

**Third Sunday in Lent
March 3, 2024**

Gathering
God invites us to enter His presence

Prelude


Welcome & Announcements

Preparation for Worship (*Time for Silent Preparation*)

 **Call to Worship** (*Responsively*)

Celia Weber

Sing a new song to the Lord, who has worked wonders,
whose right hand and holy arm have brought salvation.
**The Lord has made known salvation; has shown justice
to the nations; has remembered truth and love for the
house of Israel.**
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord, all the earth, sing out your joy.
Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music.
**With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King,
the Lord.**
—based on Psalm 98:1-6

 **Invocation** (*Responsively*)

Celia Weber

In the midst of the congregation I will praise you.
Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous,
and give thanks to God's holy name!
**I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.**
**Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;
God's greatness is unsearchable.**
—from Psalm 22:22; 97:12; 145:1, 3, NRSV

 **Hymn 76**

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Confessing
God invites us to be honest with Him

Call to Confession

Celia Weber

When we gather to praise God, we remember that we are people
who have preferred our wills to his. Accepting his power to become
new persons in Christ, let us confess our sin before God and one
another.

Prayer of Confession (*Responsively*)

Celia Weber

Lord, you showed us true humility by becoming one of us,
yet too often we practice pride.
You cried alongside your friends and for the city of Jerusalem,
yet too often we rush past the pain of others and are careless about our cities.
You loved those who were weak, despised, or cast out,
yet too often we love those who are strong, respected, or popular.
You freely forgave and healed,
yet too often we hold grudges and cause pain.
You lived a perfectly holy life,
yet too often we do not yearn for righteousness.
You prayed that we who believe in you should be united with each other and you,
yet too often we focus on the differences that separate us from other believers.
You were mocked, whipped, and even killed for us,
yet too often we deny you.
You call us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world,
yet too often we blend into or hide from our culture.
Forgive us, Lord, so that we will shine with your glory. Amen.

Time for Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Celia Weber

I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me,
and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me.
—Jeremiah 33:8, NRSV

Leader: This is the Promise of the Lord
All: Thanks be to God!

 **Gloria Patri**

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
And to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be, world without end.
A-men, A-men.*

Offering

Thankful of the gifts God has given us, we offer ourselves to Him

Invitation Let us give thanks to the Lord with all our being.
In the company of the upright, let us honor God for
the blessings and goodness we have received.
—based on Psalm 111:1

Offering

Offertory

*Oh, Lord, Is It I?
Dan Baker*

Anderson

! Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. A-men.

! Prayer of Dedication

Gracious God, we give our best, lest in gaining the world we lose life itself. As a covenant people, we seek to witness to your will and way. Help us to know more clearly what you would have us do with the wealth entrusted to our care. As we contribute to the needs of your people, we present ourselves as living sacrifices. Through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

! Praise Song

He Will Hold Me Fast

Verse 1

*When I fear my faith will fail,
Christ will hold me fast.
When the tempter would prevail,
He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold
Through life's fearful path;
For my love is often cold
He must hold me fast.*

Chorus

*He will hold me fast,
He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so,
He will hold me fast.*

Verse 2

*Those He saves are His delight,
Christ will hold me fast;
Precious in His holy sight,
He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost;
His Promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost,
He will hold me fast.*

Chorus

Verse 3

*For my life He bled and died,
Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied;
He will hold me fast.
Raised with Him to endless life,
He will hold me fast
'Till our faith is turned to sight,
When He comes at last!*

Chorus (2 x)

Proclaiming
God speaks to us through His Word

Scripture Reading

Luke 15:11-32

¹¹ He also said, "A man had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate I have coming to me.' So he distributed the assets to them. ¹³ Not many days later, the younger son gathered together all he had and traveled to a distant country, where he squandered his estate in foolish living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he had nothing. ¹⁵ Then he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to eat his fill from the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one would give him anything. ¹⁷ When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food, and here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I'll get up, go to my father, and say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. ¹⁹ I'm no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired workers.'" ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father. But while the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. ²¹ The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. I'm no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²² "But the father told his servants, 'Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Then bring the fattened calf and slaughter it, and let's celebrate with a feast, ²⁴ because this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field; as he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he summoned one of the servants, questioning what these things meant. ²⁷ 'Your brother is here,' he told him, 'and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.

²⁸ "Then he became angry and didn't want to go in. So his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he replied to his father, 'Look, I have been slaving many years for you, and I have never disobeyed your orders, yet you never gave me a goat so that I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.'

³¹ "'Son, he said to him, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

Sermon

"The Prodigal God"
Rev. Dr. Dennis Leshner

 **Hymn 3**

Praise, My Soul the King of Heaven

Sacrament of Communion

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God!

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise!

Invitation to the Table

Leader: For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you
proclaim the Lord's death until He comes Again!

**People: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come
again!**

Responding

We respond to God's Word

Profession of Faith *(Apostle's Creed)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and buried;
The third day he rose from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.

Commissioning

God sends us out into the world as His witnesses

Praise Song *Behold the Lamb*

*Behold the Lamb who bears our sins away, slain for us
And we remember
The promise made that all who come in faith
find forgiveness at the cross.
So we share in this bread of life,
and we drink of His sacrifice
as a sign of our bonds of peace
around the table of the King.*

*The body of our Savior Jesus Christ, torn for you
Eat and remember
The wounds that heal, the death that brings us life
paid the price to make us one.
So we share in the bread of life,
and we drink of His sacrifice
as a sign of our bonds of love
around the table of the King.*

*The blood that cleanses ev'ry stain of sin, shed for you
Drink and remember
He drained death's cup that all may enter in
to receive the life of God.
So share in the of bread of life,
and we drink of His sacrifice
as a sign of our bonds of grace
around the table of the King.*

*And so with thankfulness and faith we rise to respond
And to remember
Our call to follow in the steps of Christ as His body here on earth.
As we share in His suffering,
we proclaim Christ will come again!
And we'll join in the feast of heav'n
around the table of the King.*

 **Benediction & Blessing**

 **Postlude**