

**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.**

**Pastor and Assisting Minister: Prayers of Intercession**

Trusting in God’s promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

You alone are God. We thank you for the gift of sabbath rest. Awaken the church to the mystery of your presence and give us glad hearts as we receive the good news of your deliverance. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You renew creation. Drive out those who would make the earth a marketplace. Protect rainforests, mountaintops, oceans, and wilderness areas from commercial exploitation. Unite nations, policymakers, and businesses in efforts to reduce carbon emissions. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You judge the nations. We pray for an end to war and strife in every land. Strengthen international efforts to negotiate peace and provide humanitarian aid to people fleeing from conflict. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You bring healing and hope. We give thanks for physicians, nurses, researchers, therapists, and public health workers who prevent and treat illness. We pray for any who are sick, especially JoLynne Buehring; Arnette Calkins; Danny Claussen; Katie Clifford; Vicki Crow; Frank Ehrig; Carole Erickson; Lorna Harrison; Sarge Hunter; Patsy Loughboro; Donna McCain; Sandra Miller; Terry Milroy; Thordis Moe; Carol Morris; Michael Myers; Marilyn Rieti; Dee Seel; Joyce Stromberg; Diana Ward; Michael Weller; the homebound; the emergency responders; and those grieving and anticipating surgery or tests. At this time, we also pray for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You abide with your people. Sustain any in this community undergoing life transitions: marriage, divorce, childbirth, adoption, moving, graduation, employment change, or a death in the family, especially Eileen Johnson and family; Jack and Roseanne Miller and family; and the family of Arlene Rickards. We pray for those preparing for baptism. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You bring life from death. We remember our loved ones who have died, confident that they have new life in you. May we trust that nothing can separate us from your love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

**Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offering**

At this time, we remember that the giving of our offering is an authentic part of worship. During this time of transition your gifts of your time, talents, treasures, or a combination of them will sustain our ministries to the community and to our own family of faith. We give, as God has given so abundantly to us. Thank you so much for all the ways you give and help to make the ministries of this church possible!

**Assisting Minister: Offering Prayer**

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**And now please turn to hymn 185**

**Musical Offering:*Create in Me a Clean Heart* (ELW 185)**

***Please feel free to either listen to our musical offering or sing along***

**Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue (ELW p. 152)**

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 (ELW p. 153)**

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:

**Holy, Holy, Holy (ELW p. 153)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow’r and might: Heav’n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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 death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**INSTRUCTION FOR COMMUNION**

As you are comfortable, you are invited to come forward to receive communion. All of God’s children are welcome to Christ’s table.

Gather at the altar rail to receive the communion elements or if you wish to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. You may commune yourself once you’ve received the communion elements. Please commune the bread first, turn over the vessel and then carefully open the grape juice. A gluten-free option is available upon request. Please deposit empty cups in the provided baskets on your way back to your seat.

If you would like communion brought to you at your seat, indicate by raising your hand for the Assisting Minister to see and they will bring communion to you.

**Invitation to Communion**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**During Distribution:*One Bread, One Body* (ELW 496)**

**During Distribution:*Eat This Bread: Jesus Christ, Bread of Life* (ELW 472)**

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. 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, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**And now please turn to hymn 705**

Please stand as you are willing and able.

**Sending Song:*God of Grace and God of Glory* (ELW 705)**

**ASSISTING MINISTER: Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Invitation**

The Church Council Members invite guests and visitors to come and meet us in the narthex as you exit so that we can meet and welcome you. All are welcome to join us in the Fellowship Hall for cookies, coffee and conversation.

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