

TODAY'S WORSHIP NOTES

What is the church season or special day? _____

What is the color of the altar cloths today? (circle one)

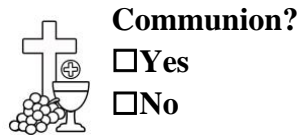
- | | |
|---|--|
| White perfection, joy, purity | Black absence of color; symbolic of death |
| Blue hope | Green life, nourishment |
| Purple royalty, mourning, repentance | Gold royalty, riches, victory |
| Red fire, fervor, blood, martyrdom, victory in the blood of Christ | |

How does the color of the day fit the theme of the day? _____

What led our singing today? video organ piano other

Did we have special music today? choir soloist guest musicians

Did we have a sacrament today?



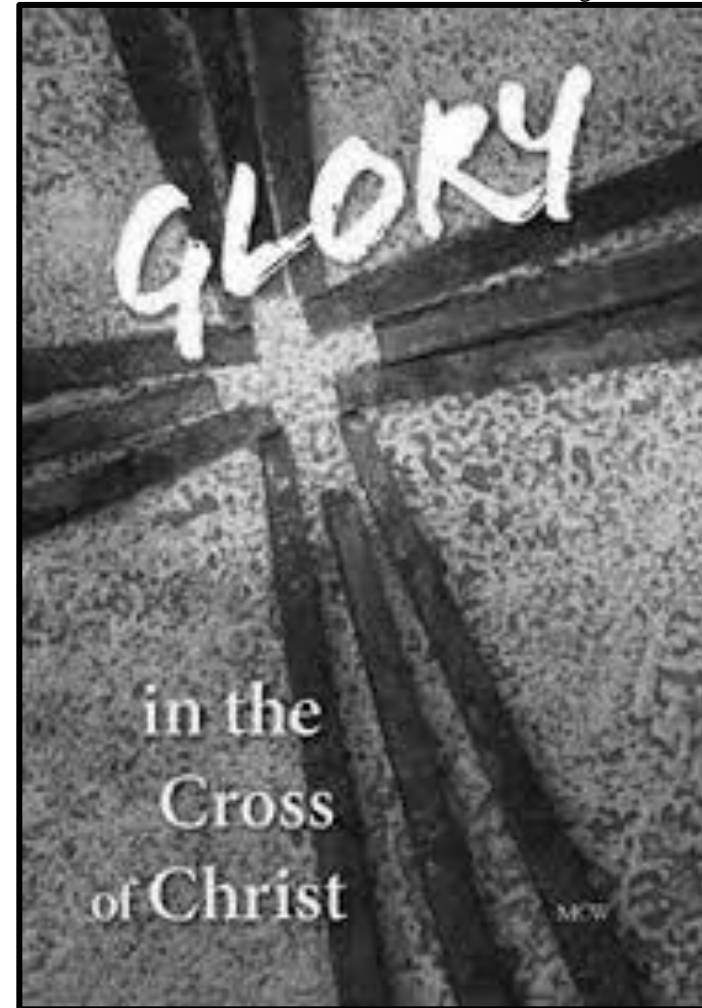
The sermon text is: _____, found in Old Testament New Testament

What did I learn today about God, myself, or my Christian faith? _____

What was my favorite song today? _____

Did we do something special or out of the ordinary in worship today? _____

I would like to ask pastor this question (*in person, text or email!*): _____



Throughout the season of Lent, we've seen Jesus overcoming Satan as Jesus stays laser-focused on the cross to which he was heading. There at the cross, the battle gets ugly. Jesus' death would not be pretty. Satan always wanted it that way. Of course, he foolishly thought that he would win a great victory and ruin God's plan to save sinners. Satan could not have been more wrong. But then, that's what unbelief does - it blinds the unbeliever to the glory of Jesus' victorious death! On this last Sunday before Palm Sunday, the triune God teaches us that God gets the glory as Jesus fights the battle for us. In the first reading (Isaiah 43), the Lord demonstrates that everything from the rescue of Israel to the salvation of the nations is all

his doing. The second reading (Hebrews 5) shows us that because of Jesus' victory in battle, we receive blessings to the glory of God. The Gospel reading (John 12) lets us listen in on a conversation between the Father and the Son about the cross and how it gives glory to God.

