



**St. James Lutheran Church
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LENT 3

MARCH 12, 2023

LIGHT SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

AS WE GATHER

“Let there be light,” God said (Genesis 1:3). And there was light. Through the promised treasure of His Word, God keeps speaking to us. And because He does, there is light. Light from above! Light never-ending! Light that enlightens our way to life everlasting! Jesus Christ is this *“light of the world”* (John 8:12), the light no darkness can overcome. By His Word and Spirit, this light breaks through again today, enters our lives, and enables us to shine brightly for Him.

THE PRESERVICE MUSIC, THE CALL TO WORSHIP &
THE WELCOME

THE OPENING HYMN “Light of Light, O Sole-Begotten”
(LSB 914)

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *2 Corinthians 5:21, alt.; Isaiah 53:5*

- P** For our sake God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin,
- C** so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.
- P** But He was wounded for our transgressions;
- C** He was crushed for our iniquities;

P upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,

C and with His stripes we are healed.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Based on Philippians 2:1–11*

P Lord Jesus, search our hearts and minds that we may receive Your Word, share in Your Spirit, and be renewed in our relationships with You and with one another.

We observe a moment of silence for personal prayers of confession.

P With humble hearts, let us pray together:

C **Lord Jesus, the Father's only Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords, hear us as we pray.**

P Darkness seeks to overtake us and rob us of the light, distracting us from Your never-failing presence in our lives.

C **Our rebellion against You in thought, word, and action is why You died for us—**

P to forgive our sins, to redeem our lives, and to cancel the debt we owe to God.

C **With hearts that are humble and lives ever grateful, help us to receive Your grace, bow before You in worship, and confess that You alone are Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

P Almighty God our heavenly Father shows His mercy to us in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, the true light of the world who scatters the darkness of our sin and shines upon us the bright beams of His mercy. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, You are the light of the world, and no amount of darkness in our world can overcome Your presence shining in our lives.

C **Renew our hearts and minds during this Lenten season as we receive the promised treasures of Your Word; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 1:1–5

A The Old Testament Reading is from Genesis, the first chapter.

¹In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. ³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

A O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE PSALM

Psalms 27:1–4, 13–14

P The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

C **The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**

P When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

C **Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.**

- P** One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,
- C** **to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple.**
- P** I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!
- C** **Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD! Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

THE EPISTLE READING

Ephesians 5:1–2, 8–14

- A** The Epistle is from Ephesians, the fifth chapter.

¹Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ²And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. . . . ⁸For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

- A** O Lord, have mercy on us.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

A SONG: Who Am I? (Mark Hall; Casting Crowns)

Verse 1

Who am I that the Lord of all the earth
Would care to know my name
Would care to feel my hurt
Who am I that the Bright and Morning Star
Would choose to light the way
For my ever wand'ring heart

Pre-Chorus

Not because of who I am
But because of what You've done
Not because of what I've done
But because of who You are

Chorus

I am a flower quickly fading
Here today and gone tomorrow
A wave tossed in the ocean
A vapor in the wind
Still You hear me when I'm calling
Lord You catch me when I'm falling
And You've told me who I am
I am Yours

Verse 2

Who am I that the eyes that see my sin
Would look on me with love
And watch me rise again
Who am I that the voice that calmed the sea
Would call out through the rain
And calm the storm in me (Pre-Chorus and Chorus)

CCLI Song # 4196651

Mark Hall

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THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 8:12–18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹²Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." ¹³So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are bearing witness about Yourself; Your testimony is not true." ¹⁴Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. ¹⁵You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. ¹⁶Yet even if I do judge, My judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent Me. ¹⁷In your Law it is written that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸I am the one who bears witness about Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness about Me."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

THE SERMON HYMN "One House Abides Unending" (Tune: Llangloffan, LSB 513)

One house abides unending,
One Master fears no fall,
One Lord provides, attending
The daily want of all.
When ruin would allure them
Whose one estate was need,
One Father would secure them
In will, in trust, in deed.

The wealth of all creation
We squandered at our birth.

The heirs of condemnation
Sowed tears in blighted earth.
But light, the world's first treasure,
The Master worked anew
In promise, and in measure
No mortal eye could view.

