

# Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

*A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

945 W. Round Bunch Rd., Bridge City, TX 77611

(409) 735-4573



LUKE 13:7

I have come  
looking for fruit

Third Sunday in Lent

March 20, 2022

**PRELUDE**

Variations: *Water of Life*

- Ray Makeever

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage. **Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy One,

**we confess that we have wandered far from you:**

**we have not trusted your promises,**

**we have ignored your prophets in our own day,**

**we have squandered our inheritance of grace,**

**we have failed to recognize you in our midst.**

**Have mercy on us!**

**Forgive us and turn us again to you.  
 Teach us to follow in your ways,  
 assure us again of your love,  
 and help us to love our neighbor.  
 Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love. In ✝ Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven. God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love. **Amen.**

**ENTRANCE HYMN “Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer” ELW 618**



1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this  
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing  
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me  
 wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me  
 fears sub - side; death of death and hell's de - struc - tion, land me



with your pow'r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
 all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - 'rer, strong de - liv - 'rer,  
 safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es



feed me now and ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.  
 shield me with your might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.  
 I will raise for - ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

**GREETING** *Please stand if you are able.*

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.**

# GATHERING SONG

“Now is the Time of Grace”

*All worshipers are invited to sing the refrain; the choir will sing the verse.*

*Refrain*

Now is the time of grace, now is the day of sal -  
va - tion. Turn now, and seek God's face,  
now be-hold God's in - vi - ta - tion.

*This is the fast that God would choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the captives go free, and to break the yoke of oppression. **Refrain***

## 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**

*Please be seated.*

## FIRST LESSON

**Isaiah 55:1-9**

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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God**

## PSALM 63

*Worshipers are invited to sing the refrain as indicated below. The choir will chant the psalm text.*



*O God you are my God; eagerly I seek you; my soul thirst for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a barren and dry land where there is no water. Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, that I might behold your power and your glory. For your lovingkindness is better than life itself; my lips shall give you praise. So will I bless you as long as I live and lift up my hand in your name. REFRAIN*

*My soul is content as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches. For you have been my helper, and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast. REFRAIN*

## **SECOND LESSON**

## **I Corinthians 10:1-13**

<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.

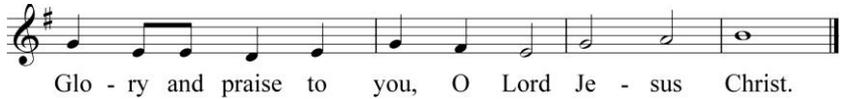
<sup>6</sup>Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. <sup>7</sup>Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” <sup>8</sup>We must not indulge in sexual immorality as 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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God**

*Please stand if you are able.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*All worshipers are invited to sing the refrain; the choir will sing the verse.*



*Jesus began to proclaim: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”*

## GOSPEL

**Luke 13:1-9**

<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 according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord!**

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

*Please be seated.*

## SERMON

*Please stand if you are able.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

“Come to the Water of Life”

1 All who are thirst-y for mer - cy, all who are thirst-y for  
 2 All who are thirst-y for heal - ing, all who are thirst-y for  
 3 All who are thirst-y for beau - ty, all who are thirst-y for  
 4 All who are thirst-y for jus - tice, all who are thirst-y for

love; all who are thirst - y for love, for mer - cy,  
 touch; all who are thirst - y for touch, for heal - ing,  
 truth; all who are thirst - y for truth, for beau - ty,  
 peace; all who are thirst - y for peace, for jus - tice,

come: come to the Wa - ter of life.  
 come: come to the Wa - ter of life.  
 come: come to the Wa - ter of life.  
 come: come to the Wa - ter of life.

## THE NICENE CREED

Let us profess our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed.

**We believe in one God,  
 the Father, the Almighty,  
 maker of heaven and earth,  
 of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
 the only Son of God,  
 eternally begotten of the Father,  
 God from God, Light from Light,  
 true God from true God,  
 begotten, not made,  
 of one Being with the Father;  
 through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation  
 he came down from heaven,  
 was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
 and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
 he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for the church around the world in all its forms: for pastors, deacons, bishops, chaplains, and mission developers; for church councils, committee chairs, and all lay ministry leaders; for congregations that contemplate difficult decisions about the future of their ministry. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For the health of this planet and the well-being of its creatures: for lands impacted by droughts and at risk of wildfires; for fig trees and vineyards that produce fruit for our nourishment and delight; for animal habitats threatened by climate change. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For those called into positions of civic responsibility: for judges, attorneys, and court administrators tasked with uncovering truth and delivering justice; for activists and community leaders who cast a vision of a more compassionate and equitable society. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For those who call upon you for mercy: for all who live in poverty and experience hunger; for any who feel tested beyond their strength; for those who are hospitalized or near death, and for all in need of healing (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For the advocacy efforts of this congregation: for those whose faith leads them to speak difficult truths and engage in difficult conversations with policymakers; for those who promote mercy over vengeance or retaliation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

