



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



First Sunday in Lent

Faith and Taxes – Matthew 17:14-27

February 26, 2023 10:30 Service of the Word

Jesus says that if you have faith the size of a mustard seed that you could move mountains! Mustard seeds are tiny. Does that mean that our faith is even smaller than that of a mustard seed? That is good math but flawed theology. We'll look into that today and find some priorities for how to live too.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are a visitor we invite you to sign the guest book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

C: Amen.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Holy God,

**C: we confess to you our faults and failings.
Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;
we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;
we spoil rather than steward your creation;
we cause hurt though you call us to heal;
we choose fear over compassion.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
as we seek to follow in your way of life.**

Amen.

P: Hear the good news:

God so loved the world that God gave the only Son,
So that all may receive life.

This promise is for you!

God embraces you with divine mercy,
forgives you in Christ's name;
and revives you in the Spirit's power.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn Purify My Heart
(For music turn to Hymn 27 in the Songbook binder)

**Purify my heart,
touch me with your cleansing fire.
Take me to the cross.
Your holiness is my desire.
Breathe your life in me,
kindle a love that flows from your throne.
Oh, purify my heart,
oh, purify my heart.**

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13, Romans 10)

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

A: The word is near you,

C: on your lips and in your heart.

A: If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord,

C: and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

A: Faith comes from what is heard,

C: and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray.

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Malachi 4

B: See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.

²But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. ³And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

⁴Remember the teaching of my servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. ⁵Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the LORD

comes. ⁶He will turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents, so that I will not come and strike the land with a curse.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 47 (*read responsively*)

D: All the peoples, clap your hands,
shout your joy to God.

**C: For God Most High is awesome,
great king of all the earth.**

D: The One who conquers peoples
and sets them at our feet
chooses for beloved Jacob
a land to be our pride.

**C: God ascends the mountain
to cheers and trumpet blasts.**

D: Sing out your praise to God,
to the king, sing out your praise.

**C: For God rules the earth;
sing praise with all your skill.**

D: God rules over nations,
high on the sacred throne.

**C: Foreign rulers join
the people of Abraham's God;
all the powers on earth
belong to God on high.**

Second Reading Romans 9:20-24

E: ²⁰But who indeed are you, a human being, to argue with God? Will what is molded say to the one who molds it, "Why have you made me like this?" ²¹Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one object for special use and another for ordinary use?

²²What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction; ²³and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— ²⁴including us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (Matthew 17:20)

C: For truly I tell you, if you had faith the size of a mustard seed nothing would be impossible for you.

Gospel Reading Matthew 17:14-27

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 17th chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

¹⁴When [Jesus and the disciples] came to the crowd, a man came to him, knelt before him, ¹⁵and said, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; he often falls into the fire and often into the water. ¹⁶And I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.” ¹⁷Jesus answered, “You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him here to me.” ¹⁸And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. ¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” ²⁰He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

²²As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, ²³and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.” And they were greatly distressed.

²⁴When they reached Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the temple tax?” ²⁵He said, “Yes, he does.” And when he came home, Jesus spoke of it first, asking, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their children or from others?” ²⁶When Peter said, “From others,” Jesus said to him, “Then the children are free. ²⁷However, so that we do not give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook; take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a coin; take that and give it to them for you and me.”

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day O Lord, throughout These Forty Days
(For music see Hymn 319 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **O Lord, throughout these forty days
you prayed and kept the fast;
inspire repentance for our sin,
and free us from our past.**
2. **You strove with Satan, and you won;
your faithfulness endured;
lend us your nerve, your skill and trust
in God's eternal word.**
3. **Though parched and hungry, yet you prayer
and fixed your mind above;
so teach us to deny ourselves
that we may know God's love.**
4. **Be with us through this season, Lord,
and all our earthly days,
that when the final Easter dawns,
we join in heaven's praise.**

Text: based on Claudia F. Hernaman, 1838-1839; para. Gilbert E. Doan Jr., b. 1930. Text copyright 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Music: A. Davison, *Kentucky Harmony*, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929-2003. Arr. 1969 Concordia Publishing House

Apostles' Creed

P: We confirm our faith with the Apostles' Creed

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints
the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

Special Music

Hymn of Thanksgiving As the offering is brought forward:

Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil

For music turn to Hymn 713 in the Blue Hymnal

**Lord, let my heart be good soil,
open to the seed of your Word.**

**Lord, let my heart be good soil,
where love can grow and peace is understood.**

When my heart is hard, break the stone away.

When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.

When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart,

Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Text and music: Handt Hanson, b. 1950, Copyright 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing/Changing Church, Inc.

† PRAYER †

Thanksgiving Prayer

P: Let us pray. Merciful God,

C: we offer to you what is already your own: ourselves, our time and our possessions. Guide us so that we may use your gifts in the service of your will; for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. Please conclude your petition with: Lord in your mercy,

*The congregation will respond: **Hear our prayer.***

The pastor concludes the prayer:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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.**

✠ SENDING ✠

Blessing

P: God, the giver of love,
Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth
bless you in this Lenten journey.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn I Want Jesus to Walk With Me
(For music turn to Hymn 325 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **I want Jesus to walk with me;
I want Jesus to walk with me;**

**all along my pilgrim journey,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.**

- 2. In my trials, Lord, walk with me;
in my trials, Lord, walk with me;
when my heart is almost breaking,
Lord I want Jesus to walk with me.**
- 3. When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when my head is bowed in sorrow,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.**

Text and music: African American Spiritual, arr. J. Jefferson Cleveland, Verolga Nix; copyright 1981 Abingdon Press

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: God's work. Our hands.



"I can be more humble than you."



"Pastor, I think we can
stop praying for rain now."

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers Mary and Greg Zuege
Acolyte Creed White
Counters Linda Flood and Sue Kaufmann
Coffee Hour

Worship assistants for next Sunday, March 5

Greeters and Ushers John and Linda Thompson
Acolyte Thomas Bullwinkle
Altar Care Helen Crown
Communion Assistant Greg Zuege
Counters Bruce and Connie Stevenson
Coffee Hour

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