

Popular Parables of Jesus

*The Seeds
of Harvest
Sower*

Sunday, March 16



GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Prehude & Confession

*P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Most holy and merciful God,*

**C: we confess to you and to one another,
and before the whole company of heaven,
that we have sinned by our fault,
by our own fault,
by our own most grievous fault,
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

P: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength.

C: We diminish our respect and awe of You by not putting our relationship with you on the top of our priority list. We relegate You to being our god of convenience and comfort rather than Creator of the Cosmos, and, in this way, we limit the power you have in our lives. Have mercy on us, O God.

P: We let other voices speak to us of fulfillment, hope and peace.

C: We have been tempted to turn away from the truth you offer us. We have doubted your presence, your power and your promise. Have mercy on us, O God.

P: We have shut our ears to your call to love and serve others with the same compassionate love and service Christ offers us.

C: We have not been diligent in staying keenly aware of how we can be a source of comfort, hope and sustenance to those who suffer, or

are in despair, or deprived of what they need to live. We have found security in protecting and preserving our abundant blessings. Have mercy on us, O God.

P: We misuse and abuse the role you have given us in and over creation.

C: We exploit and squander the earth's resources without inconveniencing ourselves with consideration for the sustainability of life in the future. We assume the power of gods, but fail to seek the wisdom of God in the use of our power, focusing too much on our satisfaction in this moment rather than comprehending the full scope of our actions. We privilege our lives over the lives of other creatures without respect for the depth of the interconnectedness of all life. Have mercy on us, O God.

P: We do not always own our own problems, nor do we take enough responsibility for working to solve them.

C: We scapegoat, we make excuses, we get distracted. We do not bring them to you and open ourselves to the Spirit's guidance through unexpected voices and resources. We become discontented because we resign to empty contentment. We default to following the norm rather than clinging to the distinction of being a Child of God. Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

Affirmation of Forgiveness

329



1 As the sun with long-er jour-ney melts the win-ter's snow and ice,
2 Through the days of wait-ing, watch-ing, in the des-ert of our sin,
3 Praise be giv-en to the mak-er of the sea-sons' year-ly round:



with its slow-ly grow-ing ra-diance warms the seed be-neath the earth,
search-ing on the far ho-ri-zon for a sign of cloud or wind,
Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Spir-it—Source, Sus-tain-er, Lord of life,



may the sun of Christ's up-ri-sing gent-ly bring our hearts to life.
we a-wait the heal-ing wa-ters of our Sav-ior's vic-to-ry.
as the ev-er turn-ing a-ges roll to their e-ter-nal rest.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you

C: And also with you

P: Let us pray:

C: Almighty God, in his parables, your Son, our Savior, spoke the truth of your kingdom. Through the characters of his stories we are called to reflect on the faithfulness of our own character. Root us as deeply in the Good Soil of your Word, that we will bear a harvest of good works and gracious words in astounding abundance. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

First Lesson

Exodus 1

After many years of living in Egypt, Joseph (the one who was infamous for his many-colored or long-sleeved coat) died, and so did all his brothers, and every one of their generation. Yet, the Children of Israel, the descendants of Joseph's father, "bore fruit" - literally swarming across Egypt, and becoming exceedingly numerous - mighty in their numbers - until the land had filled up with them.

In time, a new king began to rule over Egypt. He did not know Joseph or remember the great deeds Joseph had done to keep Egypt from starving.

The new pharaoh said to his people, "Look, the Israelites are more numerous and more powerful than us. Come, let us use our wits against them or they will continue to multiply and swarm across our land! Then, in the event of a war, the Israelites may join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land."

Therefore, the Egyptians set taskmasters over the Israelites to oppress them with forced labor. The Israelites built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But even as Egypt afflicted Israel, still Israel continued to multiply and burst out across all of Egypt. The Egyptians felt dread before the children of Israel. So, Egypt made the Children of Israel subservient with crushing labor, making their lives bitter with hard service with mortar and bricks and with every kind of field labor. The work was arduous and crushing.

The king of Egypt also said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphray and the other Puah, "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she can live."

But the midwives feared God and they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them. Instead, they let the boys live.

So, the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this? Why have you allowed the boys to live?"

The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women! The Israelite women are vigorous and give birth before the midwife gets to them."

So, God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong.

L: The Word of the Lord! C: Thanks be to God!

