



**4<sup>th</sup>**  
**Sunday**   
*in* **Lent**

*Welcome to St. John Lutheran Church  
Saturday, March 18, 2023*

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 18, 2023

**PRELUDE**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GATHERING SONG**

*He Has Made Me Glad*

I will enter His gates  
with Thanksgiving in my heart,  
I will enter His courts with praise!  
I will say this is the day...  
that the Lord has made,  
I will rejoice for he has made me glad.

**Refrain:** He has made me glad! He has made me glad!  
I will rejoice for He has made me glad...  
He has made me glad! He has made me glad!  
I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

I will enter His gates  
with Thanksgiving in my heart,  
I will enter His courts with praise!  
I will say this is the day...  
that the Lord has made,  
I will rejoice for he has made me glad. **Refrain 2x**

**WE CONFESS OUR LACK OF FAITH**

P: God,

**C: we confess our lack of faith. We see a glimpse of what we ought to be and we know we fall short of the goal. We desire faith which is solid and unchanging, yet we crumble under the trials and temptations of life. We want to be strong, but we know our own weaknesses. Our sinful condition strips us of any spiritual gain we humanly devise. God, forgive us. Accept us as we are, unworthy for the task, yet gifted for your purposes. Give us your gift of faith.**

## **WE HEAR THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S GIFT OF FAITH**

P: Our God is a great God and knows what we need in every area of our life. God knows our weaknesses and our unbelieving hearts. God loves us enough to die on a cross and provide forgiveness for our sin. Today the focus is not on the faith we can muster, but on the great gifts our God gives. God has given us the gift of faith, faith for the moment, faith for every trial, faith for every temptation, faith for every difficult situation. Praise God for this inexpressible gift of faith.

**C: Amen**

### **FIRST READING**

#### **Samuel 16:1-13**

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

### **SECOND READING**

#### **Ephesians 5:8-14**

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful

works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

## **GOSPEL**

## **John 9:1-41**

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to be-

come his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

## **SERMON**

*Pastor Shawn O'Brien*

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, 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, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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**

P: Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

P: God of good gifts,

**C: receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.**

## OFFERING SONG

*Amazing Grace*

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
and grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed!

## HOLY COMMUNION

P: As we journey through these forty days, we come to find rest for our hearts and contentment for our minds.

**C: We are caught up in the activity of our life and need to pause and receive God's sustaining gift of grace.**

P: In this holy time of worship, we come to receive the forgiving grace of God in the bread and the wine.

**C: We praise you, God, for your heavenly food given in love for us.**

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.

**C: In this meal we discover a God who sent his only Son, so that all may receive life. In the body broken and the blood poured out, we experience the mercy of a dying Savior who prayed for our forgiveness. In the eating and drinking we are united with the risen Savior who greets us with the promise of peace.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**ALL: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen**

## THE DISTRIBUTION

*Welcome!*

*St. John practices "open communion". All who are baptized and instructed are welcome to share the Lord's Supper with us today. Starting with the right side of the church, followed by the left when they are finished, the pastor will distribute the bread and the communion assistant will serve the wine. We will also have pre-sealed elements available for those who would prefer the more hygienic option (or those who wish to receive grape juice instead of wine). Indicate to the pastor that you would like pre-sealed elements and skip the wine server. Those who wish to receive a blessing should indicate their wishes to the pastor by crossing their arms over their chest.*

## BLESSING

P: God, the giver of love, Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

**C: Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

*Step By Step*

O God, you are my God,  
And I will ever praise you.  
O God, you are my God,  
And I will ever praise you.  
I will seek you in the morning,  
And I will learn to walk in your ways.  
And step by step you'll lead me,  
And I will follow you all of my days. **Repeat**

And I will follow you all of my days,  
And I will follow you all of my days,  
And step by step you'll lead me,  
And I will follow you all of my days.

## DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Serve in love.

**C: Thanks be to God.**





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***We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church.  
We are... "creating and nurturing life changing relationships  
based on the love of God in Jesus Christ,  
so that we may grow in faith, serve God,  
and serve our neighbor."***

Contemporary Worship: Saturday 5:00 pm  
Sunday School for all ages 8:30 am  
Traditional Worship: Sunday 9:45 am

[stjohnwilliston.org](http://stjohnwilliston.org)



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