

Zion Lutheran Church



March 15th, 2023
Afternoon Service

Lent -- Week 3

LIGHT SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

“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.

- P** In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.
- P** O Lord, open my lips,
- C** and my mouth will declare Your praise.
- P** Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
- C** make haste to help me, O Lord.
- C** 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.
Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.

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. 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 † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

FIRST READING -- Genesis 1:1-5

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The 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.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING -- Ephesians 5:1-2, 8-14

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. . . .

For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

"Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THIRD READING -- John 8:12-18

Again 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." So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are bearing witness about Yourself; Your testimony is not true." Jesus 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. You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. Yet 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. In your Law it is written that the testimony of two men is true. I am the one who bears witness about Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness about Me.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORY

P: Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.

C: **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

P: In You, O Lord, do I put my trust, leave me not, O Lord, my God.

C: **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

P: Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.

C: **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

SERMON

KYRIE

C: Lord, have mercy;

Christ, have mercy;

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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 brings 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.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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.**

P In the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, at His command, and with His own words, we receive His testament:

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

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 for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

DISTRIBUTION

If you are visiting us today from a Christian denomination outside the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod, we welcome you to come to the altar to receive a baptismal blessing. Please signify by crossing your arms over your chest upon kneeling.

COLLECTS

P: O Lord, hear my prayer.

C: **And let my cry come to You.**

P: O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

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

C: **Amen.**