For those whose earthly journeys have ended, we give thanks. With all the saints, we praise you for the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You call us to support one another in difficult times. Be with the people of Ukraine as their country's sovereignty is threatened. We pray for those who have been injured; we pray for the families of those who have died. We pray for those who have lost homes and places of work. We pray for peace and an end to the aggression. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You welcome us into your heavenly realm. We give thanks for those whose labors on earth are ended and who now rest with you. On the final day, gather all of us, with them, in your loving arms. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*



## **SHARING THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

*Please be seated.*

## RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

### ANTHEM

“There’s A Wideness in God’s Mercy”  
arr. Mark Schweizer

### OFFERING PRAYER

*Those who are able shall stand.*

Let us pray. Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation. **Now we gather at your feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

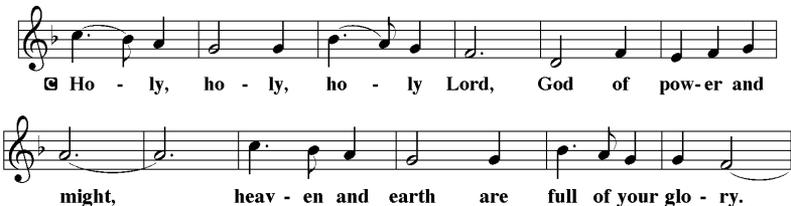
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

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

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:

### SANCTUS

WOV S36



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and  
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life: pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever. **Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is food and drink for the journey. Take and be filled.

*Please be seated.*

### LAMB OF GOD

WOV S39

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

### MUSIC DURING THE DISTRIBUTION

“Thy Holy Wings”

- Carolina Sandell Berg

*Please stand*

### COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life. **Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need. 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**

**SENDING HYMN “Great is Thy Faithfulness” ELW 733**

Stanzas 1 and 3



1 Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther; there is no  
 2 Sum-mer and win-ter and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon, and  
 3 Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thine own dear



shad-ow of turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-  
 stars in their cours-es a-bove join with all na-ture in  
 pres-ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright



pas-sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for-ev-er wilt be.  
 man-i-fold wit-ness to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy, and love.  
 hope for to-mor-row, bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!

*Refrain*



Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by



morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have need-ed thy



hand hath pro-vid-ed; great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me.

# POSTLUDE

“Musette”

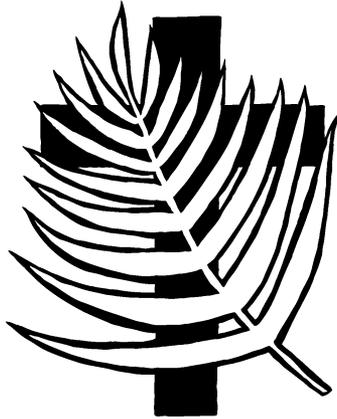
- Lèon Boëllmann

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## Celebrating Holy Week and Easter

### **Sunday, April 10, Sunday of the Passion**

Worship with Holy Communion at 9 and 11 am

### **Thursday, April 14, Maundy Thursday**

Family Dinner at 5:30 pm; Holy Communion shared as a family with preparation for Good Friday in the sanctuary

### **Friday, April 15, Good Friday**

Adoration of the Cross and Tenebrae worship, 6 pm

### **Sunday, April 17, Easter**

Festive worship with Holy Communion, 9 and 11 am, 3 pm

## When Bad Things Happen

Do you think some people suffer because they are worse sinners than others? It's an uncomfortable question that usually goes unspoken, but Jesus poses it directly. Terrible things happen in this world, and human minds seek and invent patterns to find reasons for such catastrophes so we can be confident that we might prevent them from happening to us.

While we know from experience that some of our actions cause us to suffer, we cannot reason backwards from that. We cannot assume that if someone is suffering, it's because they did something wrong. The rain falls on the just and the unjust.

While Jesus asserts that no one is a worse sinner for being on the receiving end of suffering, he complicates matters by adding, "But unless you repent, you will all perish as they did" (Luke 13:3). *Repentance—metanoia* in Greek—literally means "turning around." A sense of urgency comes into the story, and a sense of personal accountability. Jesus is calling us to quit trying to infer from other people's suffering what they might have done wrong. Instead, Jesus says, *Look at yourself and your own actions and their natural consequences. Are you living the way God calls you to live?*

Lutheran theology teaches that baptism is a lifelong process. It is a daily invitation to repent, to let go of what fails us and let the grace of God refresh us like a cool drink on a hot day.

Bad things happen to good people because bad things happen to all of us sooner or later. Every day, however, we are invited into a fresh start, a choice of how we want to live, and the unyielding love of God gives us strength to carry on.