

3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF  
LENT



***Welcome to  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Child Development Center and Pre-School***  
Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley, D.R.S., Ph.D., Pastor

March 23, 2025

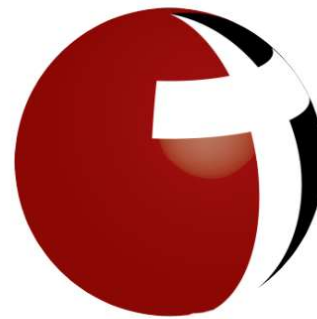
# Matters of Life and Death

Luke 13:1-9



***Welcome to  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Child Development Center and Pre-School  
Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley, D.R.S., Ph.D., Pastor***

The joy of the Lord is  
your strength.  
Rejoice in His love.



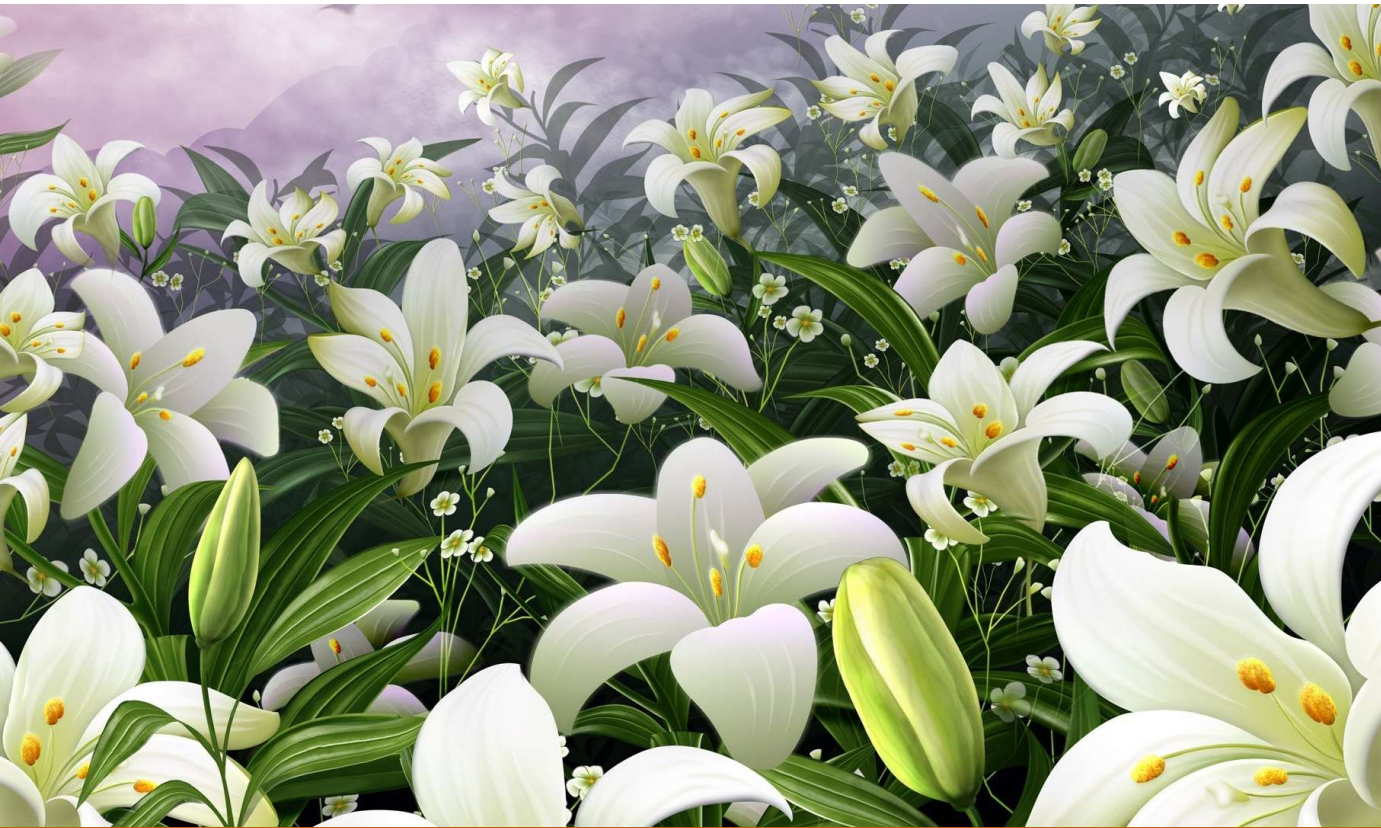
**lcmc**

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

WELCOME

WE'RE GLAD YOU JOINED US





Monday, April 14 is the deadline for ordering Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday.

