



ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 28, 2024

LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER

7:00 PM

Holy Lament: God's Presence in Times of Distress

This year's midweek series theme is "Holy Lament: God's Presence in Times of Distress," remembering that in our laments of grief, regret and mourning, Jesus Christ strengthens us in our weakness. We live in a world that is not only divided and at war, increasingly humanity lives without a sense of optimism and hope for the future. Amid the doubts and fears of modern life - out of our laments - God's steadfast love unceasingly offers us hope and strength that we might boast in our weakness and in the power of Jesus' cross. God bless you on your Lenten journey.

Lenten offerings may be placed in the plate at the entrance to the sanctuary.

Bold responses are spoken by the congregation.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit gathers us into a community of prayer.

Prelude

"Prelude on 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus'"

Tune CONVERSE by Charles C. Converse

Organ setting by Dale Wood

Opening Litany

The prophet Joel calls us to return to the Lord with all our hearts.

Lord, use this holy season of Lent to renew our lives in you.

As we raise our voices in lament,

comfort us and give us cause for hope.

Bless our worship, our work, and our play.

Guide us with your Spirit, that we may follow where you lead in confidence and trust.

Please stand as able.

Gathering Song

"As the Deer"

Text and music by Martha J. Nystrom

Text & Music: © 1984 Maranatha Praise, Inc. admin. The Copyright Co.



As the deer pants for the wa-ter, so my soul longs af - ter you.



You a - lone are my heart's de - sire and I long to wor - ship you.



You a - lone are my strength, my shield, to you a - lone may my spir-it yield;



you a - lone are my heart's de - sire, and I long to wor - ship you.

Greeting

The love of God poured into our hearts,
the saving grace of Jesus Christ †,
and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray. Loving God, you are present at every moment of our lives. When we rejoice, you are cheering right along with us. When we weep, you catch our tears as though they were as precious as diamonds. Whether our hurts are small or great, your will for us is healing and transformation. Help us to trust in your steadfast love and in your willingness to walk with us through all that life brings. In Jesus name we pray.

Amen.

Please be seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, silence, reflection and song.

“Little” Laments

Silence

During this time of silence we quiet ourselves, entering into the mystery of God's presence. The beginning and the end of this period of silence is marked with the sound of a bell.

Lamentations 42

(read responsively)

¹As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.

²**My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?**

³My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually, “Where is your God?”

⁴**These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I went with the throng and led them in procession to the house of God, with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival.**

⁵Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my help

⁶**and my God. My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.**

⁷Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your torrents; all your waves and your billows have gone over me.

⁸**By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.**

⁹I say to God, my rock, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I walk about mournfully because the enemy oppresses me?”

¹⁰**As with a deadly wound in my body, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me continually, “Where is your God?”**

¹¹Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.

Reading Matthew 9:18-26

¹⁸While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, ²¹for she was saying to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” ²²Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And the woman was made well from that moment. ²³When Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴he said, “Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶And the report of this spread through all of that district.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Lenten Meditation

“Cobwebs of Sadness”

Meg Fielding, Synodical Lay Preacher candidate

Please stand as able.

Song

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus” ELW 742

CONVERSE

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886; Music: Charles C. Converse, 1832-1918



1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—
Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - rows share?
Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged—take it to the Lord in prayer.
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge—take it to the Lord in prayer.

PRAYER

The Holy Spirit prays with and through us.

Prayers of Intercession

(Pastor McKenzie, prayers)

The congregation may sit or kneel for the Prayers.

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world. Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

A brief silence.

“As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.” (Psalm 42:1)

All: God of grace, My soul thirsts for you, the living Lord. Bless your church in this place and around the world to proclaim a faith that makes us well that all people might find comfort and release from anxiety, fear, and doubt. I hope in God, that I shall again praise him.

P: O Lord, you are my help and my God.

All: Lord of hope, If I only touch your cloak, I will be made well. Bless all who call upon you in sickness, grief, uncertainty, and despair that their suffering would end and they would again know the healing presence of the living Lord. I hope in God, that I shall again praise him.

P: O Lord, you are my help and my God.

All: God of grace, With a deadly wound in my body, my adversaries taunt me continually saying, “Where is your God?” Bless all who cry to you amid war and violence, seeking peace and an end to conflict. Grant world leaders courage and vision to overcome international and partisan divisions, working for lasting peace among the nations. I hope in God, that I shall again praise him.

P: O Lord, you are my help and my God.

