

Third Sunday of Lent

March 23, 2025

The gardener in the vineyard knows the fig tree needs rest, nutrients, and time – and it also needs to produce fruit. Both things are true, which is also true for us. If we are always striving for more growth without taking time to rest, we will burn out. But if we are only ever resting, we won't bear fruit or grow. The fig tree also teaches us that the in-between time – of nurture before fruit – can be where transformation begins.

Greetings and Welcome

Prelude by Sandi Watts

GATHERING

Call to Worship

P: Worship is a place to rest.

C: We breathe deeply here.

P: We still our aching bones.

C: We sit in the quiet.

P: We surround ourselves with music.

C: Worship is a place to rest.

P: Worship is a place to grow.

C: We listen for God's word.

P: We invite it to challenge us.

C: We lean in with curiosity.

P: We ask questions.

C: Worship is a place to grow.

P: So come into this space. Come rest and grow here.

C: For where two or more are gathered, God is always there.

P: Let us worship our gracious God.

Confession

P: Friends, we carve out time for confession in worship because it is not enough to hear about God's grace once. We need that reminder again, and again, and again. Join me in speaking the truth of our lives, and join me in receiving God's grace again.

P: Most merciful God,

C: We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P: Faithful friends, God knows your sin, and in mercy, gave his Son to die for us. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Gathering Song – “Change My Heart, O God”

(piano)

**Change my heart, O God, Make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God, May I be like You.**

You are the Potter, I am the clay. Mold me and make me, This is what I pray.

**Change my heart, O God, Make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God, May I be like You.**

**Greeting and Kyrie*

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.

A In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.

A For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mer - cy.

A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mer - cy.

A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **C** Lord, have mer - cy.

A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra-cious Lord. **C** A - men

**Hymn of Praise*

ASSISTING MINISTER



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

**Prayer of the Day*

P: Creator God, Your Word is like soil, something we can root ourselves in. Your Word is like the sun, big enough to touch everything with its warmth. And your Word is like a gardener, a love that prunes and encourages, waters and delights, seeds and tends. As we gather for worship today, warm our bones, tend to our broken pieces, and show us how to grow. With hope we pray,

C: Amen.

**Sharing Christ's Peace*

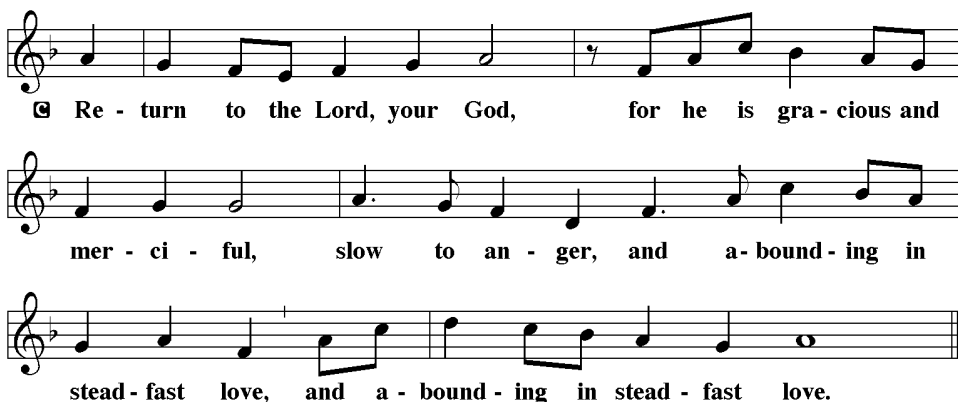
P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

All are invited to share the peace of Christ with one another.

Children's Sermon

**Gospel Acclamation*



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

WORD

**Gospel Reading:* Luke 13:1-9

Reader: Sharon Woodworth

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 13th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²He asked them, ‘Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.’

