



MIDWEEK OF LENT 4
MARCH 30, 2022

SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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MIDWEEK OF LENT 4

A guilty, heavy conscience can wreak havoc on a person and on a soul. As King David was inspired to write in a psalm, hearkening back to his time of sinful indiscretions bottled up inside, he says, “When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long” (Psalm 32:3). It is what a guilty, unclean conscience can do. One can only imagine the state of most of Joseph’s brothers, who for nearly twenty years kept to themselves the treatment of their brother and the secrets and lies kept from their father, Jacob. Through this Genesis account and throughout Scripture, we are reminded again what can cleanse a conscience and give peace to a soul. Through repentance, confession, forgiveness, and the grace of God, we are affirmed through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, and a clean conscience and new life is had.

Opening Hymn

“Not All the Blood of Beasts”

#431

1 Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain

While as a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

Could give the guilty conscience peace
Or wash away the stain.

4 My soul looks back to see
The burden Thou didst bear
When hanging on the cursèd tree;
I know my guilt was there.

2 But Christ, the heav’nly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

5 Believing, we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice
And sing His bleeding love.

3 My faith would lay its hand
On that dear head of Thine,

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Text: Public domain

Stand

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 51:1–9

P In this Lenten season, we continue our journey with Joseph

C and come to the cross of Christ on Calvary.

P Joseph’s journey came full circle when his brothers journeyed to Egypt in need of food as a famine struck the land. With their sinful actions from decades prior left unresolved, they and their consciences bowed down before their brother Joseph. We, too, know what a guilty conscience feels like, yet we also are given the knowledge of where to bring our sin and shame. We respond with the psalmist: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

C Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

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

- C** Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.
- P** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- C** Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being, and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- P** Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- C** Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that You have broken rejoice.
- P** Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Confession and Absolution

1 John 1:8–9

- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- C** But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- P** That we may have a conscience at peace, let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You 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; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name.
- P** In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C** Amen.

✠ WORD ✠

Prayer of the Day

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.
- P** Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, as we journey with Joseph in this Lenten season, we, like his brothers, carry consciences that are heavy and burdened by our sins. At Your invitation and command, we know we can bring all our faults and failings before You and be assured of Your grace and forgiveness through Your completed work as our one and only Savior from sin. Strengthen us and preserve us to walk faithfully with You in humble repentance, this season and always, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

We are seated

Old Testament Reading

✠ Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt ✠

Genesis 42:6-24

- L** The Old Testament reading continues the narrative of Joseph from Genesis, chapter forty-two: Now Joseph was governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke roughly to them. "Where do you come from?" he said. They said,
- C** "From the land of Canaan, to buy food."

- L** And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them. And he said to them, “You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land.” They said to him,
- C** “No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies.”
- L** He said to them, “No, it is the nakedness of the land that you have come to see.” And they said,
- C** “We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more.”
- L** But Joseph said to them, “It is as I said to you. You are spies. By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.” And he put them all together in custody for three days. On the third day Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die.” And they did so. Then they said to one another,
- C** “In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us.”
- L** And Reuben answered them, “Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood.” They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.
- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Holy Gospel:

✠ Jesus Before Pilate ✠

Luke 23:1-25

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-third chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹Then the whole company of them arose and brought Jesus before Pilate. ²And they began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.” ³And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” ⁴Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.” ⁵But they were urgent, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.” ⁶When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷And when he learned that he belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. ⁹So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. ¹⁰The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. ¹¹And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. ¹²And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other

¹³Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, ¹⁴and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. ¹⁵Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. ¹⁶I will therefore punish and release him.” ¹⁸But they all cried out together, “Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas” — ¹⁹a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. ²⁰Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, ²¹but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” ²²A third time he said to them, “Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him.” ²³But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. ²⁴So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. ²⁵He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Catechism

The Fifth Petition

P We pray in the fifth petition of the Lord’s Prayer:

C **And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

P What does this mean?

C **We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.**

P We now join together with this and all petitions in the prayer our Lord has taught us:

Lord’s Prayer

C **Our Father who art in heaven,**

We are seated

Sermon Hymn

“My Song Is Love Unknown”

#430 sts. 1, 3, 5 & 7

1 My song is love unknown,
 My Savior’s love to me,
 Love to the loveless shown
 That they might lovely be.
 Oh, who am I
 That for my sake
 My Lord should take
 Frail flesh and die?