Ascension Lutheran Church

March 17, 2024
(6th Sunday in Lent)

Welcome to worship today at Ascension!

OUR ORDER OF SERVICE TODAY IS FROM THE NEW CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

Our goal is to provide variety in worship, retain the best of our Christian hymns, add new hymns, and help worshippers to become comfortable and familiar with new things even as we treasure the old.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND PERMISSIONS TO PRINT:

Scripture readings are from the Evangelical Heritage Version. Liturgy, hymns that are not in the public domain as well as our Psalm of the Day are reprinted here under OneLicense #A-713900. Children's activity pages printed under subscription to Sermon 4 Kids, Inc.

OUR MISSION:

Ascension exists to proclaim the joy of Jesus Christ in the Macomb County area by gathering to grow in the timeless truths of the Bible and by scattering to share the hope of heaven with everyone we meet. We are a mission congregation of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH?

Please contact Pastor Dan Simons at revdsimons@gmail.com. Phone or text: 586-569-9895. Visit us at www.ascensionmacomb.com or at [facebook.com/ALCmacomb](https://www.facebook.com/ALCmacomb). If you need to connect to wifi, our Wi-Fi name is ASCENSION Guest. Password is macombwels.



THE LORD'S SUPPER, OR HOLY COMMUNION, WILL BE CELEBRATED IN TODAY'S SERVICE.

The Holy Sacrament of our Savior's body and blood is a gift which he has given to his church. Whenever we approach his altar, he wants us to contemplate the fact that this sacred meal is to nurture two kinds of fellowship:

- 1) The **vertical fellowship** between God and each of his individual Christians, and
- 2) The **horizontal fellowship** which God gives his people to enjoy with one another.

Paul, the Apostle, tells us that we are to examine ourselves before we partake of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:18). We are to give serious consideration to our sin and remind ourselves why we need the forgiveness of sins offered and given in this Sacrament. Hearts that are properly prepared to receive Christ's body and blood rejoice in God's gift of forgiveness of sins.

Paul also warns us that anyone who eats the bread and drinks the wine without recognizing that Christ's body and blood are also given in this sacrament, "will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord." That is a very serious matter, for Paul says that such a person "eats and drinks judgment on himself" (1 Corinthians 11:27-29).

That is why we ask all people who wish to commune at our altar be properly instructed about the Lord's Supper as well as the other basic teachings of the Christian faith, and to declare that that faith is their own. We follow this practice – as did the early Christian Church – out of love for all people and to ensure that all who commune with us:

- Are baptized in the name of the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

- Are aware that Christ's true body and blood are actually received along with the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper;
- Are relying on Jesus for salvation; and
- Are united in that fellowship which is based on God's Word.

Therefore, **if you are visitor and not yet affiliated with Ascension Lutheran Church or with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, please speak to the pastor before communing with us.** We are not saying that we think we are better than anyone else, for our motive in our practice is love, and Christian love "does not boast; it is not proud" (1 Corinthians 13). Our love for God, respect for what he says about this Sacrament, and our love for those who wish to receive it compel us to administer this sacrament according to the guidelines he has given in his Word.

Jesus' love and forgiveness are freely offered to you whether you commune or not. We, as sinners, all stand before God in need of forgiveness. The word of forgiveness God speaks to us today through his called servant is as valid and certain for both members and visitors as if God himself spoke it.

PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

(For personal reflection)

Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?

A: He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.

Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?

A: I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?

Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?

A: I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.

Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?

A: His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.

Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?

A: In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.

Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?

A: I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?

A: I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.

Worship the LORD

Opening Hymn

808 Drawn to the Cross



1 Drawn to the cross, which you have blessed with heal - ing
 2 How well you know my griefs and fears, your grace a -
 3 Wash me and take a - way each stain; let noth - ing
 4 To pledge my la - bor will - ing - ly, which shall so



gifts for souls dis - tressed, to find in you my
 bused, my mis - spent years; so now to you with
 of my sin re - main. For cleans - ing through your
 sweet a ser - vice be that an - gels well might



life, my rest, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
 con - trite tears, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
 cross and pain, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.
 en - vy me, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.