⁶Then he told this parable: ‘A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷So he said to the gardener, “See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?” ⁸He replied, “Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”’

P: The gospel of the Lord. C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Song— “Beneath the Soil” (Winchester Old)”

(organ)

**Beneath the soil in the dark there’s growth too slow to see,
A transformation not displayed in branches, fruit, and leaves.**

**Remember when the world demands more than you can produce,
We each grow at a different pace and growth starts in the roots.**

**The rest and nurture we receive will turn to fruit in time.
For God made us to grow and change as toward the sky we climb.**

**In every season of our lives the Spirit is at work
To nurture us to bear good fruit while rooted in the earth.**

Sermon: “Rest and Growth”

Song of the Day – “There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy” ELW 588 *(organ)*

- 1 **There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment giv'n.**

- 2 **There is welcome for the sinner, and a promised grace made good;
there is mercy with the Savior; there is healing in his blood.
There is grace enough for thousands of new worlds as great as this;
there is room for fresh creations in that upper home of bliss.**
- 3 **For the love of God is broader than the measures of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
But we make this love too narrow by false limits of our own;
and we magnify its strictness with a zeal God will not own.**
- 4 **'Tis not all we owe to Jesus; it is something more than all:
greater good because of evil, larger mercy through the fall.
Make our love, O God, more faithful; let us take you at your word,
and our lives will be thanksgiving for the goodness of the Lord.**

**Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Prayers of Intercession*

Installation of Church Council

Kelly Street (*President*), Patty Nelson (*Secretary*), Malinda Carlson, Ken Devlin, Marilyn Dichsen (*Youth Rep*), Kelly Hartz, Greg Kimler, Monica Proefrock, and Kay Schnitker

Stewardship Time

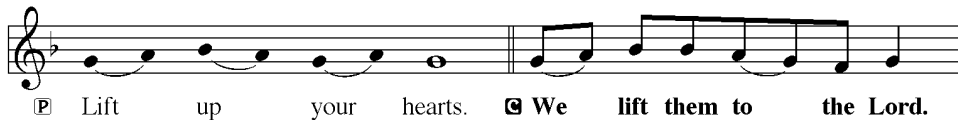
**“Amazing Love,” arr. Kendrick
*The Faith Singers***

–Please take a moment to sign into the Welcome Folder in your pew–

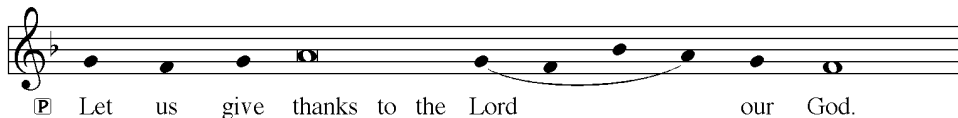
**Great Thanksgiving*



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 him thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, ... and join their unending hymn:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of your glo- ry. Ho - san- na. Ho - san- na.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho- san - na in the high - est.

**Words of Institution*

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and 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*

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

**Lamb of God*

☪ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Songs

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus” ELW 742 (*organ*)

1. **What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear –
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!**
2. **Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged -- take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness -- take it to the Lord in prayer.**
3. **Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge -- take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.**

“All My Days”

(*piano*)

- 1 **All my days I will sing this song of gladness,
give my praise to the Fountain of delights;
For in my helplessness You heard my cry,
and waves of mercy poured down on my life.**
 - 2 **I will trust in the cross of my Redeemer, I will sing of the blood that never fails;
Of sins forgiven, of conscience cleansed, of death defeated and life without end.**
- Refrain: Beautiful Savior, Wonderful Counselor, clothed in majesty, Lord of history,
You're the Way, the Truth, the Life, Star of the Morning, glorious holiness,
You're the Risen One, heaven's Champion, and You reign, You reign over all!*
- 2 **I long to be where the praise is never ending,
Yearn to dwell where the glory never fades;
Where countless worshippers will share one song,
And cries of 'worthy' will honor the Lamb! *Refrain***

**Post-Communion Blessing*

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

**Closing Prayer*

SENDING

**Benediction*

P: As you leave this place, know that God is with you in every messy middle, and go with God's blessing. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor, and + give you peace.

C: Amen.

