

# Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church Lenten Midweek Church Service

"Be Gracious to Me"

A Look at Psalm 41

Thursday, March 14, 2024



## Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

## Confession and Absolution

P: Our hope in Christ is strong and living, yet we have often taken for granted the profound reality of Christ's death for us. We have ignored how weak and ungodly we have been. Still, our heavenly Father grants us access to His throne of grace, to ask for His forgiveness.

*Silence for reflection.*

P: Heavenly Father,

C: **we have not rejoiced in suffering but have given up easily. We have lacked integrity and acted shamefully. And we have even despaired of life itself. Have mercy upon us, and reconcile us back to You, so that we may rejoice once more, on account of Jesus. Amen.**

P: At just the right time, while we were still weak and ungodly, Jesus Christ died for us and reconciled us to God. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen. We are forgiven and are at peace with God.**

## Psalm

Psalm 41

P Blessed is the one who considers the poor!

C **In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him;**

P the Lord protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land;

C **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.**

**Blessed 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.**

## **Hymn**

"Christ Sits at God's Right Hand" - Hymn 564

**Christ sits at God's right hand, His saving work complete  
To reign till ev'ry foe will lie Beneath His feet  
All that the Father planned, The Son sought to fulfill  
When first He said, "Lord, here am I To do Your will."**

**Christ was that priest God swore, Uniquely First and Last  
Who would in righteousness and love Be unsurpassed  
"A priest forevermore," An oath God would not break  
"A priest within the order of Melchizedek."**

**Christ's altar was the tree, Where on the world's behalf  
He shed a blood, unlike the blood Of goat or calf  
To seal God's guarantee Of grace that cannot fail  
With blood He entered for our good Behind the veil.**

**What costly sacrifice To cover human sin!  
Who but for Christ Jesus had the right To enter in?  
His blood, that sprinkled price, So we might be assured  
That our inheritance in light Has been secured.**

**Then let us now draw near, Washed in that precious flood  
And enter the Most Holy Place By Jesus' blood.  
From hearts that are sincere, Let tongues our hope profess,**

**And trust anew God's faithful grace That we confess.**

**△ 6 All praise to Christ we bring, Our Lord who intercedes,  
Our great High Priest enthroned above Who knows our needs;  
And to the Father sing Our songs of thankful praise,  
Who with the Spirit reigns in love For endless days."**

**Text:** Stephen P. Starke, b. 1955

**Tune:** Hebrew; setting: *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1875

**Text:** © 2002 Stephen P. Starke; admin. Concordia Publishing House

**Music:** Public domain

## **Reading**

Psalm 52:1–9

P A reading from Psalm 52:

Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man?  
The steadfast love of God endures all the day.  
Your tongue plots destruction,  
like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit.  
You love evil more than good,  
and lying more than speaking what is right.  
You love all words that devour,  
O deceitful tongue.  
But God will break you down forever;  
he will snatch and tear you from your tent;  
he will uproot you from the land of the living.  
The righteous shall see and fear,  
and shall laugh at him, saying,  
"See the man who would not make  
God his refuge,  
but trusted in the abundance of his riches  
and sought refuge in his own destruction!"  
But I am like a green olive tree  
in the house of God.  
I trust in the steadfast love of God  
forever and ever.  
I will thank you forever,  
because you have done it.  
I will wait for your name, for it is good,  
in the presence of the godly.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## Reading

James 3:1–10

P A reading from James, Chapter 3:

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## Reading

Matthew 26:57–62

P A reading from St. Matthew, the 26th Chapter.

Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?"

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## Hymn

“God Loved the World So That He Gave” - Hymn 571

**God loved the world so that He gave His only Son the lost to save  
That all who would in Him believe Should everlasting life receive.**

**Christ Jesus is the ground of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death  
All then who trust in Him alone Are built on this chief cornerstone.**

**God would not have the sinner die; His Son with saving grace is nigh  
His Spirit in the Word declares How we in Christ are heaven’s heirs.**

**Be of good cheer, for God’s own Son Forgives all sins which you have done  
And, justified by Jesus’ blood, Your Baptism grant the highest good.**

**If you are sick, if death is near, This truth your troubled heart can cheer:  
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death; That is the firmest ground of faith.**

**△ Glory to God the Father, Son, And Holy Spirit, Three in One!  
To You, O blessed Trinity, Be praise now and eternally!**

**Text:** Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.

**Tune:** *Geistliche Lieder aufs new gebessert*, Wittenberg, 1543, ed. Joseph Klug;  
setting: *Württembergisches Neues Choralbuch*, 1956

**Text and tune:** Public domain

**Setting:** © 1956 Bärenreiter

## Sermon

Psalm 41:6

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

## Prayer of the Church

### Service of the Sacrament

## Preface

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
C: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

P: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and great High Priest, who suffered for us in order to make us perfect.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

P: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, our great High Priest, we beg You, O Lord, to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who came to serve and give His life for us. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

### **The Words of Our Lord**

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\mp$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\mp$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

P: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**A:** 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.

## **Pax Domini**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C:** Amen.

## **Distribution**

## **Post-Communion Prayer**

**P:** We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this Meal. We ask that You would strengthen us as we journey toward Holy Week, trusting in Jesus, the source of eternal salvation; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C:** Amen.

## **Benedicamus and Benediction**

**P:** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**C:** Amen.

## **A Moment of Private Prayer**