



*Drawing by Jon Hlafter*

## The Lutheran Church of the Messiah

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Martin K. Erhardt, *Pastor*

Janice Hofreiter, *Organist*

Paul C. Hofreiter, *Choir Director*

John Mark Goerss, D. Min., *Pastor Emeritus*

Third Sunday in Lent (Oculi)

March 23, 2025

**Prayer upon entering:** Eternal Lord, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your Word and obey it, and make us instruments of your redeeming love; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

**Guests, welcome!** We are delighted you are with us for worship this morning. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Erhardt, sign our guest book next to the main doors. Bibles are available on a shelf in the back of the nave. Kneelers and large-print bulletins are available from the ushers upon request. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to join us here at Messiah.

**Worship** begins with the prelude and continues through the postlude. Once the prelude begins, please refrain from conversation. We use two hymnals: the green *Lutheran Book of Worship* (LBW) and the blue paperback *With One Voice* (wov). Hymn numbers below 600 are generally in LBW; above 600, in wov. The pastor's parts (spoken and sung) are designated "P:." Parts spoken or sung by the congregation are italicized, prefaced by "C:." The liturgy text and music are in the LBW on the pages noted in this service folder.

**Holy Communion:** Lutheran Christians celebrate a divine service of Word and sacrament in which God comes to us both in his proclaimed Word and in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We invite to commune at the Lord's table all baptized Christians who with contrite hearts trust God's word of forgiveness for their sins, acknowledge the presence of Jesus Christ both in the Communion elements and in this gathered body of believers, and seek, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to follow Jesus and walk in newness of life. If this doesn't describe you, we invite you to come to the altar rail to receive a blessing instead of the Communion elements. Indicate this by folding your arms across your chest at the rail. All are invited to bring their children forward for a blessing.

Individual cups are available in addition to the chalice (the common cup). Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are also available upon request from the server at the Communion rail. All are invited to bring their children forward for a blessing.

**Families with young children:** Welcome! We have children's activity backpacks in the back of the church for use during the service, as well as an unstaffed nursery on the stage downstairs. Feel free to ask an usher for help locating them. The stairs are at the back of the sanctuary.

*Prelude*

O Bread of Life from Heaven

Heinrich Isaac  
arr. Raymond Haan

## *Confession and Forgiveness*

*Please stand as you are able.*

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *Amen*

P: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: *who made heaven and earth.*

P: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C: *and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.*

*Please kneel or sit for silent reflection and confession.*

P: Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: *Most merciful God, who has given Your only begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen*

P: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore we implore him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, that the rest of our life may be pure and holy, and that at the last we may come to his eternal glory. Resting in Christ's righteousness and not on your own confession, receive God's free and full forgiveness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

*Please stand as you are able.*

## *Divine Service of Word and Sacrament*

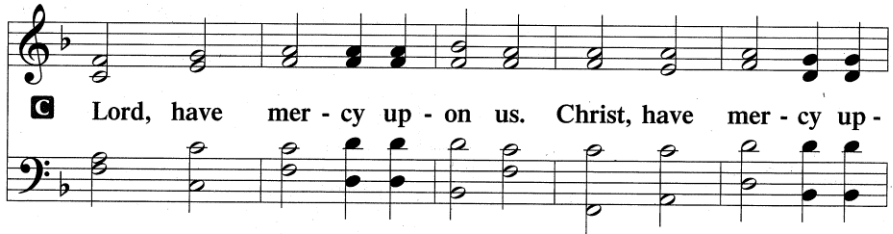
*Opening Hymn*    Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart    LBW 486

### *Apostolic Greeting*

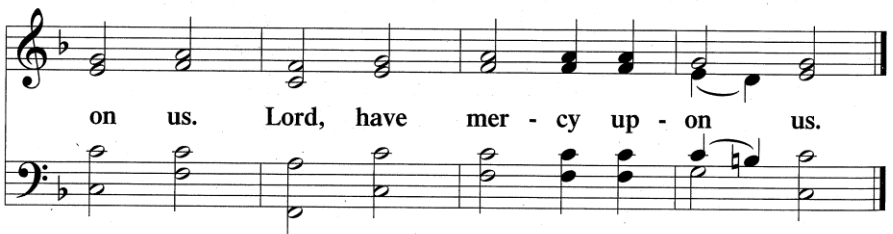
P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: *And also with you.*

### *Kyrie*



Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And also with you.*

### *Prayer of the Day*

P: Let us pray.