Text: Genevieve M. Irons, 1855–1928, alt.
 Tune: Joseph Barnby, 1838–1896
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

M: In the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Confession

M: If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

C: **If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

M: Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

C: **Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.** *(Silence for meditation and reflection.)*

M: Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called 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.

Lord, Have Mercy

M: In peace let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

M: For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

M: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

M: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

M: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



A - men.

Glory Be to God

Sung by all



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,

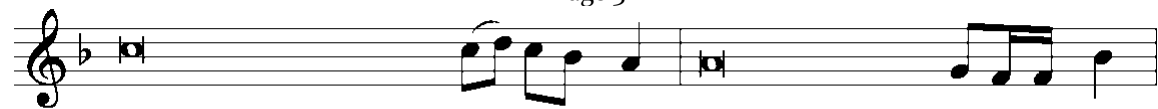


we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,

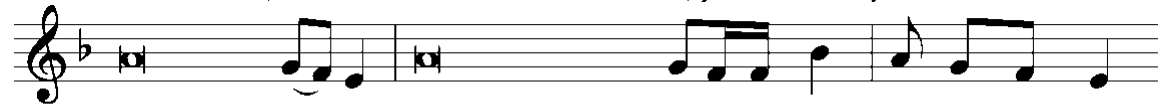


God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;

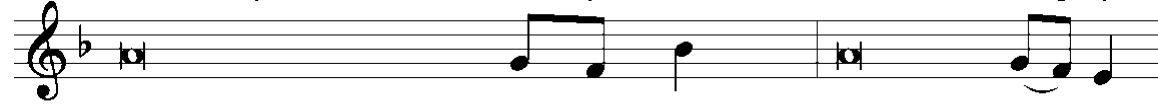
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O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



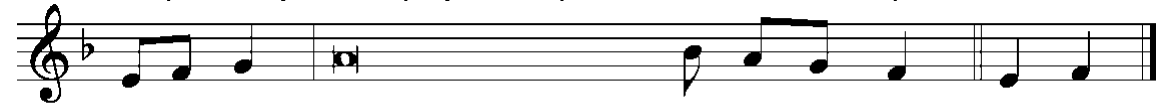
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

The Word

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray.

Eternal God and Father, help us to remember Jesus, who obeyed your will and bore the cross for our salvation, that through his anguish, pain, and death we may receive the forgiveness of sins, victory over the grave, and finally inherit eternal life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Be seated

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First Reading

Isaiah 43:1-7

The Lord demonstrates that everything from the rescue of Israel to the salvation of the nations is all his doing. Don't miss God's comforting message in the first verse: we are God's dearly loved people three times over: 1) he created us, 2) he redeemed us through the blood of Christ, and 3) he called us to faith in Jesus.

But now this is what the Lord says,
the Lord who created you, O Jacob,
the Lord who formed you, O Israel.

Do not be afraid, because I have redeemed you.

I have called you by name. You are mine.

² When you cross through the waters, I will be with you.

When you cross the rivers, they will not sweep you away.
When you walk through fire, you will not be burned,
and the flame will not set you on fire.

³ Because I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior,
I gave Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

⁴ Because you are precious and honored in my eyes,
and I myself love you,
I will give people in exchange for you,
and peoples in exchange for your life.

⁵ Do not be afraid, because I am with you.
From the east I will bring your offspring,
and from the west I will gather you.

⁶ I will say to the north, "Give them back!"
and to the south, "Do not hold them."
Bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—

⁷ everyone who is called by my name,
everyone I created for my glory,
everyone I formed,
yes, everyone I have made.

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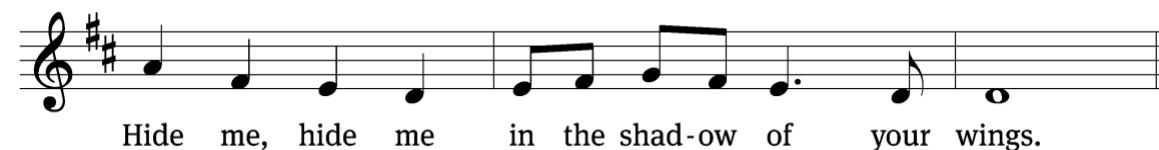
M: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm of the Day

