

Worship in the Home

Fifth Sunday in Lent, Year B

March 21, 2021



In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While we cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer.

The Asian and Pacific Islander Association of the ELCA recently [issued a statement](#), affirmed by the ELCA Conference of Bishops, calling on the church to declare a day of lament during Lent to express solidarity with and support Asian American victims of violence. Sunday, March 21, has been named as the common date.

Prelude

Announcements

Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer. **Amen.**

God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion.

Fountain of living water,

pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.

Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are † forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn

I Bind Unto Myself Today

ELW # 450



1 I bind un - to my - self to - day the strong name



of the Trin - i - ty by in - vo - ca - tion



of the same, the Three in One and One in Three.



2 I bind this day to me for - ev - er, by pow'r of

3 I bind un - to my - self to - day . . the vir - tues



faith, Christ's in - car - na - tion, his bap - tism in the
of the star - lit heav - en, the glo - rious sun's life -



Jor - dan Riv - er, his cross of death for my sal - va - tion, his
giv - ing ray, . . the white - ness of the moon at e - ven, the



burst - ing from the spic - ed tomb, his rid - ing
flash - ing of the light - ning free, the whirl - ing



up the heav'n - ly way, his com - ing at the
wind's tem - pes - tuous shocks, the sta - ble earth, the



day of doom, I bind un - to my - self to - day.
deep salt sea, a - round the old e - ter - nal rocks.

4 Christ be with me, Christ with-in me, Christ be-hind me, Christ be-fore me,
Christ be-neath me, Christ a-bove me, Christ in qui-et, Christ in dan-ger,

Christ be-side me, Christ to win me, Christ to com-fort and re-restore me,
Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and strang-er.

5 I bind un-to my-self the name, the strong name of the

Trin-i-ty by in-vo-ca-tion of the same, the

Three in One and One in Three, of whom all na-ture has cre-

a-tion, e-ter-nal Fa-ther, Spir-it, Word. Praise to the

Lord of my sal-va-tion; sal-va-tion is of Christ the Lord!

Prayer of the Day

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-12

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

²**Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.**

³For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.

⁴**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**

⁵Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb.

⁶**Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

⁷Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

⁸**Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

¹⁰**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**

¹¹Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

Second Reading: Hebrews 5:5-10

Gospel: John 12:20-33

²⁰Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” ²²Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

²⁷Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” ²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” ³⁰Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

Reflection

Things fall apart. People break their covenant with God. We sin. We die. But “come and see,” says the Gospel according to John. And with the Greeks and Philip and Andrew, here at the end of Lent in our homes, we do. We see the cross. That Jesus is lifted up is at the same time his death and his glorification. He is the falling seed that becomes a huge harvest. What we think is an awful death has become the center that draws all things and all people into a new unity in God as if God has married them in a new covenant. The sufferings of Christ have become the source of eternal salvation. In baptism we have been drawn into that salvation, marked with that cross, made part of that new covenant, made alive. In baptism, we have received the very Spirit poured out from Christ and we have been forgiven. Exactly in God’s forgiveness, all of us — least and greatest, wise and not so wise — come to know who God really is. Then we ourselves can learn to turn with forgiveness to our neighbors.



1 A - las! And did my Sav - ior bleed, and did my sov-'reign die?
 2 Was it for sins that I had done he groaned up - on the tree?
 3 Well might the sun in dark - ness hide and shut its glo - ries in
 4 Thus might I hide my blush - ing face while his dear cross ap - pears,
 5 But tears of grief can - not re - pay the debt of love I owe;



Would he de - vote that sa - cred head for sin - ners such as I?
 A - maz - ing pit - y, grace un-known, and love be - yond de - gree!
 when God, the might - y mak - er, died for his own crea - tures' sin.
 dis - solve my heart in thank - ful - ness, and melt my eyes to tears.
 here, Lord, I give my - self a - way: 'tis all that I can do.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Music: MARTYRDOM, Hugh Wilson, 1764–1824

Prayers of Intercession

On this fifth Sunday in Lent, let us offer both our laments and our petitions to God.

O God, we lament that over the past months many Christians have not be able to assemble in person for worship. Many believers have languished alone. And we pray: Strengthen all Christians in every church around the globe in the covenant of their baptism, whether online or in person. O faithful God, in your steadfast love, **have mercy on us.**

We lament that by indulging our own desires, we have misused your creation and have worsened the poverty of others. And we pray: Continue your care for the earth you have made. Protect animals and their habitats. Grant weather that prepares the soil for seeds, and shelter all lands from violent storms, flooding, and wildfires. O almighty God, in your steadfast love, **have mercy on us.**

We lament that as a nation we have not insured justice for all and equal access to freedoms and to the necessities of life. We lament ongoing prejudices and violence on our streets and in our homes. And we pray: Bring an end to warfare and terrorism. Imbue our courts with truth and wisdom. Guide citizens throughout the world to shape communities that reflect your mercy, justice, and peace, and give them creativity to work for the welfare of all. O righteous God, in your steadfast love, **have mercy on us.**

