

March 13, 2024 - Midweek Lent 4

## Empty Words

### As We Gather

You are daily assailed by empty words: idle small talk, advertising slogans, and news reports that play on your fears. Political and business leaders spew cant, clichés, and spin. Perhaps even your friends and family get in on the act, betraying you with flattery and falsehoods. King David was only too familiar with such afflictions: "When one comes to see me," he said, "he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity; when he goes out, he tells it abroad" (Psalm 41:6). Our Lord's powerful Word was David's refuge from vain and malicious talk. It is your refuge too. In Baptism, Jesus Christ has lifted you out of the verbal cesspool and placed you firmly on the rock of His Word. That Word is never empty, but it shall accomplish that which He purposes for you.

**Preservice Music** "Go to Dark Gethsemane" & "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"  
*Chimes*

### Opening Sentences

- P** O Lord, open my lips,
- C** **and my mouth will declare Your praise.**
- P** Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
- C** **make haste to help me, O Lord.**
- C** **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;**  
**as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**  
**Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.**

### Psalm

*Psalm 41*

- P** Blessed is the one who considers the poor!
- C** **In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;**
- P** the LORD protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land;
- C** **You do not give him up to the will of his enemies.**
- P** The LORD sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness You restore him to full health.
- C** **As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against You!"**

- P** My enemies say of me in malice, "When will he die and his name perish?"
- C** **And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity; when he goes out, he tells it abroad.**
- P** All who hate me whisper together about me; they imagine the worst for me.
- C** **They say, "A deadly thing is poured out on him; he will not rise again from where he lies."**
- P** Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.
- C** **But You, O LORD, be gracious to me, and raise me up, that I may repay them!**
- P** By this I know that You delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over me.
- C** **But You have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in Your presence forever.**  
**Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.**  
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

## Opening Hymn

### Reading

*James 3:1–10*

- P** A reading from James, the third chapter.

<sup>1</sup>Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. <sup>2</sup>For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. <sup>3</sup>If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. <sup>4</sup>Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. <sup>5</sup>So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! <sup>6</sup>And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on

fire by hell. <sup>7</sup>For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, <sup>8</sup>but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup>With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. <sup>10</sup>From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

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

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## The Passion of Our Lord: The Praetorium

Hymn: A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth

LSB 438

Sermon: Empty Words

*Psalm 41:6*

## Kyrie

**C** **Lord, have mercy;  
Christ, have mercy;  
Lord, have mercy.**

## Lord's Prayer

### Collects

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

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

**P** O pitying Lord Jesus, grant us of Your gentleness and forbearance, of Your compassion and love, and of Your tenderheartedness, that filled with Your grace we may always find fitting and salutary words to speak and willingly forgive the wrongs and evils done us. This we ask in Your precious and mighty name.

**C** **Amen.**

**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.**

**P** 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** **Amen.**

## **Benedicamus**

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## **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.

**C** **Amen.**

## **Sending Hymn**

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