C: *Good and gracious God, throughout the ages you have claimed and reclaimed your people. Renew for us your call to repentance, surround us with witnesses to aid us in our journey, and help us daily to fashion our lives anew, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen*

Please be seated for the scripture readings, printed on the last two pages of this service folder.

### *First Lesson*

*Isaiah 55:1-9*

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

### *Choir Anthem*

O God, You Are My God

Tom Fettke  
based on Psalm 63

O God, You are my God;

Earnestly I seek You.

I have seen You in the sanctuary

And have witnessed Your power and Your glory.

O God, You are my God,

And my lips will praise Your holy name.

When I lay down to sleep, I remember,

I think of you through the watches of the night.

Because You are my help when in trouble;

In the shadow of Your wings I sing Your praise.

*(continued on the next page)*

Lord have mercy; Christ have mercy,  
Lord have mercy.

O God, You are my God;  
Earnestly I seek You.  
I have seen You in the sanctuary  
And have witnessed Your power and Your glory.  
O God, You are my God,  
And my lips will praise Your holy name.

### *Second Lesson*

*1 Corinthians 10:1-13*

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

*C: Thanks be to God.*

*Verse (Joel 2:13)* (please stand):

*p. 63*

*C: Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger,  
and abounding in steadfast love, and abounding in steadfast love.*

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter.

*C: Glory to you, O Lord.*

### *Gospel Lesson*

*Luke 13:1-9*

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

*C: Praise to you, O Christ.*

### *Children's Sermon*

*Sermon*

Come to the Waters

*Hymn of the Day*

Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer

LBW 343

*Creed (Apostles')      Spoken in unison*

*C: 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 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.*

*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 People*

P: Led by Christ in our journey of repentance and moved by his compassion, let us pray for the church of Christ throughout the world and for those known to us in need of prayer.

After each prayer or petition,

P: Create in us a clean heart, O God,

C: *and renew a right spirit within us.*

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: *Amen*

## *The Sharing of the Peace*

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

C: *And also with you.*

Please exchange a greeting of peace with your neighbors, then be seated.

## *Gathering of Offerings*

*As the offering is brought forward, please stand and sing vv. 10–12 of Psalm 51, a psalm of penitence (next page):*



**C** Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
 new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -

way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it

from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -


tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir-it. A - men.

P: Let us pray.

Blessed are you,

C: *O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*


## The Great Thanksgiving



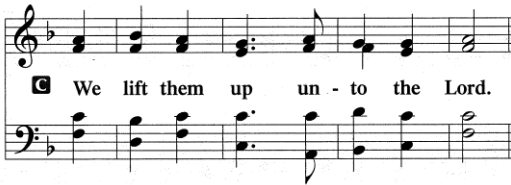
**P** The Lord be with you.



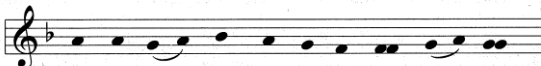
**C** And with thy spir - it.



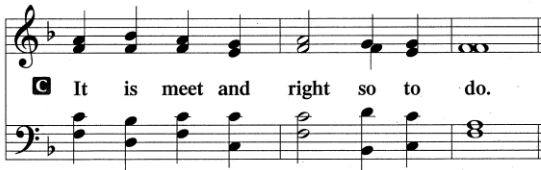
**P** Lift up your hearts.



**C** We lift them up un - to the Lord.



**P** Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.



**C** It is meet and right so to do.

*Meet* means fitting, proper.