With endless hunger driven
The grave cried out for more,
But Jesus Christ has given
Safe passage through its door:
His flowing blood our raiment,
The flood to purge our shame;
The living God the payment
That buys for us His name.

Exchange our ash for beauty,
Anoint our grief with joy;
Dear Lord, who paid our duty,
All grace for us employ.
Feed us the saving manna
Lest on the way we fail
And sweeten our Hosanna
To holy Easter's hail.

SERMON: LIGHT SHINING IN THE DARKNESS (During the sermon, children who are ages 3 through grade 2 are invited to participate in KIDZ Time. Children can make their way to the back of the sanctuary where the KIDZ Time teacher is waiting. The children will return to the service following the sermon.)

OFFERING (Please sign the burgundy Friendship booklet and pass it to other people sitting in your pew. When completed, pass it back to the center aisle and be sure to greet the people next to you! Those sitting by the center aisle: please tear off the completed sheet and place it on the pew. Thank you!)

CONFESSING OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH: The Apostles' Creed

**A HYMN
Verse 1**

Here I Am To Worship

Light of the world
You stepped down into darkness
Opened my eyes let me see
Beauty that made
This heart adore You
Hope of a life spent with You

Chorus

So here I am to worship
Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You're my God
And You're altogether lovely
Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me

Verse 2

King of all days
Oh so highly exalted
Glorious in heaven above
Humbly You came
To the earth You created
All for love's sake became poor (Chorus)

Bridge

And I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross
And I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross (Chorus)

CCLI Song # 3266032

Tim Hughes

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CCLI License # 20021974 THE GENERAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE GENERAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Gracious God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You for blessing us with the opportunity to meditate again on the cross of Christ and receive Your promised treasures.

C Grant that the message of the Lamb of God slain for our salvation bring us the riches of Your pardon and peace.

P Lead us to see that our sins caused Jesus' great agony in the garden, that our sins nailed Him to the cross of Calvary,

C that He was forsaken by His Father so that we might never be forsaken, and that He died so that we may live.

P Lord Jesus, grant that especially during this sacred season the treasured story of Your wondrous love for us would draw us closer to You.

C Enable us to walk in the light of Your grace, knowing that You are truly the light of the world that darkness can never overcome.

P Holy Spirit, lift up troubled souls everywhere. Grant wholeness to those hurting in heart, body, and mind. Work Your healing power in the lives of those in need, [*especially . . .*], and in the lives of all we name before You in our hearts.

C All glory, honor, and praise be to You, with the Father and the Son, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the T Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C Amen.

THE CLOSING HYMN “In the Cross of Christ I Glory” (LSB 427)

THE POSTLUDE

Events of the Week: March 6 – March 12, 2023

Monday	No Monday Service
Tuesday	6:30 p.m. Discovery Class
Wednesday	10:00 a.m. Darrell's Bible Class 5:30 p.m. Lenten Dinner 7:00 p.m. Lenten Service
Thursday	6:00 p.m. Bell Choir 7:15 p.m. Adult Choir
Friday	Pastor's Day off
Sunday	8:00 a.m. Gizmo on FB 9:30 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Bible study

FINANCIAL DISCIPLESHIP: March 5, 2023

General Fund	\$13,304.85
Building Fund	\$0.00
ISJ Academy	\$0.00
Tessaro Ministry	\$85.00
Memorials	\$25.00
Evangelism	\$15.00
TOTAL	\$13,429.85

Those Who Serve Today March. 12th.

Officiant: Pastor Glenn Schaeffer

Lector: Ann Schaefer

Organist: Beth McKay

Deacons: Dave Hood

Ushers: Jim McKay / Deron Kippen / Caleb Butler

Video/Sound/Recording: Nathan Urbanski, John, and Marjie Weiss

March Altar Guild: Kim Urbanski & Carol Bifulco

Those Who are Serving Next Week: March 19th.

