

# Peace Lutheran Church

## Contemporary Service 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

### Morning Meditation with Pastor

A main emphasis of our Lenten journey is the struggle against temptations to sin and toward repentance that leads to living faithful Christian lives. This is a journey that can only truly begin by remembering where it all started, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Remembering what Jesus has done for us gives us the confidence to face the many challenges, difficulties, and failures along the way of the Christian life. Like any person setting out on a journey, we need to make sure to have the proper nourishment. Christ himself nourishes us through his Body and Blood given to us in Holy Communion, in which we are united to his gifts of forgiveness and life. Those who are on a journey also need to make sure they have the proper shelter. The shelter of our journey of repentance is our baptismal life. The baptism of a Christian does not merely describe an action that happened to them in the past. It is something which describes their present reality. A Christian should not say, "I was baptized" but rather, "I am baptized." Our baptism means that God is still working within our hearts building and strengthening the gift of faith which clings to the righteousness of Christ as our salvation. Finally, anyone on a journey needs to be sure they're going in the direction. Our sinfulness often takes down the wrong paths, but the Holy Spirit at work through God's Word serves as our Guide in this life of following Jesus. Our readings for today, while perhaps challenging, encourage us to follow the path which He places before us so that our faith will remain healthy and strong even in the midst of challenge.

### Welcome

**Opening Song** "United In Christ"

*(Stand)*

### Invocation

**P** In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

### Confession And Absolution

**P** Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,

**C** whose sin is covered.

**P** Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity,

**C** and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

**P** Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous,

**C** and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

*(Silence for prayer and personal confession.)*

**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.

**P** As we have confessed in our hearts, we now confess with our mouths:

**C** Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

(Sit)

## Old Testament-

**Ezekiel 33:7-20**

*So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.*

*“And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said: ‘Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away because of them. How then can we live?’ Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?”*

*“And you, son of man, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his wickedness, and the righteous shall not be able to live by his righteousness when he sins. Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in his injustice that he has done he shall die. Again, though I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live.*

*“Yet your people say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just,’ when it is their own way that is not just. When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it. And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by this. Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways.”*

## Epistle

**1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

*For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers 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, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.*

*Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.” We must not indulge 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, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.*

*No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*

**Song of Praise**                      “Firm Foundation”

*(Stand)*

**Holy Gospel**

**Luke 13:1-9**

*There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”*

*And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”*

**Confession of Faith**

**C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

**P** What does it mean to believe in what we just confessed?

**C** I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.

This is most certainly true.

**Song of the Day**                      “Ever Be”

**Offering**

*An offering basket is available at the entrance*

Our tithes and offerings are brought forward and placed on the altar.  
*For all things come from You, and of Your own have we given You. - 1 Chronicles 29:14*

*(Sit)*

**Sermon**

**Pastor Jonathan Dueker**

**Prayers of the Church**

## The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9–13

**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.

## Remembrance of Christ's Passion *Jesus' cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene*

P We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

**C** By Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

P Consider how weak and weary Jesus was. At each step He was at the point of expiring. Not wanting Him to die along the way, the Romans forced Simon of Cyrene to help carry the cross after Our Lord.

And as they led Him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. "If any want to become my disciples, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

**C** Beloved Jesus, it was not the weight of the cross but the weight of my sins which made You suffer so much. By the merits of your own suffering save me from the punishment and judgement of my sin. Grant me strength to bear the cross you have placed upon me, that I would embrace it willingly as You did, trusting in the redemption won by Your innocent suffering. Amen.

P Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me

**C** cannot be my disciple.

*(Silence for personal reflection)*

## Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.

**C** Amen.

## Closing Song

"Stand In Your Love"

† Go in peace and serve the Lord. †

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