121D Keep Me as the Apple of Your Eye

Refrain



Tone



Refrain

I lift up my eyes to the / mountains—
where does my help / come from?
My help comes / from the Lord,
the maker of heav- / en and earth.
He will not let your / foot slip—
he who watches over you will not / slumber;
indeed, he who watches over / Israel
will neither slum- / ber nor sleep. **Refrain**

The Lord watches / over you—
the Lord is your shade at / your right hand;

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the sun will not harm / you by day,
nor the / moon by night.
The Lord will keep you / from all harm—
he will watch o- / ver your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and / going
both now and for- / evermore.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain**

Second Reading

Hebrews 5:7-9

Because of Jesus' victory in battle, we receive blessings to the glory of God.

In the days of his flesh, he offered prayers and pleas with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. ⁸ Although he was the Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. ⁹ After he was brought to his goal, he became the source of eternal salvation for everyone who obeys him,

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Gospel Reading

John 12:20-33

Open the ears of your heart as God's Word lets us listen in on a conversation between the Father and the Son about the cross and how it gives glory to God.

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Festival. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we want to see Jesus." ²² Philip went to tell Andrew. Andrew came with Philip and told Jesus.

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²³ Jesus answered them, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it continues to be one kernel. But if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵ Anyone who loves his life destroys it. And the one who hates his life in this world will hold on to it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves me, let him follow me. And where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. ²⁷ "Now my soul is troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, this is the reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!"

A voice came from heaven: "I have glorified my name, and I will glorify it again."

²⁹ The crowd standing there heard it and said it thundered. Others said an angel talked to him. ³⁰ Jesus answered, "This voice was not for my sake but for yours.

³¹ "Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be thrown out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ³³ He said this to indicate what kind of death he was going to die.

M: The Gospel of the Lord.

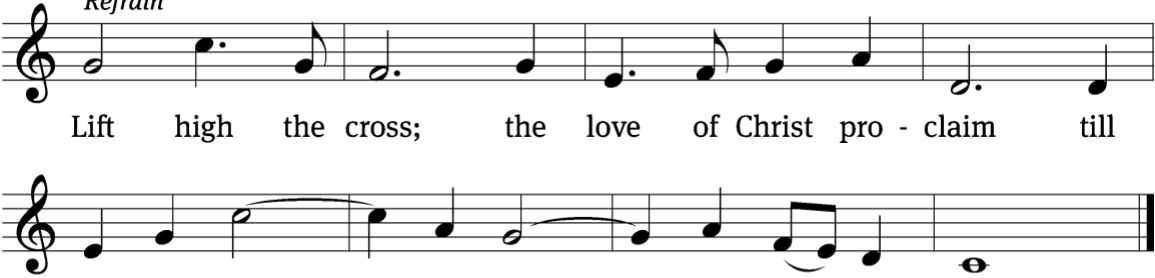
C: **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

Be seated

Sermon Hymn


900 Lift High the Cross

Refrain



Lift high the cross; the love of Christ pro - claim till
all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

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1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,
2 All new - born sol - diers of the Cru - ci - fied
3 Let ev - 'ry race and ev - 'ry lan - guage tell
4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

Refrain

our King vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 bear on their brows the seal of him who died.
 of him who saves our souls from death and hell.
 praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

Text: rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874–1956, alt.; George W. Kitchin, 1827–1912
 Tune: Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947
 Text and tune: © 1974 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: OneLicense no. A-713900

Sermon

Hebrews 5:7-9

In the days of his flesh, he offered prayers and pleas with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. ⁸ Although he was the Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. ⁹ After he was brought to his goal, he became the source of eternal salvation for everyone who obeys him

From Gethsemane to Golgotha, the Glory of the Son Saved Us!

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Stand

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth, of all that is,
 seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
 eternally begotten of the Father,
 God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
 begotten, not made,
 of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
 was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
 and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
 and his kingdom will have no end.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit,

the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who in unity with the Father and the Son

is worshiped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Be seated

Page 10

Offering

We consider it our privilege to honor God with gifts that support the ministry of the Word among us and around the world. Many worshippers prefer to use offering envelopes each week. If you do not have offering envelopes and would like a set, please ask. We will be glad to provide them, whether you are member or not. A

growing number of our worshippers choose to give their offerings online using our website. You can do so at www.ascensionmacomb.com. Click on the WATCH A SERVICE tile, then scroll down to the GIVE NOW button to make an offering or to set up an automatic recurring offering.