Order forms are available in the bulletin and on our website under the Announcements section.

## **INTRODUCTION**

*The warnings are plentiful and blunt on the third Sunday in Lent. Cut it out or get cut down! The warnings are accompanied by God's invitation to attentiveness: "Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live." The landowner's ultimatum is forestalled by the gardener's readiness to till the ground one more year. That is good news for all of us. Thanks be to God!*

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

**Amen.**

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the  
assurance of God's abiding love.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate One,  
**you are slow to anger and abounding in  
steadfast love,  
but our lives do not always reflect you  
and your love for the world.  
We do not show others the tender  
compassion  
you have shown to us.**

**We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again.**

**We squander the abundant gifts of the earth.**

**Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross.**

**Amen.**



Beloved in Christ,  
God's arms are always stretched open wide  
to welcome the wandering ones home.  
In + Christ your sins are forgiven.  
You have a place in God's house forever.  
**Amen.**

## **Gathering Song**

**“Wash, O God, Ours Sons and Daughters”**

**Hymn # 445**

**1 Wash, O God, our sons and  
daughters  
where your cleansing waters  
flow,**

Hymn # 445

**Number them among your  
people;  
bless as Christ blessed long  
ago,**

Hymn # 445

**Weave them garments bright  
and sparkling;  
compass them with love and  
light,**

Hymn # 445



**Fill, anoint them; send your  
Spirit  
holy dove and heart's delight.**

Hymn # 445

**2 We who bring them long for  
nurture;  
by your milk may we be fed,**

Hymn # 445

**Let us join your feast,  
partaking  
cup of blessing, living bread,**

Hymn # 445

**God, renew us, guide our  
footsteps;  
free from sin and all its  
snares,**

Hymn # 445

**one with Christ in living,  
dying,  
by your Spirit, children, heirs.**

Hymn # 445



**Final Oh, how deep our holy  
wisdom!  
Unimagined all your ways!**

Hymn # 445

**To your name be glory, honor!  
With our lives we worship,  
praise!**

Hymn # 445

**We your people stand before  
you,  
water-washed and Spirit born,**

Hymn # 445

**By your grace, our lives we  
offer,  
Recreate us; God, transform!**

Hymn # 445

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.**



## **Kyrie**

*Kyrie eleison*

***Lord, have mercy.***

*Christe eleison*

***Christ, have mercy.***

*Kyrie eleison*

***Lord, have mercy.***

## **Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **WORD**

*FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:1-9*

*To those who have experienced long years in exile, the return to their homeland is a celebration of abundant life. God calls them into an everlasting covenant of love. Those who return to God will enjoy new life and forgiveness, because God's ways are not our ways.*

<sup>1</sup>Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;  
and you that have no money, come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without  
price.

<sup>2</sup>Why do you spend your money for that which is not  
bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight  
yourselves in rich food.

<sup>3</sup>Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may  
live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my  
steadfast, sure love for David.

<sup>4</sup>See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

<sup>5</sup>See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

<sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

<sup>7</sup>Let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous  
their thoughts;  
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on  
them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your  
ways my ways, says the LORD.  
<sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my  
ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your  
thoughts.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: PSALM 63:1-8

*O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (Ps. 63:1)*

<sup>1</sup> O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you;  
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land where there is no  
water.

<sup>2</sup> **Therefore I have gazed upon you in your  
holy place,  
that I might behold your power and  
your glory.**

<sup>3</sup> For your steadfast love is better than life itself;  
my lips shall give you praise.

<sup>4</sup> **So will I bless you as long as I live  
and lift up my hands in your name.**

<sup>5</sup> My spirit is content, as with the richest of foods,  
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

<sup>6</sup> **when I remember you upon my bed,  
and meditate on you in the night  
watches.**



<sup>7</sup> For you have been my helper,  
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

<sup>8</sup> **My whole being clings to you;  
your right hand holds me fast.**

## **SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

*Paul uses images from Hebrew Scriptures and prophecy to speak the truth of Jesus Christ: He is our rock, our water, our food, and our drink. Christ is the living sign of God's faithfulness.*

<sup>1</sup>I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup>and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup>and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup>and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup>Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

<sup>6</sup>Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup>Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." <sup>8</sup>We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. <sup>9</sup>We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. <sup>10</sup>And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

<sup>11</sup>These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup>So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. <sup>13</sup>No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

# Lenten Acclamation



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, re - turn to the Lord, your



God, who is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful, slow to



an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

# GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to Luke 13:1-9

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **GOSPEL: Luke 13:1-9**

*Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.*



<sup>1</sup>At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup>[Jesus] asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? <sup>3</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. <sup>4</sup>Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem?"