**Sending Song – “A Mighty Fortress”*

(piano)

- 1 **A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.**
- 2 **No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight, whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord, God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.**

Interlude by the Faith Singers

- 3 **Though hordes of devils fill the land all threat'ning to devour us,
we tremble not, unmoved we stand; they cannot overpower us.
Let this world's tyrant rage; in battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail; God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.**
- 4 **God's Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse,
though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!**

**Dismissal*

P: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Worship Assistants

Communion Assistant: Kay Schnitker
Greeter: Lillian Korous
Reader: Sharon Woodworth
Usher: Pat Glyshaw
Pastor: Adam Dichsen
Music Director: Jean Welch
Organist: Sandi Watts
Pianist: Jean Welch
Drummers: John Demien & Louis Dichsen
Financial Assistants: Kelly Hartz & Greg Kimler
Chancel Committee: Pat Glyshaw
Coffee Host: Kay Schnitker



Singers:

Benen Dichsen	Terri Kimler	Kris Roth	Melissa Street
Kelly Hartz	Adam Krohe	Cole Street	Carol VanderKloot

Church Council Members:

Malinda Carlson	Marilyn Dichsen	Greg Kimler	Monica Proefrock
Ken Devlin	Kelly Hartz	Patty Nelson	Kay Schnitker
			Kelly Street

What's Coming Up at Faith?

Sunday, March 23, 9:30am: Worship
11:00am: Bible Study in the Justice Room
3:00pm: JACC Youth Game Night (*see blurb on page 14*)

Wednesday, March 26, 6:00pm: Lenten Meal
7:00pm: Lenten Worship

Sunday, March 30, 9:30am: Worship **Friends from Faith**
11:00am: Bible Study in the Justice Room

Wednesday, April 2, 6:00pm: Lenten Meal
7:00pm: Lenten Worship

Thursday, April 3, 5:30pm: First Communion Class

Saturday, April 5, 8:00am: Cooking for
9:00am: Men's Breakfast

Song Credits

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“Beneath the Soil,” ©Anna Strickland, 2024, commissioned by A Sanctified Art, LLC. Free for congregational use.

“All My Days,” by Stuart Townend. © 1998 Thankyou Music/Adm. Used by permission.

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” arr. Galbraith, © 2008 by Praise Charts. CCLI#973583

News Updates

Faith’s Little Flock

This month, we will follow the Lenten worship themes. Faith's Little Flock is for children ages 2-7. We also welcome Big Kid Helpers (ages 8 and up) to help the little ones with the more difficult parts of the crafts, and our older adults to read the scripture story to the children. Contact Melissa Street if you would like to take a turn reading the story to the children. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered so far! The children all return to the sanctuary for the communion blessing. Word-finds, crossword puzzles, and other activity sheets are available in the gathering area for the older children (and adults) to help reinforce the message of the day. We look forward to seeing all of the children in March!

Bible Study on the Gospel of Luke

Following worship, join Pastor Adam for a Bible study on Luke in the Justice Room. We will discuss the reading of the day, connect it to the gospel context, and reflect on its significance for us today.

Meal Signup for Bible Boot Camp and Faith Inkubators

We are looking for volunteers to provide meals when our children and youth meet on Sunday evenings. The meal is served from 5:30-6:00pm at the end of Bible Boot Camp and beginning of our youth night. Plates and utensils are available in the kitchen, and you are welcome to cook or heat the meal there as well. **If you can help, please sign up on the sheet located on the counter by the coat closet.** Thank You!

Bible Boot Camp

Last Fall, we introduced Bible Boot Camp, a new program for elementary-school-aged children. Pastor Adam warms them up with singing, dancing, and some retelling of Bible stories from recent worship services. Patty Nelson and Shelley McDaniel lead them in some creative play and crafts, and then we all join with parents and older youth for a meal. **Our next events will be held on Sundays, April 6 and 13, from 4:30-6:00.** Spread the word and bring a friend!

Faith Inkubators

Our Faith Inkubators youth nights incorporate all the learning of confirmation, but also some games and activities so that it is open for some upper-elementary-aged kids that are up for the challenge and our high school youth to still be involved. **Future events are scheduled for Sundays, April 6 and 13, from 5:30-7:30.**

Game Time!

Sunday, March 23, 3:00-5:00pm
Beyond Tabletop Game Lounge
70 E. Central Park Plaza, Jacksonville

Jr. High and High School youth groups and their sponsors are invited to a battle of board games! Snacks will be provided. RSVP to Libby West: lizz_e58@hotmail.com. Sponsored by the Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches.