Offering Hymn

750 We Give Thee but Thine Own

1 We give thee but thine own, what-e'er the gift may be;
 2 May we thy boun-ties thus as stew-ards true re-ceive
 all that we have is thine a-lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.
 and glad-ly, as thou bless-est us, to thee our first-fruits give.

Stand

Prayer of the Church

The Sacrament

Preface

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

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M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would

in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san - na, ho -
 san - na, ho-san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he,
 bless-ed is he, bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Ho-san - na, ho-san - na, ho-san - na in the high - est.

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

M: We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the

incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

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.**

Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my (+) body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

M: Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my (+) blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

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O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;
have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

Be seated. Communicants will be ushered forward to receive Holy Communion.

Distribution Hymn

839 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

1 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill thy law's de - mands;
3 Noth - ing in my hand I bring, sim - ply to thy cross I cling;
4 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,
let the wa - ter and the blood, from thy riv - en side which flowed,
could my zeal no res - pite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
na - ked, come to thee for dress, help - less, look to thee for grace;
when I soar to worlds un - known, see thee on thy judg - ment throne,

Page 14



be of sin the dou - ble cure: cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
 all for sin could not a - tone; thou must save and thou a - lone.
 foul, I to the foun-tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
 Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

Text: Augustus M. Toplady, 1740–1778, alt.
 Tune: Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872
 Text and tune: Public domain

Distribution of the Lord's Supper

Stand

M: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

C: his mercy endures forever.

M: Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

C: we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

M: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift.

We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace. Amen.

Closing Hymn

398 Not All the Blood of Beasts



1 Not all the blood of beasts on Is - rael's al - tars slain
 2 But Christ, the heav'n - ly Lamb, takes all our sins a - way,
 3 In faith I place my hand on that dear head di - vine,
 4 My soul looks back to see the bur - den you did bear
 5 Be - liev - ing, we re - joice to see the curse re - move;



could give the guilt - y con - science peace or wash a - way the stain.
 a sac - ri - fice of no - bler name and rich - er blood than they.
 as pen - i - tent - ly here I stand and lay on him my sin.
 when hang - ing on the curs - ed tree; I know my guilt was there!
 we bless the Lamb with cheer - ful voice and sing his bleed - ing love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.
 Tune: William Daman, c. 1540–1591
 Text and tune: Public domain

THANKS TO THOSE WHO SERVE US TODAY:

Worship accompanist - Gloria Aita; Recording Engineers – Sandy Borkowski, Paul Kokesh;
 Security – Paul Fuller. Worship leader – Pastor Dan Simons, Ascension Lutheran Church.

LAST WEEK AT ASCENSION:

Ascension members in God's house for worship 30

Repeat visitors in God's house for worship 8

First-time visitors in God's house. 2

Worshipping with us online 9

Total 49

Teens & adults growing in the Word in Bible class 21

Children growing in the Word in Christlight for Kids 2 (1 teacher)

Confirmation Instruction Class 1 (the other 5 students attended make-ups)

56% of those who in God's house for worship stayed to grown in the Word.

Faith conversations and invitations to worship by Ascension people: 12

Ascension people in touch with each (planning, encouraging, etc.): 18

COMING UP AT ASCENSION:

Today 9:30 a.m.....Worship w/ Holy Communion
 10:30 a.m.....Meet, Greet, and Eat
 10:45 a.m..... Christlight for Kids: Jesus on Trial before Pontius Pilate
 10:45 a.m.....Parable & Word Pictures Bible Class: The Bread and Water of Life
 12:00 p.m..... Confirmation Instruction Class

Monday 6:30 p.m.....Confirmation Class Make-up session
 7:00 p.m.....Alcoholics Anonymous-Covenant Chapter meets at Ascension

Tuesday 6:30 p.m.....Ascension Church Council

Wednesday 5:30 p.m.....Fellowship Supper followed by Lenten Worship at 6:30

Thursday 6:30 p.m.....Bible Information Class

Sunday, March 24th 9:30 a.m.....Worship w/ Children’s Message
 10:30 a.m..... Meet, Greet, and Eat
 10:45 a.m.....Christlight for Kids: “Jesus’ Dying Words”
 10:45 a.m.....Parable & Word Pictures Bible Class:
 “From Slaves to Sons through Circumcision”
 12:00 p.m..... Confirmation Instruction Class

