

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Midweek of Lent 4

March 11, 2015



“I will go before you and level the exalted places,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron.”

Isaiah 45:2



Midweek of Lent 4

March 11, 2015

7:15 PM

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

(Missouri Synod)

9770 Foothills Canyon Blvd.

Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

Sunday Worship Services.....8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Bible Classes and Sunday School.....9:15 a.m.

Rev. Bruce Skelton, Pastor, Office.....303-683-1300

Megan Keeling Director, Early Learning Center.....303-683-1311

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***Reaching lost souls with the Gospel:
Nourishing and equipping the saints for life and ministry!***

MIDWEEK OF LENT 4

O Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, as we continue our Lenten journey to the cross, use Your holy Law to make us conscious of our sin so that we bow in repentance before You. We know well what everlasting punishment our rebellion against Your will has earned. Yet You, O Jesus, are the friend of sinners. You came into the world that the Father might lay upon You the iniquity of us all. Because of Your faithful and steadfast love we find mercy and healing for our sin-sick souls. Hear us, holy Jesus. Amen.



Midweek of Lent 4

Breaking Down the Gates

"Jesus, refuge of the weary, Blest Redeemer, whom we love, Fountain in life's desert dreary, Savior from the world above" (*LSB* 423:1). Judean exiles in Babylon were weary! They were stuck with sights and sounds that were so different. How they longed to be free! Enter Cyrus, a Persian king, whom God calls His "anointed one" (Isaiah 45:1). When we feel as though the devil has locked the gate and thrown away the key, God sends us Jesus, who is *the* Anointed One! During His earthly ministry, He opened eyes and ears and hearts—He even opened graves! At one point Jesus promised, "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). And so we sing, "Jesus, may our hearts be burning With more fervent love for You; May our eyes be ever turning To behold Your cross anew" (*LSB* 423:3).

The **Call to Worship/Confession and Absolution** is drawn from the Seven Penitential Psalms, so named by Cassiodorus (c. AD 485–c. AD 585) in the sixth century AD. For centuries, Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143 have served as a source of prayer and reflection during Lent. Their honest confessions invite us to turn to our Lord with the same spirit of candor and humility.

Choir: Thy Holy Wings by William Miller

Invocation

2 Corinthians 13:14

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

G Amen.

427 In the Cross of Christ I Glory, vs. 1-3

Call to Worship

Psalms 51

- [P]** Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions.
- [C]** **Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.**
- [P]** For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.
- [C]** **Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are proved right when You speak and justified when You judge.**

All: **Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.**

- [P]** Surely You desire truth in the inner parts; You teach me wisdom in the inmost place.
- [C]** **Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.**
- [P]** Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.
- [C]** **Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**

All: **Do not cast me from Your presence or take Your Holy Spirit from me.**

- [P]** Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
- [C]** **You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; You do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.**
- [P]** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

All: **And so we come to You, O God, with broken spirits and contrite hearts, trusting only in the merits of Jesus to cleanse, heal, and forgive us.**

- [P]** Upon this your confession, I by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word proclaim the grace of God to all of you and in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I announce to you the full and complete pardon for all your sins; in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: **O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise!**

Response

427 In the Cross of Christ I Glory, vs. 4

Prayer of the day

P The Lord be with you.

G And also with you.

P Let us pray. O almighty God, merciful Father, You opened a way for your ancient people Israel to return from Babylon to the Promised Land and through Your Son, Jesus, You opened for us the way to everlasting life. Free us from the chains that bind us so that we follow where You lead, all the days of our lives; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

Today's Scripture readings have as their theme "God's Gift of Freedom."

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 45:1-8

Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped,
to subdue nations before him
and to loose the belts of kings,
to open doors before him
that gates may not be closed:
"I will go before you
and level the exalted places,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
I will give you the treasures of darkness
and the hoards in secret places,
that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I name you, though you do not know me.
I am the LORD, and there is no other,
besides me there is no God;
I equip you, though you do not know me,

that people may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is none besides me;
I am the LORD, and there is no other.
I form light and create darkness,
I make well-being and create calamity,
I am the LORD, who does all these things.
"Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the clouds rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit;
let the earth cause them both to sprout;
I the LORD have created it."



Series hymn

Sing We Exiles (tune: LSB 559)

1. Sing we exiles in our sadness,
Though we wander dispossessed;
Sing for hope of future rest.
Jesus is our Way, our gladness,
Straight'ning crooked paths we roam,
Leading to our Father's home.
2. Come, make way for God's Anointed!
See the portals thrust aside,
Gates of Freedom open wide.
As we wait Your hour appointed,
Freed from death for all our days—
Loose our tongues to sing Your praise.
3. Sing we exiles in our yearning
To be healed from ev'ry wrong;
Sing the distant triumph song.
Father, guide us in returning
With repentance to Your will,
Lead us ever homeward still.

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 6:13-20

For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Holy Gospel: Matthew 9:27-34

And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."



Apostles' Creed

**☩ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.**

Sermon

“Breaking Down the Gates”

Based on the Old Testament Reading

Sermon hymn:

423 Jesus, Refuge of the Weary

Offerings

*(Please add your name to the red fellowship
book and pass it to your fellow worshipers.)*



Prayers of the church

- P** Lord God, Almighty Father, when guilt stands in our way, You promise,
- G** **“Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”** (Isaiah 1:18)

- P** Father, when gloom and doom stand in our way, You say,
C **"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light."**
 (Isaiah 9:2)
- P** Lord, when dryness and deadness stand in our way, You transform
C **"The desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs."** (Isaiah 35:7)
- P** O God, when huge obstacles stand in our way, You make the solemn pledge,
C **"Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain."** (Isaiah 40:3)
- P** And when blindness and captivity and bondage stand in our way, Your Servant comes to
C **"Open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness."** (Isaiah 42:7)

All Your rescue is greater than we imagine, more than we deserve.

(Insert congregational prayers here)

- P** O Lord, we believe this promise, "If the Son sets us free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)
- C** **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

- P** Hear us, loving Father, as we pray the prayer our Lord taught us.,
- 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.**

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.

G Amen.

524 How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds, vs. 1-4



Soli Deo Gloria!

(To God alone be the glory.)

Silent Prayer: Lord Jesus, we thank You that we are not locked in with no way out. We are free! Amen.



***When He entered the house, the blind men
came to Him, and Jesus said to them,
“Do you believe that I am able to do this?”
They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”
Then He touched their eyes, saying,
“According to your faith be it done to you.”
And their eyes were opened.***

Matthew 9:28-30a