We lament the sufferings of people the world over. We lament the sorrows of the pandemic. We lament hunger, homelessness, and loneliness. And we pray: End this pandemic. Provide vaccinations to all persons around the earth. Guide us in healing the sick, welcoming the migrant, feeding the hungry, and living with others in harmony. We pray especially forO benevolent God, in your steadfast love, **have mercy on us.**

We lament the hopelessness that afflicts so many people. We lament the anguish of refugee camps, of overcrowded hospitals, of unhappy homes. And we pray: As this Thursday we celebrate the annunciation of the birth of Jesus to Mary, instill in us gratitude for your presence among humankind, for holding us through sorrow, and for leading us into joy. O compassionate God, in your steadfast love, **have mercy on us.**

We lament our secret sorrows known only to you, and we ask you to receive the prayers of our hearts...O mothering God, in your steadfast love, **have mercy on us.**

We lament the countless who have died of COVID and the diminishment of life that so many have endured. We pray for the families torn apart by violence this week in Atlanta; let light perpetual shine on the victims. We praise you for those who have given us words for our lament and our praise, especially today Thomas Cranmer. At the end, bring us with all who have died in Christ into your everlasting presence. O everlasting God, in your steadfast love, **have mercy on us.**

We entrust ourselves and all to you, Father of glory, in your bountiful Spirit, and in the name of Christ who taught us to pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Sending Hymn

Lamb of God

ELW # 336



1 Your on - ly Son, no sin to hide, but you have
2 Your gift of love we cru - ci - fied. We laughed and
3 I was so lost, I should have died, but you have



sent him from your side to walk up - on this guilt - y
scorned him as he died. The hum - ble king we named a
brought me to your side to be led by your staff and



sod and to be - come the Lamb of God. O Lamb of
fraud and sac - ri - ficed the Lamb of God. O Lamb of
rod and to be called a lamb of God. O Lamb of



God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the ho - ly Lamb of God. Oh, wash me



in your pre - cious blood, my Je - sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

Text: Twila Paris, b. 1958
Music: Twila Paris
Text and music © 1985 Straightway Music/Mountain Spring Music

YOUR ONLY SON
LMD

Benediction

Almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever. **Amen.**

**Join us after the postlude for Fellowship on Zoom:
596-621-1441 passcode 8675309**

Reminder: April 1st is the Early Bird Deadline for Camp Sequanota. Early Bird pricing offers the lowest cost for camp and helps us help you provide an affordable week of outdoor ministry for kids or families. St. Matthew will pay for camp for you and a friend. If you know Sequanota will be in your summer plans, please register by April 1st for the lowest price.

Stewardship Committee is in need of members. The committee's main function is to help the congregation make use of their "Time & Talents". The committee only has three members. Please email the church at: stmatthewluth@aol.com or call 814-793-2413 to volunteer.

Lenten Schedule:

Sunday 9:30 AM Livestream
Monday, Friday 9AM Hymn Devotion
Tuesday & Thursday 9AM Morning Prayer
Tuesday 9PM Night Prayer
Wednesday 7PM Holden Evening Prayer w/Bible Study after on Zoom
Thursday 7PM Lenten Devotions on Zoom

OFFICE HOURS: (schedule may change, so always watch the bulletin, Facebook & website)
Pastor Traci; Monday and Wednesday 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Lori; Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Schedule of Meetings:

None

Serving God and Us

Our Pastor – Rev. Traci Marriott
Our Pianist/Organist – Dr. Adam Smith/Mary Nelson
Our Administrative Assistant – Lori Tremmel
Our Assistant Administrative Assistant– Laura Orczeck
Our Sexton – Bill Brown
Our Audio/Video Tech – Camden Kuster
Our Offering Counters – Jim Barley, Beth Garner

First Quarter Ventures in Faith to "Local Needs"

COVID VACCINE INFORMATION

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is making the COVID-19 vaccine available to adults over the age of 65 and people with certain health conditions. You can call the PA Department of Health hotline at 1-877-724-3258 for information about the vaccination process.

To get access to the vaccine, click on the following link:

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Vaccine/Pages/Vaccine.aspx>

www.vaccinatepa.org



Prayers are needed for our homebound: Shirley Acker, Carl & Dawn Alexy, John Acker, Vivian Beach, Verna Blough, Fred Brandenburg, Clyde Claycomb, Donna Gearhart, Betty Helsel, Doris Henderson, Jere Hess, Gerald Hoover, Audrey Hite, Ruth Johnson, Janet Kreider, Ginny Sell, Dan Sinal, Don Smith, Nancy Uber, Joy Williams.

Prayer Concerns: Amy & Family, Pastor Denise Arpino, Randy Barrett, Diane Cappel, Dwight Ciccotelli, Greg Comer, Brian Fleck, Jim Freyer, Betty Helsel, Dan Hershberger, Marilyn Horton, Amber Itle, Michelle Iwanski, Jenny, Anna Klepser, Darren Kreutzer, Karrie McCall & Family, Chuck McGeary, Kristen Malloy, Ryder McDermitt, Betty McDowell, Rick McIntyre, Nathan, Aunt Mica, Harry Partner, Deb Peters, Alana Rhodes, Paul Ruth, Barbara Smith, Luther Steele, Cindy Thomas, Carol Weyandt, Pete Williams, Jody Zelanko, and for our **Missionaries: Rev. Lesley Hand, On Eagle's Wings, Elizabeth Hendrickson.**

Our college students: Christopher Bush, Olivia Day, Jacob Orczeck.