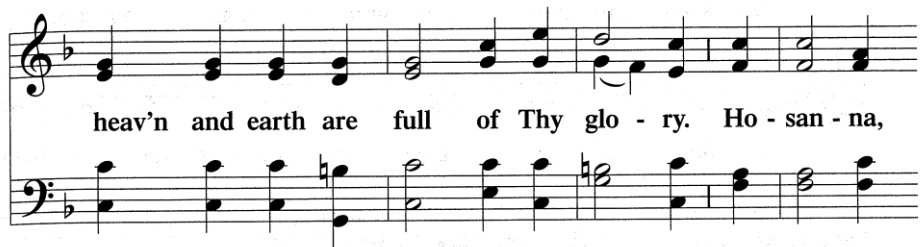
P: It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God: Who on the tree of the cross didst give salvation unto mankind that, whence death arose, thence Life also might rise again; and that he who by a tree once overcame might likewise by a tree be overcome, through Christ, our Lord; through whom with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Thy glorious name, evermore praising Thee and saying:

(turn page)

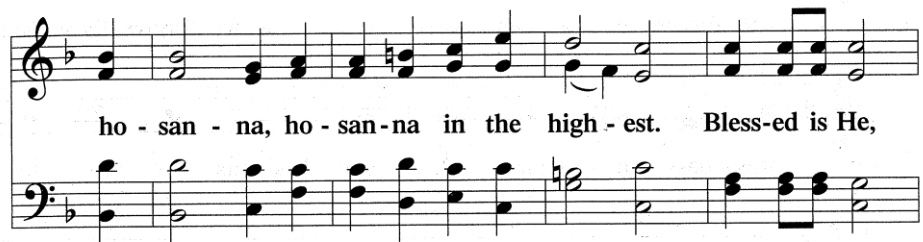
# Sanctus



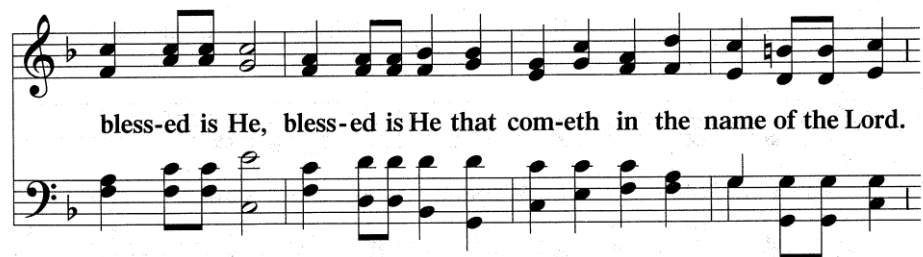
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



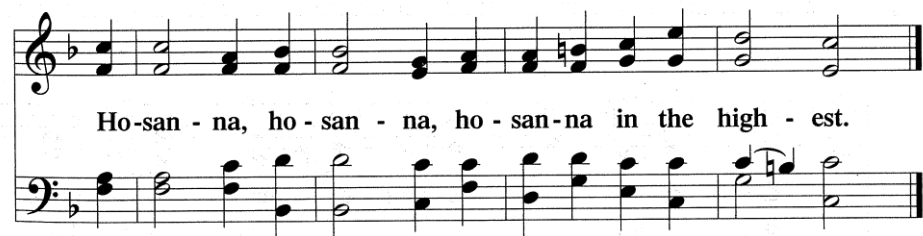
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

*Sabaoth* (SAH-bay-oath) is Hebrew for "heavenly hosts."  
*Hosanna* is a Hebrew word of praise meaning "save us now."

## *The Words of Institution*

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.”

In the same way also he took the cup after supper, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you and for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

## *The Lord's Prayer*

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

*C: 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*

*Agnus Dei: Lamb of God*

♩ O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the

The first system of music consists of a vocal line in G major (one flat) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a quarter note G, followed by a half note chord of G-B, and continues with a series of chords and intervals. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

world, have mer - cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that

The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics 'world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic textures.

tak - est a-way the sin of the world, have mer - cy up - on us.

The third system continues the vocal line with the lyrics 'tak - est a-way the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic textures.

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the

The fourth system continues the vocal line with the lyrics 'O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak - est a-way the sin of the'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic textures.

world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

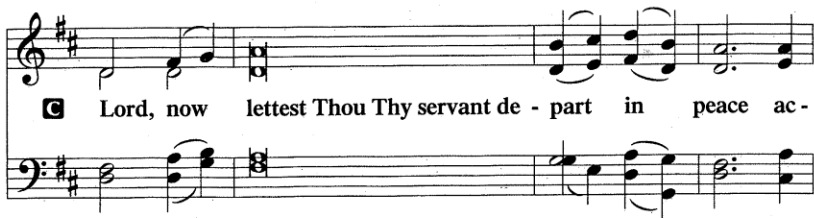
The fifth system concludes the vocal line with the lyrics 'world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.'. The piano accompaniment concludes with a final chord and a fermata over the final notes.