Psalm

Psalm 65

*Praise is due to you,
O God, in Zion;
and to you will vows be performed,
O you who answer prayer!*

**To you all flesh shall come.
When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us,
you forgive our transgressions.**

*Happy are those whom you choose and bring near
to live in your courts.*

**We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,
your holy temple.**

*By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance,
O God of our salvation;
you are the hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the farthest seas.*

**By your strength you established the mountains;
you are girded with might.**

*You silence the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples.*

**Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your
signs; you make the gateways of the morning and the
evening shout for joy.**

*You visit the earth and water it,
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide the people with grain,
for so you have prepared it.*

**You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.**

*You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.*

**The pastures of the wilderness overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,
the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together for joy.**

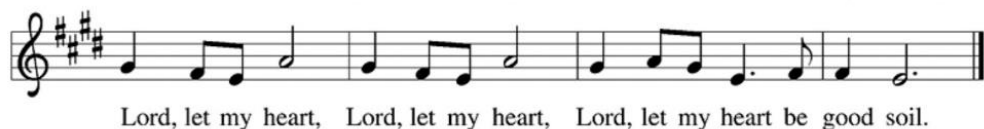
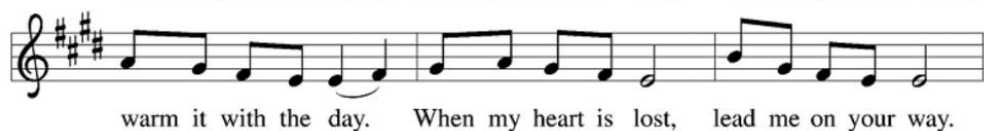
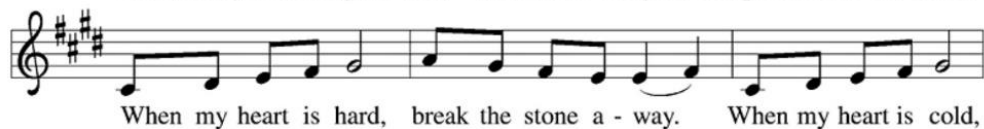
Second Lesson

Ephesians 3

I, Paul, pray, therefore, that none of you may not lose heart over the cross-tribulations I now suffer for you, for they are actually your glory! For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. And he, being powerful above all, make us exceedingly abundant beyond what we ask or understand according to the power that is energizing in us - to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus into all the generations, the age of the ages. Amen.

L: The Word of the Lord! C: Thanks be to God!

Verse



Gospel Acclamation

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the ninth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel

Luke 9

When a great crowd had gathered and people from town after town came to him, Jesus told them this parable.

"A sower went out to sow his seed and as he sowed, some seed fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some seed fell on the rocks and as it grew up, it withered from a lack of moisture. Some seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. Some seed fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold."

As he said this, he called out, "Let anyone with ears to hear, listen!"

Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant.

Jesus said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others I speak in parables so that *'looking they may not perceive and listening they may not understand.'* [Is 6:9-10]

"Now this is what the parable is about: The seed is the Word of God. The seeds that fall on the path are those who have heard God's Word, but then the devil comes and takes away the Word from their hearts so that they may not believe or be saved. The seeds that fall on the rocks are those who, when they hear the Word, receive it with joy, but because they have no root they believe only for a while and, then, in a time of testing, they fall away. As for the seeds that fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear God's Word, but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. But, as for the seeds that fall in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the Word hold it tightly with an honest and good heart and bear fruit with patient endurance.

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

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

1 Al - might - y God, your word is cast like seed in - to the ground;
 2 Let not the sly sa - tan - ic foe this ho - ly seed re - move,
 3 Let not the world's de - ceit - ful cares the ris - ing plant de - stroy,
 4 So when the pre - cious seed is sown, life - giv - ing grace be - stow,

now let the dew of heav'n de - scend and righ - teous fruits a - bound.
 but give it root in ev - 'ry heart to bring forth fruits of love.
 but let it yield a hun - dred - fold the fruits of peace and joy.
 that all whose souls the truth re - ceive its sav - ing pow'r may know.

Apostles Creed

P: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church, the faith in which we baptize. Do you renounce all the forces of evil, the devil, and all his empty promises?

C: We do with the help of God.