Then “Crucify!”
 Is all their breath,
 And for His death
 They thirst and cry.

3 Sometimes they strew His way
 And His sweet praises sing;
 Resounding all the day
 Hosannas to their King.

5 They rise and needs will have
 My dear Lord made away;
 A murderer they save,
 The Prince of Life they slay.
 Yet cheerful He
 To suff’ring goes
 That He His foes
 From thence might free.

7 Here might I stay and sing,
No story so divine!
Never was love, dear King,
Never was grief like Thine.

This is my friend,
In whose sweet praise
I all my days
Could gladly spend!

Text: Samuel Crossman, c. 1624–1683

Text: Public domain

Sermon

Prayer of the Church

Offerings—*may be left in the offering plates near the doors as you leave. Those worshipping at home may continue to mail or drop off offerings at the church office, and on-line giving always available on our website for everyone. For those worshipping with us at home, we continue to pray God's blessing and look forward to us all being together again here in God's house.*

Closing Prayer

Luther's Evening Prayer

P We pray together Luther's Evening Prayer,

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.**

Closing Sentences

1 John 1:8–9

P In this Lenten season, we continue our journey with Joseph

C **and come to the cross of Christ on Calvary.**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C **Amen.**

We are seated

Closing Hymn

"God, Who Made the Earth and Heaven"

#877

1 God, who made the earth and heaven,
Darkness and light:
You the day for work have given,
For rest the night.

May Your angel guards defend us,
Slumber sweet Your mercy send us,
Holy dreams and hopes attend us
All through the night.

(I'm passing this along from our LCMS.org website – thought you may find it interesting. There is much more information there about the work of our Synod – Pastor John)

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Office of International Mission (OIM) recently met with leaders and representatives of Lutheran church bodies throughout Eastern Europe to learn more about and further support [the aid given to refugees from the war in Ukraine](#).

“We have the command of our Lord to love our neighbor, and especially of the household of faith,” said the Rev. James A. Krikava, associate executive director of the OIM, Eurasia and Asia Operations. “We do have members of the household of faith coming to us. We want to help them, even though the household is a bit messy at this point.”

Tomas Gulan, a religion teacher at a Lutheran high school in Slovakia, reported that the school has received 350 refugees. For the time being, the school has shifted its focus from teaching to providing social ministry to help as many people as possible, including receiving some Ukrainian students into the school. The students are from families who have fled Ukraine and need not only instruction but a place to live.

Refugees from Ukraine continue to escape to any place that will accept them. Many countries have allowed refugees to enter and travel freely when trains and planes are available. Lutherans in these countries are lending aid where and when possible, including in their own homes.

“Please express our thanks to the congregations [of the LCMS] who have provided for those in need. It is very important,” said the Rev. Mindaugas Sabutis, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania. “We open our doors to sinners. ... We are seeking to share the Gospel with them and to pray. These people are in a very post-traumatic situation. They came to us with nothing. We try to be sure that we will provide help ... to carry this cross with these people for a long time.”

The Rev. Sorin-Horia Trifa, a Romanian Lutheran pastor supported by the LCMS, noted in a recent email that the church in Ukraine is facing a dire and worsening situation.

“The Ukrainian Lutherans in Odesa [part of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine], with whom we are in daily contact, have told us that they no longer have the resources to survive in Ukraine,” said Trifa. “They urgently need food and medicine, some of which is extremely important, such as insulin. ...

“Faced with such a situation, the Confessional Lutheran Church in Romania mobilized. We bought [and delivered] food and medicine using financial resources provided by the LCMS. ... Most likely, in the near future, we will have to repeat this operation because Odesa is no longer supplied with the resources necessary for daily life, especially vital medicines.”

Though most of the people of the LCMS may not physically travel to Eastern Europe to improve the chaotic situation there, their prayers and support for the Synod’s partners and friends in Europe continue to witness to the love and mercy of Christ.

“Our fervent prayers and continued desire to support our dear brothers and sisters in crisis have never been stronger,” said the Rev. Kevin D. Robson, LCMS chief mission officer. “We want to help care for peoples’ needs and especially to join them to God’s precious Word and Sacraments.”

By Kevin Arbbrust

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Dr. Kevin Armbrust is the director of Editorial for LCMS Communications.