

**Week three**



*Mid-Week  
Lenten  
Worship*



"Incline your ear and come to me;  
listen, so that you may live..."

Isaiah 55:3a



**Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church**  
**Mid-Week Lenten Worship**  
**Based on Traditional Mid Day Prayer (Sext)**  
**March 26, 2025—Rev. Matt Musteric**

**GREETING**

AM: O God, come to our aid. O Lord, make haste to help us.

**C: Amen**

**GATHERING HYMN** In the Cross of Christ I Glory #324  
4 verses

**GATHERING WORDS**

AM: It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

**C: to sing praise to your name, O Most High;**

AM: to herald your love in the morning,

**C: your truth at the close of the day.**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

AM: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*The assembly keeps silence for self-examination.*

AM: Holy and gracious God,

**C: I confess that I have sinned against you this day.**

**Some of my sin I know—**

**the thoughts and words and deeds**

**of which I am ashamed—**

**but some is known only to you.**

**In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness.**

**Deliver and restore me,**

**that I may rest in peace.**

AM: By the mercy of God  
we are united with Jesus Christ,  
in whom we are forgiven.

We rest now in the peace of Christ  
and rise in the morning to serve.

**A RESPONSE OF THANKSGIVING - Psalm 130**

AM: Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.

**C: Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!**

AM: If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?

**C: But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.**

AM: I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.

**C: O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem.**

AM: It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

**TODAY'S READING** 1 Samuel 3:1-10

**REFLECTION ON THE READING** - *Listening to Scripture*

**HYMN**

Here I Am, Lord

# 574

3 verses

**PRAYERS (responsive)**

AM: Lord in your mercy

**C: Hear our prayer**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

AM: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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**

**BLESSING** (ELW p. 327)

AM: Let us bless the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**

AM: Almighty and merciful God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep us, this day and forevermore.

**C: Amen.**

*Please join us for a time of food and fellowship in the church basement immediately following this service*

## WORSHIPPING AT NOON

Worshipping in the middle of the day is not unusual. In fact, it is a very ancient tradition that is part of a daily worship structure known as “The Order of the Hours.” Unlike the creation stories of Genesis where the day began at evening, the beginning of the day in the early Church was understood to be sunrise, or more specifically, 6 am. Beginning at that hour, and every three hours after, it was deemed appropriate to pray. We are, after all, called upon to pray “without ceasing” and having set hours of prayer assists in making this a reality. Within religious communities, this evolved into distinct worship services held every 3 hours: Lauds (dawn), Prime (6 am), Terce (9 am), Sext (Noon), None (3 pm), Vespers (6 pm), Compline (9 pm), and Matins (midnight). (Matins in the 21st century is generally moved to morning.) You will find only Matins, Vespers, and Compline in Lutheran hymnals.

Mid-day prayer, called “Sext” for the word Latin word for “six”, refers to the sixth hour of the day or Noon. The custom of private prayer at the sixth hour was well established by the 3rd century and by the 4<sup>th</sup> century it was a not only a part of daily worship but also a purposeful pause for the community in the midst of the day’s work. (A fun fact---the word “siesta” comes from the word sext. It reflects the afternoon rest taken by the monks after noon worship and before worship at 3 pm. This makes up for the sleep lost by waking at midnight to pray.)

The symbolism of this hour was mentioned often in the early writings of Church leaders in the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> century: [Noon](#) is the hour when the sun is at its zenith and light at its fullest which is an image of Divine splendor and the fullness of [God](#). In Genesis 18, the sixth hour (the heat of the day) was when [Abraham](#) received the three [angels](#) with their promise of a son. Perhaps most importantly, noon was the hour when the Son of God was nailed to the Cross (John 19:14); the scene from Good Friday is therefore the background for Sext. That makes this a service of humility and confession in the death and resurrection of Christ. The tenor of this worship service is contemplative and, as with the other six liturgical “hours” of prayer, it focuses on the Psalms, hymnody, and readings.



*The Northwestern Ohio Synod is observing 2025 as the  
“Year of LISTENING.”*

*As we quiet our hearts and minds in the middle of the day, it is a good time to listen to God. Use the weekly scripture passage as a starting point. Mark it in your personal Bible and read it aloud in the middle of each day. Listen closely. What stands out to you? How might God be speaking into the circumstances of your life? Read Psalm 130 as your morning devotion. How is God giving you direction for the day to come?*

*Can you hear the Good News of God’s redemptive plan?*

*Stop at the end of each day and examine whether you have heard God’s word in the actions of a friend or family member.*