Specialist Training in the Army: Nathan Smith

Readings for the Week:

Monday (commemoration of Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, 1758) Psalm 119:9-16. **Tuesday** Acts 2:14-24. **Wednesday**

(commemoration of Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, martyr, 1980) Haggai 2:1-9, 20-23). **Thursday** (Annunciation of Our Lord) Luke 1:26-38. **Friday**

Philippians 2:12-18. **Saturday** Jeremiah 33:10-16. **Sunday of the Passion/Palm**

Sunday Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1 — 15:47 *or* Mark 15:1-39[40-27].

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United

States of America, adapted and edited with permission by Gordon Lathrop and Gail

Ramshaw.

Prayers and Christian Sympathy are asked for Sandy and Les Loomis upon the death of Sandy's sister, Sylvia Thullen, on Tuesday, March 16, 2021.

Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Letter from Bishop Rhyne

March 17, 2021

Dear sisters and brothers of the Allegheny Synod,

May God's grace and peace be with you. We have now lived one full year with COVID-19. March 15, 2020 was our last 'normal' Sunday. That day I was blessed to worship with Trinity Lutheran in Johnstown and that afternoon gather with First Lutheran in Portage to celebrate the installation of Pastor Mark Fisher. We could still shake hands, be closer than six feet, and none of us had masks. The following week our statewide shutdown began. It has been one year-- however, it feels like much more time has passed.

I believe that is because we have carried so many burdens during this pandemic. We were working (and we still continue to work) to take care of our family, our friends, and ourselves when the world seems to be turning upside down. This has been hard. If you are like me, you are ready for all of this to be behind us. We are all ready to be in that place where we have gotten a majority of people vaccinated and we can see each other face to face again, safely.

I want to first thank God and our Lord Jesus that we have been given the strength and courage to make it through thus far. Throughout the pandemic, Jesus continued to lead and guide us even when the church buildings were closed. **Because of Christ, the work of the church has continued on.**

In this last year, congregations learned how to be church together even though we were apart. We have learned about livestream and Zoom services. In better weather we took the worship of Jesus into our parking lots and into the streets. Many congregations found ways to make sure that our members who were most vulnerable were being taken care of. We have seen congregations find new ways to reach out to and support the community. The Holy Spirit has shown us, time and again, that God will find a way to see that God's will is done. God does that in and through you. My deep and abiding prayer is that this is a lesson that we can take from this time.

I also thank God that we have seen rates of COVID infection begin to go down since the beginning of February. We have seen vaccines begin to be distributed. I hope you see these as signs that we will get through this.

What is important for us now is to continue listening to and following that recommendations of the CDC and the PA Dept. of Health. Since things are finally looking a little better, the temptation is for us to slacken our adherence to our safety protocols. That is a natural human response. We want this pandemic to be behind us, we want to move on with our lives. **However, if we stop these safety practices before health and science officials tell us it is safe to do so, we could see another spike in infections and the spread of the virus.**

As we begin to gather together more in groups, and we are prayerfully considering when we will resume our worship in person, I cannot overstate how important it is for us to continue the good work that we have been doing. Continue to maintain social distance. Keep wearing your masks when in public. Until we begin to reach the point where 70 – 80% of the population is vaccinated continue to wear masks, use hand sanitizer, and refrain from group singing in worship.

We are going to get through this. We have to hold on for a little bit longer and make sure we are doing our part to prevent any further infection and transmission of this virus.

May God bless you and keep you.

+Bishop Michael Rhyne

THIRD CENTURY FUND (ENDOWMENT FUND)

The Third Century Fund had good earnings year in 2020 and as a result has \$5,437 for distribution in 2021. You or your committee may request funding in writing by contacting David Lehman, chairperson or committee members Allen Kuster, Laura Orczeck, Beth Garner or Pastor Traci.

Deadline to submit a request is Sunday, May 30, 2021. Funds will be distributed in June 2021. You can email Dave at: **dlehman1@atlanticbb.net**

The following is from the by-laws of the Third Century Fund and outline the guidelines for fund requests.

USE OF THE FUND

All contributions to the St. Matthew Lutheran Church Endowment Fund will be undesignated and added to the principal balance of the fund. The Endowment fund principal balance will be retained and only the dividend income will be used for annual disbursements.

Consideration for awarding fund requests will be given using the following guidelines.

1. Youth of all ages - scholarship support of congregational members and their children; for youth events, for church camps or similar Christian programs and education.
2. Christian outreach ministries and missions of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, its members and the ELCA.
3. Worship and music - support for the worship of St, Matthew.
4. Capital Projects - major renovations or building projects of St. Matthew.