



Lutheran Church & Christian School



Lenten Midweek III

February 28, 2024

Redeemed, Restored, & Rejoicing in Jesus!

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Mission Statement

[Who We Are]

Leading with the Gospel, we at Trinity Lutheran Church and School strive to:

**HUMBLY AND KNOWINGLY FOLLOW JESUS,
SEEKING JOY THROUGH HIM IN WORSHIP,
TEACHING, AND PRAYER.**



Vision Statement

[Who We Endeavor to Be]

Leading with the Gospel, we at Trinity Lutheran Church and School endeavor to:

**LIVE [up] BY FAITH, BE KNOWN [out] BY
CHRIST'S LOVE, and REJOICE [in] HIS
FORGIVENESS.**

"Redeemed and restored, we are rejoicing in Jesus!"

AS WE GATHER

By way of God's grace, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord equipped His people for a vibrant life with Him and lived out in the world. One of the ways He did this was through various spiritual practices, or disciplines. Each drawn from God's Word, these faith strengthening practices, governed by the movement of the Holy Spirit, accompanied the 1st Century Christians, propelling them into a life of witness and service.

Tonight's service centers on the spiritual practice of celebration, "a way of engaging in actions that orient the spirit toward worship, praise and thanksgiving." (Calhoun) Celebration is the lifeblood of our response to God for all of His gifts, driven not by compulsion, but by a deep desire to "bless the Lord, O my soul" (Psalm 103:1). All told, celebration is as natural to our discipleship as breathing. Welcome, as we acknowledge yet one more gift, received from and returned to God, with full and joyful hearts.

PRELUDE

PRE-SERVICE SONG *"Mighty to Save" (Words & Music by Reuben Morgan and Ben Fisher © 2006 Hillsong Publishing)*

1. Everyone needs compassion, love that's never failing; let mercy fall on me.
Everyone needs forgiveness, the kindness of a Saviour; the hope of nations.

*Chorus: Saviour, He can move the mountains; my God is mighty to save,
He is mighty to save.
Forever, Author of salvation, He rose and conquered the grave;
Jesus conquered the grave.*

2. So take me as You find me, all my fears and failures, and fill my life again.
I give my life to follow, everything I believe in, now I surrender. *(Chorus)*

*Bridge: Shine your light and – let the whole world sing ... see we're singing
For the glory – of the risen King – Jesus.
Shine your light and – let the whole world sing ... see we're singing
For the glory – of the risen King!*

(Chorus and repeat)

INTRODUCTION

OPENING PRAYER

Let joy abound and celebration ensue, Father, as we survey Your goodness to us in countless ways. Comfort us in our suffering and embolden us in our celebrating. Jesus, continue to seek and reclaim what's been lost along the way - in our world, and in our own hearts. Amen.

SERVICE OF LIGHT

Pastor: Now is the time of God's favor;

Congregation: now is the day of salvation.

Pastor: Turn us again, O God of our salvation,

Congregation: that the light of Your face may shine on us.

Pastor: May Your justice shine like the sun;

Congregation: and may the poor be lifted up.

HYMN OF PREPARATION "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"

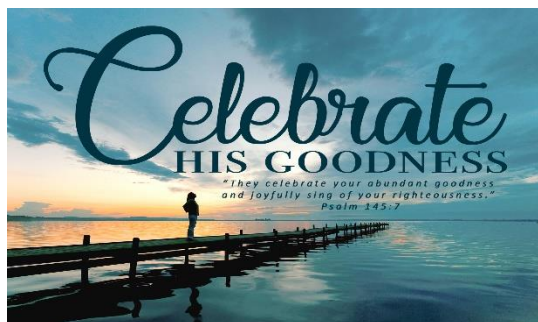
LSB 849

For this and all subsequent hymns, please see PowerPoint slides or the hymnal.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led Your people Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Enlighten our darkness by the light of Your Christ; may His Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for You are merciful, and You love Your whole creation and we, Your creatures, glorify You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.