Get to Know Our Youth

For Sunday mornings during Lent, we are looking for volunteers to meet with our youth after worship. You can choose from a variety of options, from following a list of questions to share your faith and get to know each other better, use a discussion guide to reflect on the scripture of the day, work together in the kitchen for a meal, do a service project together at church or someone's home, or more. Sign up by the Total Ministry Center and enjoy getting to know our youth.

Lenten Midweek Worship Schedule

Our schedule has changed for midweek worship services this year -- note that worship now begins at 7:00 p.m.

March 26, April 2, & April 9

Outreach Meal at 6:00 pm

Midweek Worship in the sanctuary at 7:00 pm

Midweek Worship: “Pray without Ceasing”

Our midweek worship services will focus on prayer and provide opportunities to pray without ceasing. We will worship in the sanctuary with a variety of music that invites us into prayer. There will be time for your own prayer and some reflections on the power of prayer in our lives. ¹⁶*Rejoice always,* ¹⁷*pray without ceasing,* ¹⁸*give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.* - 1 Thess. 5:16-18

Midweek Supper and Worship with new “Outreach Meals”

Our Lenten tradition continues with Wednesday night meals and worship, but with a significant change. The meals will no longer be pot-luck style but will be a provided meal

with a free-will offering. **Groups are invited to sign up for a Wednesday to provide the meal.** Faith will reimburse them \$200 in outreach funds to cover their cost. The group can select a charity to receive the funds, and all of the offering will go towards that ministry. Sign up your group and charity at the counter outside the Total Ministry Center. Join us for these wonderful outreach meals at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and all are invited to chip in and help with clean up in the kitchen. Worship will start at 7:00 to make time for all to be ready after the meal.

Lenten Devotional Books

Pick up your own devotional book to dig deeper into the weekly binaries that Jesus addresses in Luke's gospel. In addition to scripture, each week includes commentary, poetry, visual art, hymns, and journaling prompts. Pair this book with your Bible as they accompany you through the Lenten season to the empty tomb.

Daily Devotional Cards

Beginning with Ash Wednesday and continuing through the first few days of Eastertide, use these daily devotional cards with questions and prayers to deepen our spiritual walk through Lent. Day by day, may these prayers remind you that God is by your side, through your doubt, your faith, and everything in between.

Women of Faith

Women of Faith is on hiatus during the season of Lent. Make plans to join us again in May for a special Mother's Day event. More details coming soon!

Music and Choir Opportunities at Faith

At our recent listening session, we heard a desire for our choir to get back together. Our Music Director, Jean Welch, will be organizing a choir to sing on Easter and at our Living Last Supper worship, but there is one thing she needs... singers! If you would like to sing with us, contact Jean. We are also always looking for people to sing or play special music for a prelude or a stewardship offering. Please contact Jean if you are interested in sharing your musical gifts. jrwelch53@msn.com or 217-652-7009 (phone/text)

Fairly-Traded Coffee/Tea

Check out the coffee display from Equal Exchange. Simply select the product(s) you would like to purchase, and place the money in the container provided by the display (**\$6.50** regular; **\$7.50** decaf; **\$3.00** tea; **\$2.50** chocolate bars; **\$6.50** cashews). Checks should be made out to Faith Lutheran Church with "*coffee*" designated in the memo area.

**Baja Mobility Alliance – Club Collection Drive – Saturday, March 29, 9:00-1:00
Lincoln Avenue Baptist Church, 951 Lincoln Ave., Jacksonville**

What do donate:

Mobility Equipment: walkers, wheelchairs, crutches, braces, compression socks

Home Nursing Equipment: commodes, transfer boards, oxygen

Medical Equipment: oximeters, thermometers, blood pressure machines, diabetes test kits, first aid supplies

Diapers (adult and child), pads, gloves

Creating a unified collection and distribution system that provides essential personal medical equipment and home healthcare supplies to underserved areas in the Baja. Connecting donors in the United States with Rotarians hosting lending closets in Baja.

Contact us: 217-883-1155 (Cathy Jo); 916-832-8965 (Katherine)
Jacksonville Rotary Club District 6460

Contribution Envelopes for 2025 are available in the church office.

Sign-Up Sheets

are available at the podium in the gathering area. Please take a moment to sign up to be an Usher, Reader, Greeter, Communion Assistant, Coffee Host, Chancel Committee volunteer, and to Donate Altar Plants. **Thank You!** *We are Gifted to Serve!*