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

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

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**C: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived of 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 into hell.
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.**

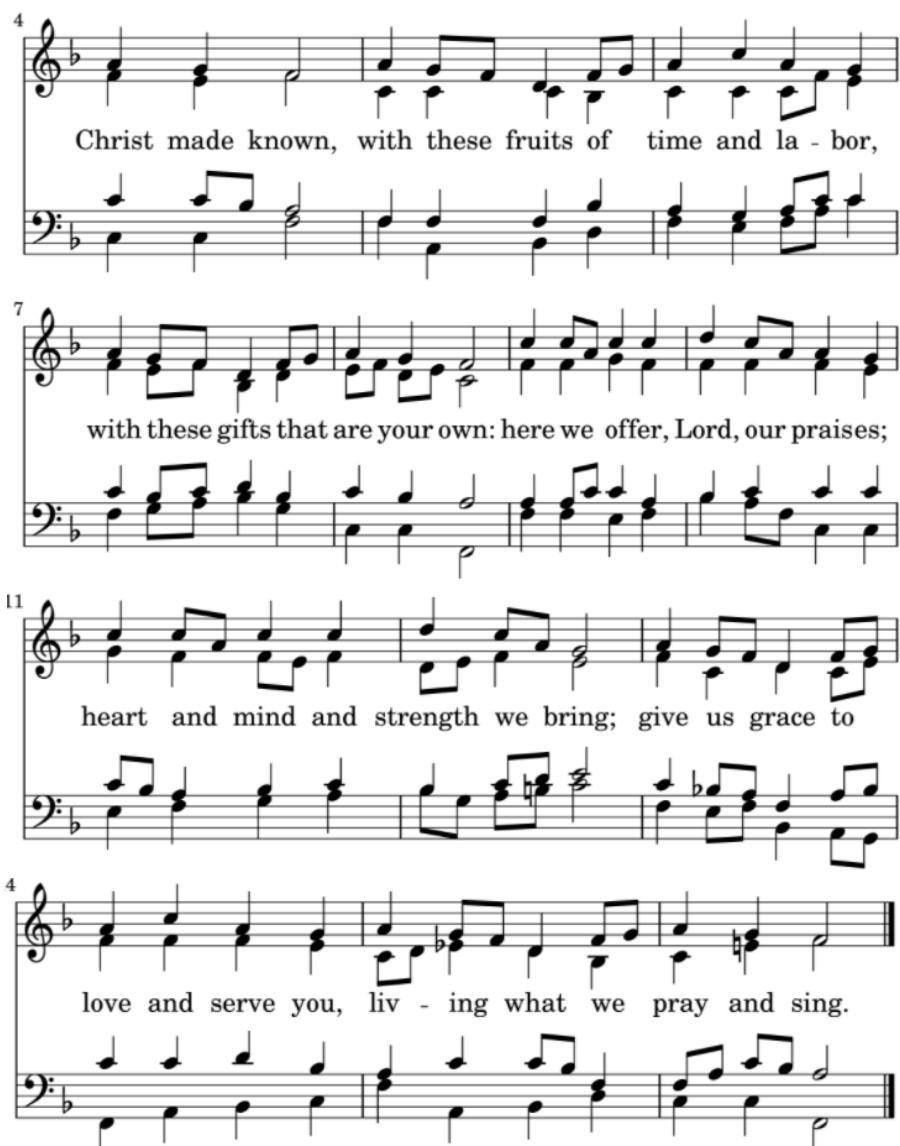
P: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**C: 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**

The Prayers of the Church & Passing of the Peace

Offertory

For the life that you have giv-en, for the love in



4
Christ made known, with these fruits of time and la - bor,

7
with these gifts that are your own: here we offer, Lord, our praises;

11
heart and mind and strength we bring; give us grace to

4
love and serve you, liv - ing what we pray and sing.

Offertory Prayer

A: Let us pray:

C: Accept, O Lord, these gifts that we bring in gratitude this day; offerings from the abundant blessings we have received. May they be pleasing in your sight, that you will continue to look kindly on us and our needs, and that they may serve the need of manifesting your Kingdom in this age. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

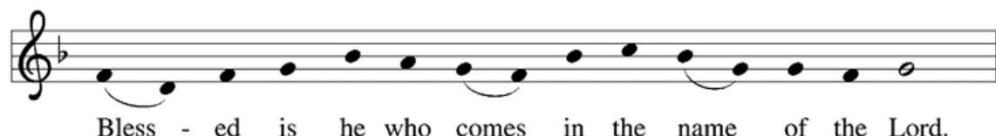
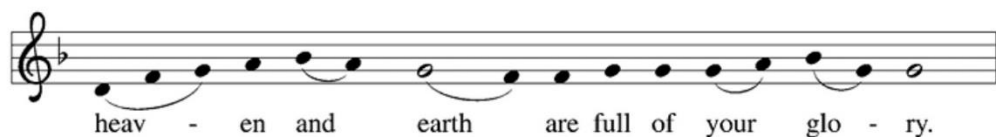
Great Thanksgiving

S 161



P: It is right . . .

