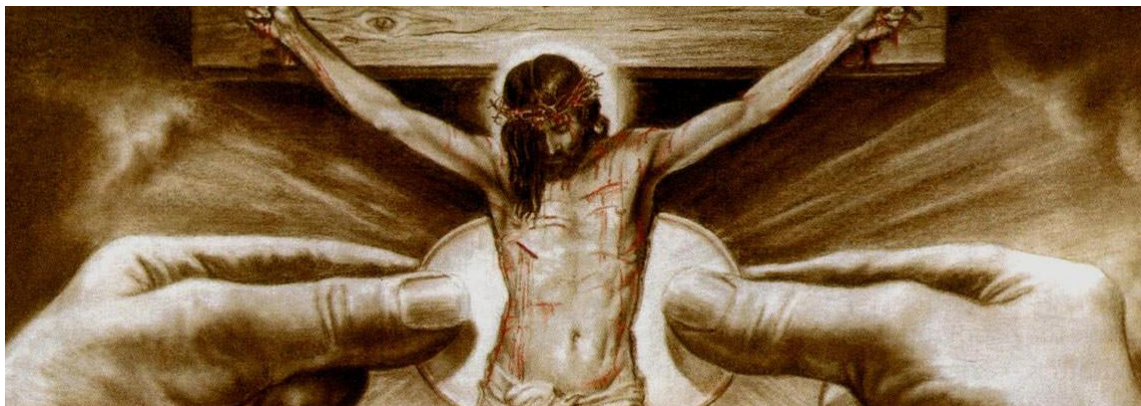


# **Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church**

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

**March 22, 2023**

Midweek Lenten Vespers



## **Bread of Life**

The bread we bake in our homes or buy from the store is good for today. But by tomorrow, it may be gone. The gifts we receive in this world satisfy us for a moment; however, the gifts we receive in the promised treasures of God's Word are gifts that are eternal. When Jesus describes Himself in John 6 as the bread of life, we know that He highlights for us His mission of salvation. As our bread of life, Jesus comes to forgive us, renew us, and lead us toward a meaningful life in relationship with Him. Let us taste and experience that life together this day as the Holy Spirit calls us to walk with Jesus and be satisfied by His presence among us.

**2606 Chimney Rock Road—Hendersonville, NC 28792**

**Church Phone 692-7027**

**Preschool Phone 698-5900**

**Church E-mail: [mtpisgahlcms@gmail.com](mailto:mtpisgahlcms@gmail.com)**

**Website: [www.mtpisgahlutheran.com](http://www.mtpisgahlutheran.com)**

**Church Office Hours 9:00 AM—3:00 PM M-TH**

**9:00 AM—1:00 PM on Friday**

*Stand***Invocation**

- P** In the name of the Father and of the  $\text{✠}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

**Opening Sentences***2 Corinthians 5:21, alt.; Isaiah 53:5*

- P** For our sake God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin,  
**C** so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.  
**P** But He was wounded for our transgressions;  
**C** He was crushed for our iniquities;  
**P** upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
**C** and with His stripes we are healed.

**Confession and Absolution***Based on Philippians 2:1–11*

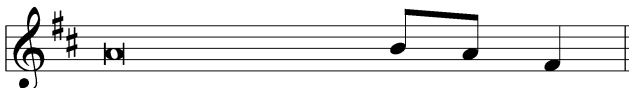
- P** Lord Jesus, search our hearts and minds that we may receive Your Word, share in Your Spirit, and be renewed in our relationships with You and with one another.

*We observe a moment of silence for personal prayers of confession.*

- P** With humble hearts, let us pray together:  
**C** Lord Jesus, the Father's only Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords, hear us as we pray.  
**P** We confess that we have not lived our lives as we ought, forgetting that You have called us to be the salt of the earth.  
**C** Our rebellion against You in thought, word, and action is why You died for us—  
**P** to forgive our sins, to redeem our lives, and to cancel the debt we owe to God.  
**C** With hearts that are humble and lives ever grateful, help us to receive Your grace, bow before You in worship, and confess that You alone are Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.  
**P** Almighty God our heavenly Father shows His mercy to us in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, the true bread from heaven who satisfies the hunger of our souls. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the  $\text{✠}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

*Stand*

**L** O Lord, o - pen my lips,



**C** and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.



Make haste, O God, to de - liv - er me;  
make haste to help me, O Lord.  
Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it;  
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.  
Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our sal - va - tion.

