

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda, NY
March 9th, 2025**



AS WE GATHER

"Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness" (1 Timothy 3:16). As we have now entered the forty-day pilgrimage of Lent, we approach the most climactic event of our Lord's earthly ministry, the one that confused and frightened the first followers of Jesus and perhaps even some to this day. The expectation of the establishment of the kingdom of God with Jesus, the Son of God, seated on a royal throne as ruler was demolished as they witnessed their Rabbi, Master, and Lord taken captive, convicted, tortured, and executed on that Passover in Jerusalem.

The cross has always been an offense. To this day, the same mystery stands: His royal throne is but a frightful cross of crucifixion—His kingdom hidden to the eyes. When confronted with the facts of God's Word, many cannot see past this mystery. Yet it is the power of God's Word that gives people the gift of faith and new eyes to see what was incomprehensible and secret now revealed by the Spirit of God. God's truth is that in the death of Christ, redemption and forgiveness of sin now avails for the entire world. Sinners are delivered, justified before God by faith in the blood of Jesus shed on the cross and given the ability to repent and believe and become children of God for eternity. For sinful mankind, this life-giving truth is impossible to believe or understand. Only because of the mighty Word of God proclaimed to the world by His church and by the power of the Spirit is that otherwise mysterious Word actually easy and powerful to understand and to believe.

Welcome to all our Members, Guests and Visitors today, if you're a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoy your time worshipping with us today.

LSB 435 Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith and confess our sins unto God our Father, that we may receive His forgiveness.

O God, we believe Your Word is true for it reveals our sin for which we deserve Your rebuke and judgment. Yet even more, we believe in Your promise of mercy and forgiveness for the sake of Christ. We therefore confess to You all our sins. We plead the suffering and sacrifice of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, as the all-sufficient price of our redemption, and beg Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of faith in our Savior alone. Hear us in Your mercy and according to Your promise in Christ, our Lord.

“Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge,” upon this, your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

INTROIT

When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble;

□ I will rescue him and honor him.

With long life I will satisfy him

□ and show him my salvation.

Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—

□ the Most High, who is my refuge—

no evil shall be allowed to befall you,

□ no plague come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you

□ to guard you in all your ways.

On their hands they will bear you up,

□ lest you strike your foot against a stone.

You will tread on the lion and the adder;

□ the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

SALUTATION & Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

O Lord God, You led Your ancient people through the wilderness and brought them to the Promised Land. Guide the people of Your church that following our Savior we may walk through the wilderness of this world toward the glory of the world to come; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Old Testament Deuteronomy 26:1–11

¹“When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance and have taken possession of it and live in it, ²you shall take

some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket, and you shall go to the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name to dwell there. ³And you shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, ‘I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.’ ⁴Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. ⁵“And you shall make response before the LORD your God, ‘A wandering Aramean was my father. And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number, and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. ⁶And the Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us and laid on us hard labor. ⁷Then we cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. ⁸And the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great deeds of terror, with signs and wonders. ⁹And he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which you, O LORD, have given me.’ And you shall set it down before the LORD your God and worship before the LORD your God. ¹¹And you shall rejoice in all the good that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house, you, and the Levite, and the sojourner who is among you.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Epistle Romans 10:8b–13

“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” ¹²For there is no distinction

between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Luke 4:1-13

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the fourth chapter

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

¹Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ²for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. ³The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” ⁴And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” ⁵And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, ⁶and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” ⁸And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’” ⁹And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰for it is written, ‘“He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’¹¹and ““On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”” ¹²And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” ¹³And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Apostle’s Creed
I believe in God, the Father Almighty,

**maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**LSB 423 Jesus, Refuge of the Weary
Sermon**

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from
me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free
spirit. Amen.*

Offering

Prayer of the Church

Lord God, almighty Father, we give You thanks for Your clear and mighty Word by which You brought the entire universe into being and also ourselves as individual members of the human family. More than that, however, we praise You for re-creating us by faith in Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to be numbered among those counted already now as citizen of Your heavenly, eternal kingdom. Continue to form, guide, and direct us that we may be salt and light in this world, witnesses of Your eternal grace and

glory. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We pray for Your whole church of every time and every place—all those who rejoice with us in the truth of Your Holy Word as well as those living amid the suppression of Your truth who are challenged for their faith in the clarity of Your Word by the lies and confusion of unbelief. Enlighten the testimony of steadfastness of faith in the face of all falsehood. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Enable all who preach and teach Your Law and Gospel, those called to administer Your Holy Sacraments, and every servant of Your people with the stamina and conviction required to faithfully convey Your Word of truth both in season and out of season so as to convince, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and patience. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Graciously grant to our nation, our people, and those who lead and serve in public office wisdom to seek and acknowledge Your divine will, that justice and peace may prevail among all. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Grant Your healing and comfort to all who are sick or hospitalized, those cast down by sorrow or fear, and all who are in any need of body or spirit. Bless all who administer Your love in any way. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

We give thanks to You for all who have died with the sign of faith and are with You. As together we await the glorious day of the resurrection of all flesh and our entry into Your eternal kingdom, grant the peace of faith and trust in Your abiding presence to us who still contend for Your truth. Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

Benedicamus

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Bless we the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

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

Amen, amen, amen.

LSB 744 Amazing Grace