All: Lord of hope, When shall I behold your face and praise you? Bless me with faith like the prophets and saints of old for you are my song and my prayer; cover me with the waves and billows of your steadfast love again. I hope in God, that I shall again praise him.

P: O Lord, you are my help and my God.

“Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, ‘Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.’”

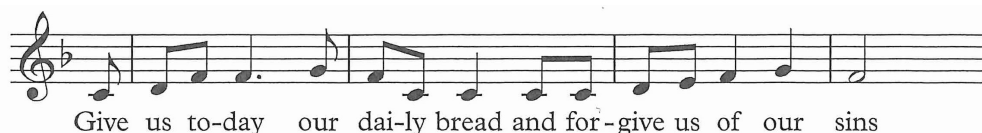
(Matthew 9:22)

Into your wide embrace, O God, we place all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, trusting that you will receive them into your heart of mercy, Jesus Christ, your Son and our Savior.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

(musical setting by Michael Austin Miller)



as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.

Save us from the time of tri - al and de - liv - er us from e - vil.

For the king - dom, and the pow - er, and the glor - y are yours,

now and for - ev - er. A - men.

Please stand.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Blessing

The Lord watches over your going out and your coming in. The Lord shields your joys and holds your sorrows. God, the Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you this day and always.

Amen.

Sending Song

“Just a Closer Walk with Thee” ELW 697, Stanzas 1 & 2 CLOSER WALK

Text & Music: Rolf Vegdahl, b. 1955, based on Romans 14:8, Psalm 103; T&M © 2009, 2016 Augsburg Fortress

Refrain Just a clos - er walk with thee, grant it, Je - sus, is my plea;

1 I am weak but thou art strong: Je - sus, keep me from all wrong;

2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I fal - ter, Lord, who cares?

dai - ly walk - ing close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be.
I'll be sat - is - sied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee. *Ref.*
Who with me my bur - den shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. *Ref.*

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

† † †

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Worship Leaders: Pastor Timothy McKenzie; live streaming camera: A. J. Pridgen; Musicians: Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

Lenten Mid-Week Worship series: "Holy Lament: God's Presence in Times of Distress" During Lent, please join us online, Wednesdays (2/21-3/20), at 7 pm at St. Mark's and live on Facebook, for the weekly worship series.

Lenten Schedule February 21-March 20

Lenten Wednesday Supper 6 pm-6:45 pm Fellowship Hall

Lenten Midweek Worship 7 pm (in-person and online)

Lenten Devotional Booklets are available in the Gathering Place. Make Lent a time for prayer.

LENTEN BOX OFFERINGS: During Lent we focus on Jesus' path to the cross and his sacrifice for us. One of our small sacrifices during this period is our donations into a small Lenten box. The letter with the boxes explains the recipient of this year's donations - REFUGEE SUPPORT SERVICES. Infant care kits will be purchased for the little ones of our recently arrived refugees. Be sure to put your name on the box along with your envelope number if you have one. Donations can be made several ways - daily loose change, paper money, or simply write a check to St. Mark's and put it in the box. Keep the box where you can see it as a constant reminder of Jesus' sacrifice and the infants we will be helping. Please return to church before Easter. *Lenten Boxes are available in the Gathering Place.*

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St. Mark's Prayer List

Angie Blackwelder Malone, Greg Bruce, Linda Carter, Drew Goodson, Norma Alexander, Laura Elliott, Gene Ellington, Ken Foust, Michael Frye, Tanner Grant, Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Sarah Lindberg, Danye Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa Coburn, Ben Watson, Tina Wiland, Martha Stackel, Ingrid Keiris, Shirley Larson, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Bill Schwartz, Sergei Kobiakov, Arlene Fielding, Oakley Coburn, David Kutscher, Carl Sepmeyer, Danielle Clausen, Rachel Fulp, Joseph Tolbert, Virginia Stackel, David Mathis, and Jay Harbinson.

Please feel free to email Pastor McKenzie with Prayer List and other prayer requests (pastortimsmc@gmail.com)



Do you feel like you are in crisis? In Isaiah it is written, "Fear not, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God." Stephen ministers are here to show the Lord's love and comfort for you in times of trial. If you would like to confidentially speak to a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Tim (pastortimsmc@gmail.com)

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Our Ministers

All the people of God at St. Mark's

Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor
pastortimsmc@gmail.com

Lester Ackerman,
Director of Music Ministry, Organist
lackerman2@aol.com

Sue Wadgymer, Parish Administrator
stmarkselca1001@gmail.com

Jessie Craig, Financial Administrator
saintmarksfinance@gmail.com