

TODAY'S BULLETIN

As We Gather: Genuine Love

We hear today of eternal life that is given to us because of God's great love for us, shown to us in perhaps the most famous Bible verse, John 3:16. This verse speaks of God's genuine love for us and the world shown in Jesus' death on the cross for us. The love of God never ends. God's love is present here and now and extends into eternal life as eternal love. May we be so encouraged by God's love to share it with others. Thanks be to God for such love!

LENTEN MIDWEEK CHURCH SERVICES:

Our Midweek church services here at Saint Matthew's will be held on Thursdays at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm. This week we continue our look at Psalm 41.

EASTER LILIES: Forms are now available on the table in the church's narthex for you to order Easter Lilies. The cost per plant is \$10. You can fill out the form and place it on the folder on the church's desk or hand it to Pastor Iovine. Additionally, you can order your plants on the church website. Look for the Easter Lilies link where you can fill out the form and even pay for the plants.

THURSDAY BIBLE CLASS: This week, we continue our study of our Midweek theme - "Be Gracious to Me." Since the fall into sin, no part of our human nature has escaped the ravages of original sin. Not only has sin separated us from God to our spiritual detriment, but our bodies, created for perfect health, endure sickness and injury. King David announces God's answer to this catastrophe in Psalm 41:3: "The LORD sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness You restore him to full health." This is a beautiful promise, but what does it mean for you and your infirmities? As all the Scriptures bear witness to Jesus, the gifts contained in these words are only revealed by your Baptism into Him by whose wounds we are healed.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK: Our verse is taken from John 3:16

(Jesus said) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."



Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church

New Milford, NJ
LCMS — New Jersey District

Saturday
March 9, 2024
Lent 4

**Saint Matthew's
Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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Congregational President

Thomas Williams
Congregational Treasurer

Stephanie Coppola
Elder

Serving in Our Church Service Today: Stephanie Coppola,
Elder

Serving Next Sunday: Jody Wangerin

Sunday's Reader: Pastor Iovine

PALM SUNDAY READERS:

You can help our Palm Sunday church service by signing up to read. Copies of the readings are available on the table in the narthex. Take the reading and sign your name to the chart. Thank you for considering reading part of the Passion Story on Palm Sunday!

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE:

A food pantry needs update is available on the table in the back of the church. Take one along with you today!

READINGS FOR NEXT WEEKEND:

- Jeremiah 31:31–34 (God's new covenant)
- Hebrews 5:1–10 (Jesus is our great High Priest.)
- Mark 10:(32–34) 35–45 (The Son of Man came to serve and give His life.)

HYMNS FOR NEXT WEEKEND:

- "Christ Sits at God's Right Hand" - Hymn 564
- "Since Our Great High Priest, Christ Jesus" - Hymn 529
- "Abide, O Dearest Jesus" - Hymn 919

NEXT WEEK'S WORSHIP SERVICES

March 9 & 10 - Lent 3

- **Lenten Midweek @ Holy Trinity** - Wednesday, March 13, beginning at 7:00pm
- **Lenten Midweek @ Saint Matthew's** - Thursday, March 14, 11:00am and 7:00pm
- Saturday, March 16 - 5:00pm @ Saint Matthew's
- Sunday, March 17 - 9:30am @ Saint Matthew's
- Sunday, March 17 - 11:30am @ Holy Trinity



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Fourth Saturday in Lent

Blended Church Service - Divine Services 3, 4, and Creative Worship

Welcome & Church Announcements

Moment of Prayer

Invocation & Opening Sentences

John 3:16

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

C: **Amen.**

P: God so loved the world,

C: **that He gave His only Son,**

P: that whoever believes in Him should not perish

C: **but have eternal life.**

P: Our Lenten journey leads us to the cross where Jesus gave His life,

C: **and then to the resurrection and eternal life.**

Confession and Absolution

P: Though Christ has loved us with this genuine love that gives us eternal life, we sometimes ignore His love and refuse to share Christ's love with others. Still, our heavenly Father is merciful, and He invites us to draw near to Him in hope and confidence to ask for His grace.

Silence for reflection.

P: Heavenly Father,

C: **we have sinned against You and against our neighbors. We have not loved You with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not loved our enemies. Forgive us, renew our love, on account of Jesus. Amen.**

P: Jesus Christ was lifted up on the tree of the cross so that we might be forgiven. His genuine love is for the world and is for you. 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 by the genuine love of Jesus.**

Salutation and the Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray: Lord Jesus Christ, You have loved us with an everlasting love that grants us eternal life. Burn Your love ever stronger within our hearts, Lord, so that we may love others as You have loved us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Numbers 21:4–9

(Moses lifts up the bronze serpent to save the people of Israel.)

L: The Old Testament Reading for the Fourth Sunday in Lent is taken from Numbers, Chapter 21:

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.” Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you. Pray to the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle Reading

Ephesians 2:1–10

(We are saved by grace through faith.)

L: The Epistle Reading is taken from Ephesians, Chapter 2:

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your

own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel Reading

John 3:14–21

(God so loved the world.)

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 3rd Chapter:

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

(Jesus said) "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

The Nicene Creed

A: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Today's Sermon

Prayer of the Church

Today's response is taken from Hymn 422, "On My Heart Imprint Your Image"

P: On our hearts imprint Your image,

C: **blessed Jesus, King of grace.**

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, who so loved the world that He was lifted upon the tree of the cross in order to draw all people to Himself.

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, we beg You, O Lord, to increase our faith and love so that we might reflect the genuine love of Jesus into the world. 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 where we receive Your genuine love. Keep us firm in faith and increase our love of You and our neighbors; through 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.**

Moment of Prayer