S 162



P: Holy God, we give you thanks and praise, for even in the midst of our turning away from you, you call to us . . .

The Lord's Prayer

S 163

Our Fa-ther in heav-en, hal-lowed be your name,
your king-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav-en.
Give us to-day our dai-ly bread. For-give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a-against us. Save us from the time of tri-al
and de-liv-er us from e-vil. For the king-dom, the pow'r,
and the glo-ry are yours, now and for-ev-er. A-men.

Distribution Hymns

515, 520, 522

S 164

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. A - men.

1 Break now the bread of life, dear Lord, to me, as once you
 2 Bless your own word of truth, dear Lord, to me, as when you
 3 You are the bread of life, dear Lord, to me, your ho - ly

broke the loaves be - side the sea. Be - yond the sa - cred page
 blessed the bread by Gal - i - lee. Then shall all bond-age cease,
 word the truth that res - cues me. Give me to eat and live

I seek you, Lord; my spir - it waits for you, O liv - ing Word.
 all fet - ters fall; and I shall find my peace, my All - in - All!
 with you a - bove; teach me to love your truth, for you are love.

1 Dear - est Je - sus, at your word we have come a -
 2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est
 3 Ra - diance of God's glo - ry bright, Light of Light from
 4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, praise to you and

gain to hear you; let our thoughts and hearts be stirred
 dark - ness shroud - ed till your Spir - it breaks the night,
 God pro - ceed - ing, Je - sus, send your bless - ed light;
 ad - o - ra - tion! Grant us what we need the most:

and in glow - ing faith be near you as the prom - is -
 fill - ing us with light un - cloud - ed. All good thoughts and
 help our hear - ing, speak - ing, heed - ing, that our prayers and
 all your gos - pel's con - so - la - tion while we here on

es here giv - en draw us whol - ly up to heav - en.
 all good liv - ing come but by your gra - cious giv - ing.
 songs may please you, as with grate - ful hearts we praise you.
 earth a - wait you, till in heav'n with praise we greet you.

1 As we gath-er at your ta-ble, as we lis-ten to your word,
2 Turn our wor-ship in-to wit-ness in the sac-ra-ment of life;
3 Gra-cious Spir-it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast

help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
where tri-um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.

Nour-ish us with sa-cred sto-ry till we claim it as our own;
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for-give as you for-gave;
There no more will en-vy blind us nor will pride our peace de-stroy,

teach us through this ho-ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic-t'ry known.
may we still be-hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
as we join with saints and an-gels to re-peat the sound-ing joy.

Post Communion Blessing & Prayer Benediction & Recessional

1. You are the seed that will grow a new sprout; you're a
You are the dawn that will bring a new day; you're the

star that will shine in the night; you are the yeast and a
wheat that will bear gold-en grain; you are a sting and a

small grain of salt, a bea-con to glow in the dark.
soft, gen-tle touch, my wit-ness - es wher - e'er you go.

Refrain

Go, my friends, go to the world, pro - claim - ing
Be, my friends, a loy - al wit - ness, from the

love to all, mes - sen - gers of my for - giv - ing peace,
 dead I a - rose; "Lo, I'll be with you for - ev - er,
 e - ter - nal love. till the end of the world."

2. You are the flame that will lighten the dark, sending sparkles of hope, faith, and love; you are the shepherds to lead the whole world through valleys and pastures of peace. You are the friends that I chose for myself, the word that I want to proclaim. You are the new kingdom built on a rock where justice and truth always reign. Refrain

3. You are the life that will nurture the plant; you're the waves in a turbulent sea; yesterday's yeast is beginning to rise, a new loaf of bread it will yield. There is no place for a city to hide, nor a mountain can cover its might; may your good deeds show a world in despair a path that will lead all to God. Refrain

Dismissal

Great Prayers of the Bible
 GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
 March 9th - April 6th 7:30 p.m.

Lenten Wednesday Evening Prayer.
 Bring your own dinner at 6:00 p.m.
 Worship at 7:00 p.m.
 in-person or on-line

Lenten Wednesdays