Once the pastor says, “Welcome to the table of the Lord,” kneel or sit. Because Communion is important, please read and follow our Communion policy, printed on p. 2 of this service folder. If you are not communing, you are invited to come forward to receive a blessing, but feel no pressure to do so. If you do come forward for a blessing (only), indicate this by folding your arms across your chest when you kneel at the altar rail. When the pastor dismisses you, please return to your seat by the center aisle. If you would like Communion brought to your seat, please raise your hand to alert the pastor.


*Communion Hymn*      O Bread of Life from Heaven      LBW 222

*After all have returned to their places, the pastor says: (please stand)*

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



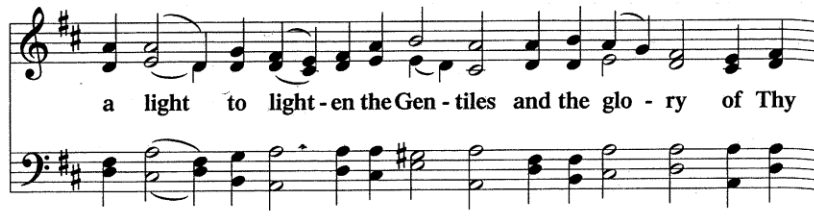
Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -



cord-ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,



which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,



a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy



peo - ple Is - ra - el.



## *Post-Communion Prayer*

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: *Amen*

## *Closing*

P: The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

C: *He does not faint or grow weary; His understanding is unsearchable.*

P: He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength.

C: *Even youths shall faint and be weary, and the young shall fall exhausted;*

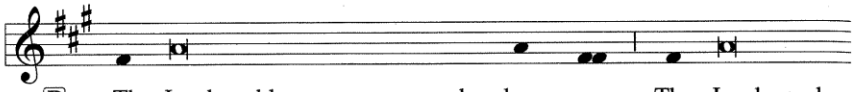
P: But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;

C: *They shall mount up with wings like eagles;*

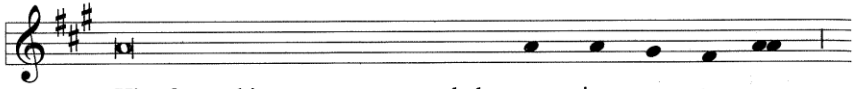
P: They shall run and not be weary;

C: *They shall walk and not faint.*

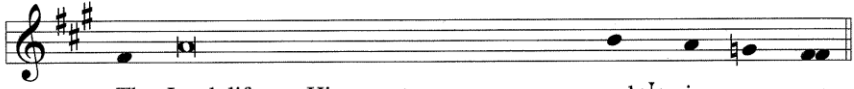
## Benediction



**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.

**C** A - men, a - men, a - men.

*Postlude* Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer arr. Timothy Albrecht,  
quoting Mozart's *La Clemens di Tito*

## Announcements

P: Go in peace, for God walks with us through the wilderness.

All: *Thanks be to God!*

### **Curious about the Latin on the dateline on the first page of the service**

**folder?** Latin was the primary liturgical language of Western Christianity until quite recently, and is still used today. Lutherans and other Christians in the Western tradition often begin Sunday worship services with an "introit" (entrance) Bible verse, usually from a psalm. Sundays were named for the first word of the introit. Today's word is "Oculi", which begins Psalm 25:15 ("Oculi [mei]...") and means "[My] eyes..."