## Psalmody

### Psalm

*Psalm 19:7–10, 14 Tone A*



- <sup>7</sup>The law of the LORD is perfect, reviv- | ing the soul; \*  
the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the | simple;  
<sup>8</sup>**the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing | the heart; \***  
**the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening | the eyes;**  
<sup>9</sup>the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for- | ever; \*  
the just decrees of the LORD are true, and righteous alto- | gether.  
<sup>10</sup>**More to be desired are they than gold, even | much fine gold; \***  
**sweeter also than honey and drippings of the | honeycomb.**  
<sup>14</sup>Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable | in your sight, \*  
O LORD, my rock and my re- | deemer.

### Collect of the Day

- P** Let us pray... Lord Jesus Christ, You reveal Yourself as the bread of life who satisfies all the hungry souls that return to You in repentance and faith.  
**C** **Renew our hearts and minds during this Lenten season as we receive the promised treasures of Your Word;**  
**P** for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**C** Amen.



1 O Christ, You walked the road Our wan-d'ring feet must go.  
 2 No bread of earth a-lone Can fill our hun-g'ring hearts.  
 3 No blind-ing sign we ask, No won-der from a-bove.  
 4 When lures of eas-y gain With prom-ise bright-ly shine,  
 5 O Christ, You walked the road Our wan-d'ring feet must go.



You faced with us temp-ta-tion's pow'r And fought our an-cient foe.  
 Lord, help us seek Your liv-ing Word, The food Your grace im-parts.  
 Lord, help us place our trust a-lone In Your un-swerv-ing love.  
 Lord, help us seek Your king-dom first; Our wills with Yours a-lign.  
 Stay with us through temp-ta-tion's hour To fight our an-cient foe.

## Readings

### Old Testament Reading

*Exodus 16:2–5, 11–18*

**P** A reading from Exodus, the sixteenth chapter.

<sup>2</sup>And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, <sup>3</sup>and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

<sup>4</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. <sup>5</sup>On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” <sup>11</sup>And the LORD said to Moses, <sup>12</sup>“I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

<sup>13</sup>In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. <sup>14</sup>And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. <sup>15</sup>When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat. <sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he can eat. You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.’” <sup>17</sup>And the people of Israel did so. They gathered, some more, some less. <sup>18</sup>But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**G** Thanks be to God.

*1 Corinthians 10:1–4, 15–17*

<sup>1</sup>I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup>and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup>and all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup>and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*John 6:32–37*

<sup>35</sup>Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. <sup>36</sup>But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. <sup>37</sup>All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## LSB 231

**L** 1 Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are  
the God of my sal - va - tion.  
2 In You, O Lord, do I put my trust, leave me not, O Lord, my God.  
3 Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are  
the God of my sal - va - tion.

**Q** Rescue me from my en - e - mies, protect me  
from those who rise a - gainst me.

Sit

## Hymn

## 625 Lord Jesus Christ, Life-Giving Bread



1 Lord Je - sus Christ, life - giv - ing bread, May I in grace  
2 To pas - tures green, Lord, safe - ly guide, To rest - ful wa -  
3 O bread of heav'n, my soul's de - light, For full and free  
4 I do not mer - it fa - vor, Lord, My weight of sin



pos - sess You. Let me with ho - ly food be fed,  
ters lead me; Your ta - ble well for me pro - vide,  
re - mis - sion I come with prayer be - fore Your sight  
would break me; In all my guilt - y heart's dis - cord,



In hun - ger I ad - dress You. Pre - pare me well  
Your wound - ed hand now feed me. Though wea - ry, sin -  
In sor - row and con - tri - tion. Your righ - teous - ness,  
O Lord, do not for - sake me. In my dis - tress



for You, O Lord, And, hum - bly by my prayer im - plored,  
ful, sick, and weak, Ref - uge in You a - lone I seek,  
Lord, cov - er me That I re - ceive You wor - thi - ly,  
this com - forts me That You re - ceive me gra - cious - ly,

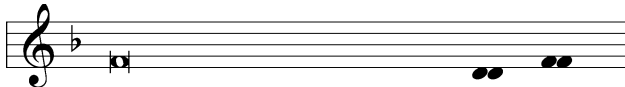


Give me Your grace and mer - cy.  
To share Your cup of heal - ing.  
As - sured of Your full par - don.  
O Christ, my Lord of mer - cy!

## Sermon

## Canticle

Stand



**L** Let my prayer rise before You as in - cense,



**G** and the lifting up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

## Hymn

## 935 Tell Out, My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord



1 Tell out, my soul, the great-ness of the Lord!  
 2 Tell out, my soul, the great-ness of His name!  
 3 Tell out, my soul, the great-ness of His might!  
 4 Tell out, my soul, the glo-ries of His Word!