VARIOUS READINGS ON CELEBRATION

2 Samuel 6:16-19

¹⁶ As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart. ¹⁷ And they brought in the ark of the Lord and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. ¹⁸ And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts ¹⁹ and distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed, each to his house.

Psalms 16: 7, 9, 11

⁷ I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me...
⁹ Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices;
my flesh also dwells secure...
¹¹ You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalms 47:1

Clap your hands, all peoples!
Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

Psalms 139:13-14

For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.

Isaiah 55:12

“For you shall go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall break forth into singing,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”

Lamentations 3:21-23

But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

***Zephaniah 3:14-17**

Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!
The Lord has taken away the judgments against you;
he has cleared away your enemies.
The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall never again fear evil.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
“Fear not, O Zion;
let not your hands grow weak.
The Lord your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing.

Acts 16:25-34

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, ²⁶ and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. ²⁷ When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." ²⁹ And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³² And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. ³⁴ Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Ephesians 5:18-20

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

***1 Peter 1:3-9**

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Matthew 22:2-3

“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come.”

Matthew 26:26-29

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”

Luke 2:10-11

And the angel said [to the shepherds], “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 5:27-29

After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything, he rose and followed him. And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them.

Luke 10:20

"Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Luke 15:1-7

¹ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

***Luke 15:20-25**

²⁰ And [the lost son] arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

²¹ And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³ And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴ For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

MEDITATION

Notes:

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Do you experience God as a task-master or a party-thrower?

Where are you most prone to celebrate God? Alone? With others? In worship? In music? In nature? What does this tell you about how God made you and how you most naturally meet with Him?

When you see others celebrating God in a way that is different or foreign to you, what goes on in your mind and heart?

If there is a heaviness about you, an overly serious side or an entrenched critical spirit, how might celebrating God affect those traits and move you into new areas of transformation?

Imagine you are on the hospitality and promotion team for the wedding feast from Matthew 22. How winsome is your personal invitation to come and join the party? Are others drawn to the party because you are going?

What in your life is worth celebrating that you have perhaps overlooked?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES:

Identify the place you most readily connect with God. Is it in nature? Listening to Christian music? Participating in corporate worship? Solitude? Go to that place. What do you want to tell God about the joy you receive there?

Find intentional ways in order to build celebration into your day. It doesn't need to be a big production, but what *could* you do that would feel celebratory? [Example: keep a journal in which you record each day, or every so often, a "grace happening."]

Invite God to broaden your view of celebration and joy in the kingdom of heaven. Do you dare envision the celebration that took place in heaven on the day that you were the lost sheep, coin or child that was found (yes, this happened!)? Meditate on this awesome fact, pray or write a prayer of thanks.

Intentionally place yourself in the presence of God. Recall some of God's gifts, provision, guidance or love toward you. To celebrate God's grace to you, write a prayer, Psalm or song of joy, make a collage that represents your joy, play some music, memorize a verse of praise and repeat it throughout the coming days. If you feel so moved, dance!

Consider how God loves you. Read Zephaniah 3:14-17. Be still and listen. How is God celebrating you? Celebrate the God who celebrates you. Intentionally ask for the gift of celebrating yourself the way God does.

HYMN OF RESPONSE "All People That on Earth Do Dwell"

LSB 791, St. 1-3, 5

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: As we mark the forty days of Lent with repentance and forgiveness, let us pray for the renewal of the Church and the restoration of the world to the life of God in Christ.

Silence for time of personal reflection.

Various petitions and praises may be offered.

Pastor: Gracious Father, please hear the prayers that flow from our lips, and sustain us with the forgiveness won by Jesus' death and resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

Sharing of God's peace.

OFFERTORY "Create in Me"

LSB 956

LORD'S PRAYER

Please see PowerPoint or back of hymnal.

BENEDICTION *Romans 15:13*

Pastor: Now, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Congregation: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

LSB 528, St. 1-2, 7

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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