



The 40-day season of Lent is a time of self-reflection, confession, and renewed commitments to the disciplines of faith. During Lent worship reflects a less festive mood as we reserve pomp and celebration for the Easter season.

February 14, 2023 | 6:30 pm



St. John's Lutheran Church | Salisbury, NC

Please enter in silence

The tolling of the bell represents the beginning of the 40-day journey of Lent.

Responsive Reading of Psalm 51:1-17

The congregation reads the indented portion (bold print) of the Psalm. Remain seated.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving kindness;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

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

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

Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.

And so you are justified when you speak
and upright in your judgment.

Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,
a sinner from my mother's womb.

For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body you have broken may rejoice.

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

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

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

Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

I shall teach your ways to the wicked,
and sinners shall return to you.

Deliver me from death, O God,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.

Open my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Please stand

Apostolic Greeting

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.**

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, 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



Word

Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Because of the coming day of the LORD, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community declares that God is gracious and asks God to spare the people lest the nations doubt God's power to save.

¹Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—²a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

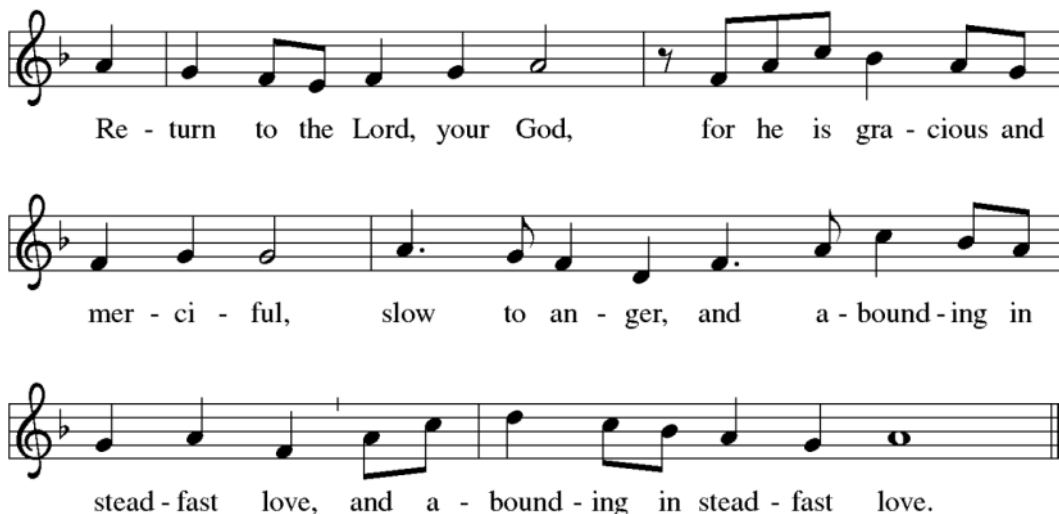
¹²Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. ¹⁴Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God?

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. ¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God!**

Choral Response

Return to the Lord Your God



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

Please stand

Gospel Reading: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.

¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Please be seated

Sermon

Pastor Lori Carter

Please stand

Hymn 606

Our Father, We Have Wandered HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN
(Hymns are found in the red worship books in the pews.)

Confession of Sin

The minister addresses an exhortation to the congregation, concluding with an invitation to the Disciplines of Lent. Remain seated.

Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

Most holy and merciful God,
**we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven,
that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault,
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.
Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

Choir Response

Once We Sang and Danced with Gladness by S. Brieuhl and M. Haugen
St. John's Chancel Choir

Please stand

Prayers of Intercession *Each petition ends: "Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great."*



Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

Sharing of Christ's Peace *We share the peace of Christ with one another using the words, "Peace be with you." (John 20:19)*

Please stand

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.

Words of Institution, followed by The Lord's Prayer

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.

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.

Invitation to Communion

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Distribution of Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes have been combined this evening. Please follow the ushers' instruction directing worshipers down the middle aisle. Pastors at the head of the aisle will mark a cross of ashes on the foreheads of those desiring to receive them. If you prefer no ashes, please continue on to a Communion station. After receiving ashes, proceed to the Communion station at the side aisles. We commune by intinction (dipping the bread into the wine). Return to your seat by the side aisles. Those not communing are invited forward for a spoken blessing.

All the baptized are welcome to receive God's gift of grace through the sacrament of Holy Communion. Ashes remind us of our mortality and our need for lifelong repentance and conversion. When we repent, we turn our hearts again toward Christ rejoicing that though sinful, we have been promised a new beginning with Christ.



Imposition of Ashes

Ashes are applied to the forehead of each person with the words:
Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

After all have received ashes and communed, worship continues: please stand



Sending

Benediction

During this 40-day journey of Lent, may God restore in you the joy of salvation,
may God strengthen you in love for your neighbor,
may God grant you to live in harmony with all of creation.
God the giver of love, ✚ Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn 335

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross

NEAR THE CROSS

(Stanzas 1,3 and 4)

(Hymns are found in the red worship books in the pews.)

Dismissal

Go forth into the world and serve God with gladness; be of good courage;
hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people;
love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit!

Thanks be to God!

Postlude

Unless otherwise indicated, today's service is from Evangelical Lutheran Worship
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St. John's Lutheran Church

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Pastoral Ministry

Senior Pastor.....Daniel Joyner Miller
Pastor for Congregational CareLori Carter
Pastor for Youth and OutreachJames Demmel

Worship and Music Ministry

Minister of Worship and the Arts.....Rob Durocher, deacon
Interim Contemporary Worship Leaders.....Michael Board and Ondria Witt
Parish Musician Accompanist.....Janie Rollins
Production Manager.....Taylor Hutchins
Director of Music *emeritus*.....Karl Kinard Jr., deacon

Program Ministry

Children.....Stacey Shafer
St. John's Kindergarten (4 and 5 year olds), DirectorGina Phifer
Child Development Center, Executive Director.....Lea Anne Thomas

Administrative Team

Church Administrator.....Deborah Cross
Office Manager.....Vivian Connor
Bookkeeper.....Mark Bias
Facility Manager.....David Ellenburg
Custodian.....Brandt Cozad



Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*

The Season of Lent

Sundays of Lent. Throughout the 40-day season of Lent, our pastors will explore the Gospel of Matthew. Online worship at 11:00 am; in-person worship at 9:27 and 11:00.

Wednesdays of Lent. Throughout the centuries, Lent has been a time for Christians to return to the disciplines of faith. Midweek Lenten worship helps us see worship as an integral part of our weekly rhythm. Evening Prayer begins at 6:30 pm, in the sanctuary. The 30-minute service will feature the beautiful music of Holden Evening Prayer.

Lenten Season—This year’s daily devotional guide, *“Gathered into One”* is available in the Sanctuary narthex and in any of the St. John’s literature racks.