Un - num - bered bless - ings, give my spir - it voice;  
 Make known His might, the deeds His arm has done;  
 Pow'rs and do - min - ions lay their glo - ry by.  
 Firm is His prom - ise, and His mer - cy sure.



Ten - der to me the prom - ise of His Word;  
 His mer - cy sure, from age to age the same;  
 Proud hearts and stub - born wills are put to flight,  
 Tell out, my soul, the great-ness of the Lord



In God my Sav - ior shall my heart re - joice.  
 His ho - ly name, the Lord, the Might - y One.  
 The hun - gry fed, the hum - ble lift - ed high.  
 To chil - dren's chil - dren and for - ev - er - more!

*Sit*

## Offering

## When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

C. S. Lang

## Prayer

*Stand*

## Kyrie

LSB 233



**C** Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy; Lord, have mer-cy.

## 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



**L** O Lord, hear my prayer.



**C** And let my cry come to You.

- P** Gracious God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You for blessing us with the opportunity to meditate again on the cross of Christ and receive Your promised treasures.
- C** **Grant that the message of the Lamb of God slain for our salvation bring us the riches of Your pardon and peace.**
- P** Lead us to see that our sins caused Jesus' great agony in the garden, that our sins nailed Him to the cross of Calvary,
- C** **that He was forsaken by His Father so that we might never be forsaken, and that He died so that we may live.**
- P** Lord Jesus, grant that especially during this sacred season the treasured story of Your wondrous love for us would draw us closer to You.
- C** **Enable us to savor You as the true bread of life, trusting that You forgive us, renew us, satisfy us, and give our lives meaning.**
- P** Holy Spirit, lift up troubled souls everywhere. Grant wholeness to those hurting in heart, body, and mind. Work Your healing power in the lives of those in need.
- C** **All glory, honor, and praise be to You, with the Father and the Son, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## Collect for Peace and Luther's Evening Prayer

- L** 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** **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.**



## Benedicamus

LSB 234

**L** Let us bless the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Benediction

LSB 234

**P** The grace of our Lord Je - sus Christ and the love of God

and the communion of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.

**C** A - men.

## Hymn

### 894 For the Fruits of His Creation

1 For the fruits of His cre - a - tion, Thanks be to God.  
2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will is done.  
3 For the har-vests of the Spir - it, Thanks be to God.

For His gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, Thanks be to God. For the  
In the help we give our neigh-bor, God's will is done. In our  
For the good we all in - her - it, Thanks be to God. For the

plow - ing, sow-ing, reap-ing, Si - lent growth while we are sleep-ing,  
world-wide task of car - ing For the hun - gry and de - spair-ing,  
won - ders that as-tound us, For the truths that still con-found us,

Fu - ture needs in earth's safe-keep-ing, Thanks be to God.  
In the har-vests we are shar-ing, God's will is done.  
Most of all, that love has found us, Thanks be to God.

## Postlude

### There Is a Green Hill Far Away

Henry Coleman

# Home Devotional: Bread of Life

“I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst.” John 6:35

## Introduction

Bread is one of the most common food staples of life. It is also, perhaps, one of the most familiar physical elements in the Bible, and it is still used often in the Church today. Even though some people are allergic to processed flour, various whole grains and seed breads are still crucial to good nutrition. When the Israelites were in Egypt and about to depart, Moses instructed them to make unleavened bread (see Exodus 12). The manna in the desert, which God gave to the people of Israel, sustained them on their way to the Promised Land (see Exodus 16). God made manna rain down from heaven every day for the people to eat while they were in the wilderness. God also established the feast of unleavened bread. Soon, the bread of the Presence was to be set in the tabernacle and Holy Place by the priests (see Exodus 25:30).

In the New Testament, Jesus fed the five thousand (see Luke 9:10–17), taught us to pray for daily bread (see Luke 11:2–4), and called Himself the “bread of life” (John 6:35). In fact, His bread of life teaching (see John 6) became one of His most contentious discourses, because many left Him (see v. 66) when He addressed eating His flesh and drinking His blood (see v. 54). When Jesus instituted His Supper, He used bread and wine. Today, we use these elements in every service of Holy Communion. The Lord’s Supper remains a contentious topic, a crucible, for many within Christendom who do not believe, or renounce, Christ’s real bodily presence in the Meal.