<sup>5</sup>No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

<sup>6</sup>Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup>So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?'

<sup>8</sup>He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. <sup>9</sup>If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**



CHILDREN'S  
SERMON

# **Sermon**

Rev. Dr. George R. Qualley

The image features a silhouette of a bare tree on the right side, set against a warm, golden, hazy background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

THE  
BARREN  
FIG TREE

Luke 13:1-9

## **Hymn of the Day**

**“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”**

**Hymn # 632**

**1 O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
our shelter from the stormy  
blast,  
and our eternal home:**

Hymn # 632



**2 Under the shadow of your  
throne  
your saints have dwelt secure;  
sufficient is your arm alone,  
and our defense is sure.**

Hymn # 632

**3 Before the hills in order  
stood  
or earth received its frame,  
from everlasting you are God,  
to endless years the same.**

Hymn # 632

**4 A thousand ages in your  
sight  
are like an evening gone,  
short as the watch that ends  
the night  
before the rising sun.**

Hymn # 632

**5 Time, like an ever-rolling  
stream,  
bears all our years away;  
they fly forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the op'ning day.**

Hymn # 632

**Final O God, our help in ages  
past,  
our hope for years to come,  
still be our guard while  
troubles last  
and our eternal home.**

Hymn # 632

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

## **CREED**

*Apostles' 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.**

## **New Member Reception**

We welcome you as a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church to join with us in worshiping God, hearing his Word and sharing his supper, proclaiming the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, serving all people, and striving for justice and peace in all the earth.

We thank you, Lord, for this new member of our congregation. By your life-giving power, bind us to each other in you, strengthen us for service, support us all our days, and bring us at length to that day when all your children will be one and you will be All-in-All.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. Grant humility and wisdom to national church leaders, bishops, pastors, deacons, elders, councils, and congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly.  
Teach your people the goodness of your generosity,  
that in sharing what we have been given, all life may  
flourish on the planet that is our shared home. God,  
in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for those in need, called to receive your compassion. Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict. Aid communities in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild and we remember our friends and family members before you. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**



We pray for all our military, especially those deployed. We keep in our prayers all the Wounded Warriors that have returned home to heal. We pray for our missionaries: for Cheryl Kruckemeyer our missionary in Tanzania, for Dan and Nancy in the Home Office, serving with the World Mission Prayer League, and for our sister congregation at Faith Lutheran Church in Osborne, Kansas.

Today we also give you thanks for St. John Lutheran Church in Boerne, Texas and their pastors Eric Waters and Robert Weber. Bless their work for your Kingdom's sake. Bless and protect all our local nurses, doctors, healthcare workers and first responders, our students, teachers and school administrators. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended. May their witness inspire our own. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

**Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Amen.**

## **Canticle of Thanksgiving**

*Refrain* ***Salvation belongs to our God  
and to Christ the Lamb for ever and  
ever.***

***<sup>1</sup> Great and wonderful are your deeds, O God of the universe; just and true are your ways, O Ruler of all the nations.***

***Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name?***

*Refrain* **Salvation belongs to our God  
and to Christ the Lamb forever and  
ever.**

***2 For you alone are the Holy One,  
and blessed is the one whose  
name is the Word of God.  
All praise and thanks to you, holy  
God!***



*Refrain* ***Salvation belongs to our God  
and to Christ the Lamb forever and  
ever.***

# **THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

Let us pray.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**Amen.**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

**SENDING**

**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.**

## **Sending Song**

**“O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts”**

**Hymn # 658**

**1 O Jesus, joy of loving hearts,  
the fount of life, the light of all:  
from ev'ry bliss that earth imparts  
we turn, unfilled, to hear your call.**

Hymn # 658



**2 We taste you, ever-living bread,  
and long to feast upon you still;  
we drink of you, the fountainhead;  
our thirsting souls from you we  
fill.**

Hymn # 658

**3 For you our restless spirits yearn,  
where'er our changing lot is cast;  
glad, when your smile on us you  
turn,  
blest, when by faith we hold you fast.**

Hymn # 658

**Final O Jesus, ever with us stay!  
Make all our moments fair and  
bright!**

**Oh, chase the night of sin away!  
Shed o'er the world your holy  
light.**

Hymn # 658

# DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

**Thanks be to God.**

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