



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



4th Sunday of Lent

March 19, 2023

10:30 Holy Communion

Matthew 21-22 is Jesus' first days in Jerusalem before the Passover. The religious leaders and elders are curious about him. They've certainly heard of him from his ministry in the communities to the north. Will this famous preacher be in line with orthodox teaching or will he be a troublemaker? Given that Jesus upends the tables of the money changers as the first thing he does, they recognize him as a threat. But how to catch him, or discredit him? We'll see them try in today's gospel reading. Try as they might, Jesus bests them. Jesus is not preaching anything new. But the religious leaders still do not want to hear it.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us 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

Gathering Hymn Lead Me to the Rock

(For music turn to Hymn 20 in the Songbook binder)

1. **When my heart is overwhelmed,
Hear my cry,
Give heed to my prayer,
And my eyes are dim with tears,
O Father, make them clear;
From the ends of all the earth,
When my heart is fainting,
Let me know that You have heard,
Lead me into safety.**

Chorus (Repeat Chorus at end)

**And lead me to the Rock,
The Rock that is higher,
Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.
Lead me to the Rock,
The Rock that is higher,
Higher than I.**

2. **You, O Lord have been for me
A refuge from my enemies.
Let me live within your strength,
In the shelter of Your wings;
From the ends of all the earth,
When my heart is fainting,
Let me know that You have heard,
Lead me into safety.** *Chorus*

Text and music by Lynn DeSchazo. CCLI # 80971. Copyright 1989 Integrity's Hosanna! Music, Admin: Integrity Music, Inc.

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

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.**

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.

Hymn of Praise Kyrie

For music turn to page 28 in the Blue Hymnal

L: Kyrie eleison:

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Christe eleison:

C: Christ, have mercy.

L: Kyrie eleison:

C: Lord, have mercy.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray.

Bend your ear to our prayer, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

Scripture Poetry Psalm 110 (read responsively)

A: The Lord decrees to my Lord:

“Take the throne at my right hand,
I will make your enemies a footrest.

**C: I will raise your scepter
over Zion and beyond,
over all your enemies.**

A: Your people stand behind you
on the day you take command.

**C: You are made holy, splendid,
newborn like the dawn,
fresh like the dew.”**

A: God’s oath is firm:

“You are a priest for ever,
the rightful king by my decree.”

**C: The Lord stands at your side
to destroy kings
on the day of wrath.**

A: God executes judgment,
crushes the heads of nations,
and bring carnage worldwide.

**C: The victor drinks
from a wayside stream
and rises refreshed.**

Introduction to the Gospel

Gospel Reading Matthew 21:23-22:46

P: When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered

Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

B: “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’²⁹ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went.³⁰ The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go.³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

D: “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.³⁴ When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce.³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another.³⁶ Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way.³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”⁴¹ They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”⁴² Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’?⁴³ Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.⁴⁴ The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”⁴⁵ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them.⁴⁶ They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

E: Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying:²⁴ “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son.³ He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come.⁴ Again he sent other slaves, saying,

‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’⁵ But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business,⁶ while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them.⁷ The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.⁸ Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy.’⁹ Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’¹⁰ Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.¹¹ “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe,¹² and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless.¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

B: Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said.¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality.¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?”¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites?¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius.²⁰ Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?”²¹ They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”²² When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

D: The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection; and they asked him a question, saying,²⁴ “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the widow, and raise up children for his brother.’²⁵ Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother.²⁶ The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh.²⁷ Last of all, the woman herself died.²⁸ In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her.”²⁹ Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God.³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.³¹ And as

for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, ³²‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is God not of the dead, but of the living.” ³³And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

E: When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” ³⁷He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” ³⁸This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

B: Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: ⁴²“What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” ⁴³He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, ⁴⁴‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”’? ⁴⁵If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” ⁴⁶No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

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

C: Thanks be to God.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Great Is Thy Faithfulness
(for music please turn to Hymn 733 in the Red Hymnal)

**1. Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.**

Refrain

**Great is thy faithfulness!
Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;**

great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

2. **Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. Refrain**

3. **Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bring hope for tomorrow,
blessing all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain**

Text: Thomas Chisholm; Music: William Runyan; Copyright 1923, renewed 1951 Hope Publishing Co.

Nicene Creed

P: We confirm our faith with the Apostles' Creed.

**C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of
heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally
begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God
from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he
came down from heaven, was incarnate of the virgin Mary and
became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose
again, in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in
glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no
end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who
proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the
Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the
prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We
acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the
resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. 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.

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.

† MEAL †

Special Music

Hymn of Thanksgiving Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful Lord
For music turn to page 35 in the Blue Hymnal

**Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with your presence, Lord,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: God of good gifts,

**C: receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service
for the sake of your gospel.**

**Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal
as you pour out your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.
Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:

(Isaiah 6:3, spoken)

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

P: In the night in which he was handed over our Lord Jesus took bread, 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."

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.

Communion Distribution

Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. Please pick up a communion glass as you come forward to the altar. You will receive bread from the communion assistant. (If you need a gluten free wafer please tell the assistant.) The pastor will pour wine into your glass. If you prefer grape juice, it is pre-filled in the individual glasses. As we commune together everyone is invited to sing the following hymns:

Lamb of God (Page 39 of the Blue Hymnal)

459 *Wade in the Water (Red Hymnal)*

465 *As the Grains of Wheat (Red Hymnal)*

Communion Blessing *After all have communed the pastor will say:*

P: The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

P: Let us pray:

Embodied God,

at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.

With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,

empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors

and touch the world with your love.

C: 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 *Everybody's Got Something to Offer*

(For music turn to Hymn 55 in the Songbook binder)

Refrain

Everybody's got something to offer;

young and old the prince and the pauper.

Everybody's got something to offer

in the name of the Lord.

**1. To the lost and the lowly ones
the message it is clear;
we have all got a gift to give
our hands, our hearts, our tears. *Refrain***

**2. To the believers gathered here
the message it is true;
we have all got a gift to give
in all we say and do. *Refrain***

Text and Music: Larry Olson, copyright 1989 Dakota Road Music, used by permission

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Helen Crown
Acolyte	Creed White
Altar Care	Helen Crown
Communion Assistant	Sue Kaufmann
Counters	John and Linda Thompson
Coffee Hour	

Worship assistants for next Sunday, March 26

Greeters and Ushers	Linda Flood
Acolyte	Thomas Bullwinkle
Counters	Michele Myers and Helen Crown
Coffee Hour	

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