Each of us goes through many stages of maturity, like grains of wheat. Lent is a beautiful season to grow again, to be ground like wheat. Just as many grains grow, die, and are ground up to make one beautiful loaf of bread, so do we as the Church. Each day we are sifted and milled through repentance to become more like Christ. Until our journey of this life ends, we only grow when our old sinful nature is ground up and crucified so that a new man, like a new loaf, rises in Christ. Like chaff, which clings to wheat, our sinful nature is burned with Christ in His death and buried in His tomb so that only pure wheat, our new nature, remains. St. Augustine once said to his people, “Be what you see, receive what you are.” Each of us will go through the threshing floor of suffering, pain, and challenge in life. None of us can avoid it. However, by God’s Word and Supper, the Holy Spirit continues His good work in you, separating the sinful chaff of your old man, in order to make you into a new loaf, united with all the Body of Christ, the Church. To partake of Jesus, the bread of life, makes each of us bread and all who partake of Jesus become one whole loaf in the Church as well. The most essential thing in life is not your daily bread but the bread of life, Jesus Christ.

## Questions (Answers at the End)

- Q1. What did God regularly provide to feed the people of God, Israel, after He delivered them from Egypt and brought them through the Red Sea? Read Exodus 16:1–2, 11–18.
- Q2. In 1 Corinthians 10:1–4, 11–17, St. Paul makes a spiritual application to the physical eating and drinking in the wilderness by the people of God. Who does St. Paul say was leading them even at that time (which person of the Trinity)?

- Q3. The Jews so often appealed to the greatness of their father Abraham (see John 8:39–47) and Moses (see John 6:32–37) but failed to see that Jesus was the greater Moses, the greatest prophet. Are people still blind to who Jesus really is, the only source of life? If so, what can we do about that?
- Q4. God’s Word is food for the soul. That is why it is called a Means of Grace, a channel through which forgiveness flows into you. How does King David so beautifully describe God’s Word in Psalm 19:11–17?

## **Conclusion**

Like the Israelites of old, we journey every day in the wilderness of this life. We live in the midst of this sinful world under the heat of sin and death bearing down on us each day. It is just as the desert heat beat down on the Israelites. We are waiting for a promised land, not Canaan, but the promised land of heaven. No matter how crazy or bad life may be in the wilderness of this world, you are not wondering “Where can I find help?” or “How can I be sustained?” Your true help is found in this life whenever Christ breaks open His Word for you to eat, meditate upon, hear, and inwardly digest, and when He offers you the holy food of His body and blood at His Altar. In order to enter the promised land of heaven, we must be fed in the way God chooses to feed us, and that is always through His precious Word and Sacraments.

## **Closing**

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, You are the bread of life. You are the gift of the heavenly Father to this entire world, and through You we live, move, and have our being. You are the sustainer of all life and the head of all things in heaven and earth, now and forever. Feed us now with the bread of life so that we never hunger or thirst. Just as You sustained the Israelites in the wilderness every morning with manna until they reached the Promised Land, so give us this day our daily bread and give us Yourself as the bread of life often in Word and Sacrament so that our faith never wanders nor wanes. We pray all these things in Your holy name. Amen.

## Answers

- A1. God rained down bread from heaven, manna, every day to feed His people, Israel. He loves all people and sustains them day after day, both the evil and the good (see Matthew 5:45). In the evening, God even provided meat for Israel to eat when He brought them quail. He provided food for them every day. They only collected what they needed for that day. He still feeds us every day, as Martin Luther's meal prayer emphasizes (see Psalm 145:15–16).
- A2. All the people of Israel ate the same food, manna, and drank from the same spiritual Rock, which was Christ. The Church, like Israel of old, still eats of the same spiritual bread at Holy Communion and receives Christ's true body and blood. We still receive our daily bread (every need of the body) from God, but the most essential bread for life is the bread of life, Jesus Christ, whom we receive by faith often—in the hearing of His forgiving Word and the receiving of His nourishing Supper.
- A3. Jesus is far greater than Abraham, who rejoiced at seeing Jesus' day (see John 8:56). Jesus is also far greater than Moses, who did not even provide the manna for the people to eat; it was God who did. Jesus, likewise, is the bread of life, satisfying and feeding every hungry and longing soul. No one who comes to Him ever lacks anything. He will never cast any child away. He always welcomes longing souls to take of Him and eat and live forever. We can assure anyone we know and see that God has made them and has a purpose for their life. Jesus is the way, the truth, the life, and the bread of life (see John 14:6; 6:35). Outside of Him, there is no nourishment or peace.
- A4. This wonderful psalm highlights God's creation and His Word. Just as God created the world and all things with His voice, so His voice still goes forth with His Word. It is perfect, sure, right, pure, and true (see vv. 7–9). God's Word never fails and always satisfies. His Word is sweeter than honey (see v. 10). His Word is food for the soul. Jesus is the manna of life now and forever.