

MIDWEEK OF LENT

APRIL 9, 2025

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH – WEST ALLIS, WI

THE HAND OF THE LORD WHO HOLDS ALL THINGS

To the faithless, unrepentant world, taken together with the climax of the events of Holy Week, it appears that, after all, Jesus ends up only a disappointment, dead and gone! To the eyes of faith, however, all His deeds, including His suffering and death, describe the most powerful and mighty act of God, by which He redeems and saves the world and us!

The Christian liturgy preserves certain words in their original language to express their full meaning. For instance, we do not end prayers saying, “Yes, yes, it shall be so,” but the original “Amen.” Likewise, every Sunday we sing the Sanctus, “Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Sabaoth.” *Tsebaot* in Hebrew means “hosts” or “armies.” “Lord God of hosts” is a way of saying God is over all— all powerful. So also, Greek art depicts the risen, ascended, and reigning Lord Jesus as *Pantokrator*, “the Almighty!” The church has always claimed that, before and after all, Jesus Christ indeed holds all things. By faith in Jesus, we know that we are forgiven, renewed, redeemed, and destined for eternal glory.

OPENING SENTENCES

P O Lord, open my lips,

C **and my mouth will declare your praise.**

P Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

C **make haste to help me, O Lord.**

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Praise to you, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.**

+ PSALMODY +

PSALM *Psalm 95:1–7a*

L Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

C **Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise! For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are His also. The sea is His, for He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.**

HYMN “How Firm a Foundation” (LSB 728)

How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He has said
Who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?

“Fear not! I am with you, O be not dismayed,
For I am your God and will still give you aid;
I’ll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

“The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no never, no never, forsake!

“When through fiery trials your pathway will lie,
My grace, all sufficient, will be your supply.
The flames will not hurt you; I only design
Your dross to consume and your gold to refine.

“Throughout all their lifetime My people will prove
My sov’ reign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And then, when gray hairs will their temples adorn,
Like lambs they will still in My bosom be borne.”

+ READINGS +

READING *Daniel 7:13–14*

L ¹³I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and He came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. ¹⁴And to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; His

dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

READING *Revelation 1:9–20*

L ⁹I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet ¹¹saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

¹²Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around His chest. ¹⁴The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵His feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and His voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶In His right hand He held seven stars, from His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and His face was like the sun shining in full strength.

¹⁷When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

¹⁹Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. ²⁰As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

READING *John 3:11–18, 22–36*

P ¹¹Truly, truly, I say to you, We speak of what We know, and bear witness to what We have seen, but you do not receive Our testimony. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except He who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.

¹⁶"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. . . .

²²After this Jesus and His disciples went into the Judean countryside, and He remained there with them and was baptizing. ²³John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized ²⁴(for John had not yet been put in prison).

²⁵Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification. ²⁶And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, He is baptizing, and all are going to Him." ²⁷John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. ²⁸You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him.' ²⁹The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. ³⁰He must increase, but I must decrease."

³¹He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all.

³²He bears witness to what He has seen and heard, yet no one receives His testimony. ³³Whoever receives His testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. ³⁴For He whom God has sent utters the words of God, for He gives the Spirit without measure. ³⁵The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. ³⁶Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

LENT RESPONSORY

P Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for you are the God of my salvation.

C **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

P In you, O Lord, do I put my trust, leave me not, O Lord, my God.

C **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

P Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for you are the God of my salvation.

C **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

HYMN “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted” (LSB 451)

Stricken, smitten, and afflicted, See Him dying on the tree!

‘Tis the Christ, by man rejected; Yes, my soul, ‘tis He, ‘tis He!

‘Tis the long expected Prophet, David’s Son, yet David’s Lord;

Proofs I see sufficient of it: ‘Tis the true and faithful Word.

Tell me, ye who hear Him groaning, Was there ever grief like His!

Friends through fear His cause disowning,

Foes insulting His distress;

Many hands were raised to wound Him,

None would intervene to save;

But the deepest stroke that pierced Him

Was the stroke that justice gave.

Ye who think of sin but lightly Nor suppose the evil great
Here may view its nature rightly, Here its guilt may estimate.
Mark the sacrifice appointed, See who bears the awful load;
‘Tis the Word, the Lord’s anointed, Son of Man and Son of God.

Here we have a firm foundation, Here the refuge of the lost:
Christ, the Rock of our salvation, Is the name of which we boast;
Lamb of God, for sinners wounded, Sacrifice to cancel guilt!
None shall ever be confounded Who on Him their hope have built.

SERMON

+ CANTICLE +

ANTIPHON

P Let my prayer rise before you as incense,

C **and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**

MAGNIFICAT

C **My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior;**

P for He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden.
For behold, from this day all generations will call me blessed.

C **For the Mighty One has done great things to me, and holy is His name;**

P and His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.

C **He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.**

P He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted the lowly.

C **He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away.**

P He has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

OFFERING

+ PRAYER +

KYRIE

- C Lord, have mercy;
Christ, have mercy;
Lord, have mercy.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- C **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.**

COLLECTS

- P O Lord, hear my prayer.
C **And let my cry come to you.**
P Let us pray. Heavenly Father, all things are in your hands, both creation and our very lives. Turn our eyes to follow the finger of John the Baptist pointing to Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus has received nails into His hands for our sins to bring us forgiveness. When and where you will, use us to point others to Jesus and where He promises to be found in His Word and Sacraments; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C **Amen.**
P Almighty God, by your great goodness mercifully look upon your people that we may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C **Amen.**
P Almighty and everlasting God, you despise nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from you full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C **Amen.**

LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER (10:00AM)

- C **I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. For into your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the evil for may have no power over me. Amen.**

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER (6:00PM)

- C **I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that you would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**
P O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

BENEDICAMUS

- P Let us bless the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

BENEDICTION

- P The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
C **Amen.**

HYMN “Precious Lord, Take My Hand” (*LSB 739*)

Precious Lord, take my hand, Lead me on, let me stand;
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
Through the storm, through the night, Lead me on to the light.
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

When my way grows drear, Precious Lord, linger near,
When my life is almost gone,
Hear my cry, hear my call; Hold my hand lest I fall.
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

When the darkness appears And the night draws near
And the day is almost gone,
At the river I stand; Guide my feet, hold my hand,
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

Preacher	Pastor Josh Grotelueschen
Lectors	Grant Gundersen, Katie Scepanski
Organist	Deaconess Carole King

Holy Week Worship

Maundy Thursday Worship: April 17 at 10:00am & 6:00pm

Good Friday Worship: April 18 at 1:00 & 6:00pm

Easter Vigil: April 19 at 5:00pm

Easter Sunrise Service: April 20 at 6:30am

Easter Celebration Services: April 20 at 9:00 & 11:00am

Easter Breakfast at 7:30am