



March 23, 2022 - Fourth Midweek Lenten Service

In View of God's Mercy: A Series of Services for the Season of Lent

As We Gather: In our "In View of God's Mercy" series, we are looking at our lives through the lens of God's love toward us in the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus. In this service, we recall that no life is without suffering, but our sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory to be revealed to us in Jesus by God's great mercy.

Welcome

Invocation and Call to Worship

Pastor: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

People: **Be not far from me, for trouble is near.**

Pastor: Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

People: **Be not far from me, for trouble is near.**

Pastor: O my God, I cry by day and by night, but I find no rest.

People: **Be not far from me, for trouble is near.**

Pastor: Deliver my soul from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog.

People: **O you my help, come quickly to my aid.**

Pastor: You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen.

People: **O you my help, come quickly to my aid.**

Pastor: You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him.

People: **O you my help, come quickly to my aid.**

Pastor: For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him.

People: **But God has heard when we cried to him. Amen.**

Hymn: LSB 440 "Jesus I Will Ponder Now" vs. 1, 2, 3, & 4

Confession and Forgiveness

Pastor: The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord" (Numbers 21:7). We likewise confess to God that we have often spoken against him and have sinned.

All: **Holy God, we confess our sin to you. When adversity and suffering have come our way, we have complained and spoken against you. We have forgotten your many benefits and blessings to us. We have not trusted you through the hard times, but have resented you and resorted to our own strength. Forgive our iniquity, and pardon our sin.**

Pastor: We cry to you for mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, God's mercy is greater.)

Pastor: Hear the good news! God's Word declares that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3:14-15). In the mercy of Almighty God, his Son Jesus was given to die for you to remove the guilt of your sin. For Christ's sake God forgives you all your sin and gives you eternal life. His mercy endures forever because his love for you is steadfast.

People: **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

Pastor: Gracious Lord, as we continue our Lenten pilgrimage we do so in view of your mercy. We encounter many hardships and much suffering in life. Strengthen us by your Holy Spirit so that we may trust you through the trials and take up the cross to follow you. We pray through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Numbers 21:4-9

⁴ They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; ⁵ they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" ⁶ Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. ⁷ The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸ The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." ⁹ So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

Epistle Reading: 1 Peter 2:21-25

²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." ²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." ²⁵ For "you were like sheep going astray,"^[b] but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 8:14-17

¹⁴ When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him. ¹⁶ When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases."^l

Hymn: LSB 451 "Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted"

Sermon: 1 Peter 2:23 "Mercy in Suffering"

Hymn: LSB 437 “Alas And Did My Savior Bleed”

Prayers

Pastor: Almighty and merciful God, we approach your throne of grace today as those who struggle with hardships and suffer with pain.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we encounter the brokenness of this world and the suffering that it brings—such as natural disasters, economic reversals and financial losses—restore us with your healing power so that we might rest secure in you as our mighty fortress.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we experience broken relationships and the suffering that these bring—such as estrangement of family members, alienation from friends and conflict within congregations—restore us with your healing power so that we might seek reconciliation and peace.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we experience broken bodies and the suffering that it brings—such as illness, injury and disability—restore us with your healing power so that we might live in health once again.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we experience broken minds and the suffering that it brings—such as with mental illness, neurosis and dementia—restore us with your healing power so that we might know of your love.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we experience broken spirits and the suffering that it brings—such as depression, despair and desperation—restore us with your healing power so that we might have hope.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we encounter the death of loved ones and the sorrow that it brings, restore us with your abiding comfort so that we might trust in your victory over death.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we encounter our own death and the terror that it brings, restore us with your resurrection power so that we might live eternally in your glory.

People: **Lord, grant me your grace to trust you in times of suffering and sorrow.**

Pastor: All these things we pray in the name of Jesus the Suffering Servant.

People: **Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

All: **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.**

Benediction

Pastor: May the merciful God, who suffered the pain of the cross for you and your salvation, strengthen you to trust him through hardship according to his good and gracious will, through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory forever!

People: **Amen.**

Hymn: LSB 878 “Abide With Me” vs. 1, 4, 5, & 6