Officiant: Pastor Glenn Schaeffer

Lector: Cindy McAuliffe

Organist: Beth McKay

Deacons: Jerry Talen / Dave Hood

Ushers: Urbanski Family

Video/Sound/Recording: Nathan Urbanski, John, and Marjie Weiss

March Altar Guild: Kim Urbanski & Carol Bifulco

Announcements

Knit / Crocheted Together in Love: Please join us on Sunday April 16, 2023 after church from 10:45am to 1:00pm. Anyone ages 13 and up who is interested in learning the basics of knitting / Crocheting to Advanced. Make sure you bring a snack or lunch for yourself, knitting needles or crochet hooks and yarn if you have some! No need to sign up just join the group.

LWML Grand Rapids Zone Spring Rally: "Raising Christin Children/Grandchildren in Today's World" You are invited to attend the LWML Spring Rally being held at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Caledonia on Saturday, April 22nd, 9:00am- noon. We are excited and blessed to have Jo Fleming and her daughter Amy Nuttleman, both wives of Lutheran pastors in the Grand Rapids area as our speakers on the topic "Raising Christin Children/Grandchildren in Today's World". The admission fee will be \$10.00 which includes breakfast. More information and a sign-up sheet will be coming soon, but be sure to make your calendars now!

Mailboxes: Ashley is working on making new mailbox signs and organizing the coat room. Please keep an eye out that your box may change its location.

Christian Summer Children's Camp: Camp Concordia 30 minutes north of Grand Rapids, Michigan, gives your children and grandchildren an opportunity to experience a Lutheran camp experience with trained cabin leaders, lifeguards and program leaders. Weekly experiences include meals, swimming, archery, canoeing, campfire devotions, cookout, Bible adventures and more all wrapped around a Christ-centered message. Get more information at www.campconcordia.org If interested a few brochures will be on the table outside the sanctuary near the church office. A poster will be posted on the bulletin board across from the coat room.

The EGGS-traordinary Easter Carnival:

This EGGS-tra special event will be a basket full of carnival fun including egg hunt, games & activities, crafts & music and the Eggs-trodinary account of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead! This year St. James is partnering with ISJ Academy the ISJ PTL to share the Jesus love with the Creston community. So please join us on Saturday, April 15, 2023, from 1-3p.m. and check out the newsletter for ways to get involved.

Praying with Boldness and Humility:

Messiah Lutheran Church is hosting a Spiritual Growth Seminar on Saturday March 25, 2023. Different pastors from the area and a professor from Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne will be presenting. If you would like to attend, please RSVP no later than March 20, 2023 to Messiah. For more information and to see the list of presenters please see the flyer on the bulletin board across from the coat room.

LCMS Foundation: We can discover great joy by thinking of the benefit that will come from the gifts we give from our estates. You may have a dull sense that you should leave a gift to support ministry. If you connect it to a specific ministry activity, like "Lutheran School Scholarships", then you can

imagine children learning about Jesus through your gift. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help you get specific with your gift plan. Contact...Julie Burgess
Gift Planning Counselor
Church Extension Fund
Email: Julie.burgess@lfnd.org Mobile: 713-822-5284

Good Friday Tre Ore Service: Please join us on April 7, 2023, from 12:00pm – 3:00pm at Immanuel Lutheran Church. To hear the seven last words of Jesus. You may come and go as you are able during this three-hour service. A man's last words are often the most significant. For more information and to see a list of speakers please see the bulletin board. Our very own pastor Schaeffer will be speaking on "My God, My God".

Dine out on Thursday, March 16th (from 4-8 p.m.) and support ISJ Academy! This month the local restaurant is Noodles. Twenty-five (25%) of the qualifying sales will directly benefit ISJ! Noodles & Company is located at Knapp Corners (2289 East Beltline, Grand Rapids). You can order food online using the promo code: GIVING25 at checkout. You can also use the brochure (located in the narthex).

Memorial Services for Art Nacke and Bee Ruble. Two dear friends in Christ joined the Church Triumphant recently. Art's Memorial service will be at St. James on Saturday, March 25 at noon with a catered luncheon to follow. If you are planning to attend the luncheon, please let Pastor know so that he can pass the information on to Art's family. There will also be a Memorial service at St. James for Bee Ruble which is tentatively scheduled for May 20th. More information will be shared with the congregation as plans for the service become more solidified.