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This coming week

Wed	6:00 PM	Soup & Salad Supper
Wed	7:00 PM	Lenten Evening Prayer (LBW p. 142)
Wed	7:45 PM	Choir
Thu	6:30 PM	Lutheran Campus Ministry Table Talk (see p. 21)
Sat	10:30 AM	Women's Fellowship
Sun	9:00 AM	Adult Forum
Sun	10:30 AM	Service of Word and Sacrament

Thank you to today's Temple Servants

Acolyte	Charles Loughery
Reader	Charles Loughery
Ushers	Jeff Frole and Stephen Stys
Fellowship Host	Nancy Amidon
Chancel	Laura Bennett
Offering Counter	Jeff Frole
Livestream	Mark von Bargaen

## Next Sunday

Joshua 5:9-12 • Psalm 32 • 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 • Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Opening Hymn: We Plow the Fields and Scatter (LBW 362)

Hymn of the Day: Our Father We Have Wandered (WOV 733)

Communion Hymn: Wide Open Are Your Hands (LBW 489)

## **Lenten Wednesdays at Messiah, Mar. 12 – Apr. 9 (not Mar. 5 or Apr. 16)**

6:00 PM Soup & Salad Supper

7:00 PM Lenten Evening Prayer (LBW p. 142)

Theme: *Navigating Troubled Waters*

7:45 PM Choir rehearsal (join us for the season or longer!)

**Thank you to those who have generously volunteered to host Lenten soup & salad suppers!** If you will need to enter the church building before 5 PM on a supper Wednesday and don't have a key, please contact Pastor.

### **Supper Hosts**

March 12: Laura Bennett, Elizabeth, and Julia

March 19: Pat Hlafter & Carolyn Gishlick

March 26: Debbie Baer

April 2: Louise Cooper and Miranda Hempel

April 9: Marion Zukas and Miranda Hempel

**Adult Forum** meets at 9am on Sundays in the parish building library.

Current Series (March 9 – April 13): *Navigating Troubled Waters in the Bible, Hymns, & Our Lives*

**Lutheran Campus Ministry Table Talk: Thursday, March 27, at 6:30pm**

*The Nicene Creed at 1700*, led by Pastor Erhardt. During the academic year, Lutheran Campus Ministry sponsors monthly Table Talks (dinner discussions). Table Talks are held at 6:30 – 8:00 PM in 210 Murray-Dodge Hall, Princeton University. After 4:00 PM on weekdays, free parking is available in the university lot on William St., between Washington Rd. and Charlton St. All are welcome! Please join us and invite friends. If you plan to attend, please inform Pastor Erhardt by noon on Thursday so we have enough food for you.

**Window replacement is underway!** Nelson Glass expects to complete work on the sanctuary windows eventually. No changes to our worship schedule or location are planned. If you have questions about the project, contact Paul Majsztrik.

**Save the Date:** Our May voters meeting will be after worship on Sun., May 4.

**Available on the back pew:**

- (1) March/April 2025 edition of the *Messiah Messenger*
- (2) Portals of Prayer devotion booklets for April-June 2025
- (3) February-May 2025 Temple Servant schedule

## **Prayer Corner**

We remember in our prayers:

- The Stohs family (mourning the death of Pastor Erhardt's great-uncle, Eugene Stohs), the family of Bernice Singh (friend of Carolyn Gishlick, mourning the death of her granddaughter), family and friends mourning the death of Carole Bleicher (friend of Carolyn Gishlick), Micha Livne (friend of the Gishlicks who is ill), Julia Majsztzik (with thanksgiving for healing from heart surgery and praying for continued good health), Ted Alslev (son of Elda Alslev, to overcome his addiction to smoking), Mary Pickens (friend of Jon and Pat Hlafter, undergoing an experimental medical treatment), Sue Parisi (friend of Pat Hlafter, being treated for breast cancer), Peter Schulze (son of Lydia and Carl Schulze, friends of Miranda Hempel, Brad Bergmann, and Jenny Mills – for comfort, strength, and healing)

Prayer requests are generally printed in the Prayer Corner and included in the Sunday intercessory prayers for 4 weeks. If you would like us to keep someone there longer, we are happy to do that. Please call the church office or email [lcmprinceton@gmail.com](mailto:lcmprinceton@gmail.com) to let Pastor Erhardt know.

**First Lesson: Isaiah 55:1-9**

Hear, everyone who thirsts; come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your earnings for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. Now you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did, as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." We must not engage in sexual immorality, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

## **Gospel Lesson: Luke 13:1-9**

At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the other people living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish just as they did.” Then 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. So he said to the man working the vineyard, ‘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?’ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not, you can cut it down.’”

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