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP:



with Easter Egg Hunt following

Palm Sunday 3/24 at 9:30 a.m.
Maundy Thursday 3/28 at 6:30 p.m. (Holy Communion)
Good Friday 3/29 at 6:30 p.m.
Easter Sunday 3/31 at 9:30 a.m.



mission to be the recipient of the offerings gathered in these boxes. They must be returned by Sunday, March 31st.

LUTHERAN WOMENS MISSIONARY SOCIETY MITE BOXES are available in the church lobby. This is a handy way to gather change (coins or paper) for the next few weeks and dedicate them to mission work. Each Spring, LWMS chooses one home mission and one world

EASTER EGG HUNT - EASTER SUNDAY

We are starting to collect eggs for the children to hunt and find on Easter Sunday after worship. We are asking for plastic eggs, pre-filled with individually wrapped bandy. There will be a box in the church lobby in which to place these donated eggs. Can you help?



NEW BEGINNINGS is a parachurch organization of WELS Christians which offers pregnancy counseling and support for single women. A special opportunity to support this effort will begin after Easter. Plastic baby bottles will be available in the church lobby in which you can gather your gifts of coins or folding money. Watch for this to begin right after Easter.

Our photo studio will be set up in the church lobby each Sunday. Gary Aita will be on hand to take your individual or family photo. We’re putting together a digital picture directory of our congregation that will run continuously on a large monitor at church.



Parables & Word Pictures

Introduction

List the most “successful” Christian preachers.

One of the most famous sermons Jesus ever preached is recorded in John chapter 6; we call it the Bread of Life discourse. What happened after Jesus preached these words? (See John 6:66 – “After this, many of his disciples turned back and were not walking with him anymore.”)

Studying God's Word

Jesus' words in the Bread of Life discourse—when he said that salvation only comes from *eating* his flesh and *drinking* his blood—weren't anything new. Eating and drinking are used to picture salvation throughout Holy Scripture.

Satisfied with the goodness of the gospel

The basic imagery of eating and drinking is on display for us in two sections of apocalyptic imagery.

Read Ezekiel 2:8–3:4 – “But you, son of man, listen to what I am telling you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.”

⁹Then I looked, and I saw a hand stretched out toward me, and in it there was a rolled-up scroll. ¹⁰He unrolled it in front of me, and there was writing on both sides. Written on it was: Laments, Groaning, and Woe.

³Then he said to me, “Son of man, eat what you have received. Eat this scroll, and then go, speak to the house of Israel.” ²I opened my mouth, and he fed me the scroll.

³Then he said to me, “Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your belly with this scroll that I am giving you.” I ate, and in my mouth it was sweet like honey.

⁴He then said to me, “Son of man, go now to the house of Israel and speak my words to them.

Read Revelation 10:8–10 - The voice that I heard from heaven also spoke to me again, saying, “Go, take the scroll that has been opened in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land.” ⁹I went to the angel and said to him, “Give me the little scroll.”

He said to me, “Take it and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey.” ¹⁰I took the little scroll out of the angel's hand and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

1. What point is illustrated with Ezekiel and John eating the scrolls?

2. Why do you think God's Word turned John's stomach sour?

Read Isaiah 55:1–3 - Hey,¹ all of you who are thirsty, come to the water, even if you have no money!

Come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

² Why do you spend money on something that is not bread?

Why do you waste your labor on something that does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good.

Satisfy your appetite with rich food.

³ Turn your ear toward me, and come to me.

Listen, so that you may continue to live.

3. What picture is God using here?

4. How do you know he's talking about the hearing of his Word?

5. What truths about the gospel are on display in these verses?

6. God places great emphasis on the difference between the gospel and other “foods.” The gospel is true “food” that satisfies, while other things on which we “spend money” don't satisfy us. What unsatisfying things do people work hard for? Contrast these things with the gospel.

Jesus, the Bread of Life

Jesus often describes himself as the Water of Life (John 4:13,14 and Revelation 21:6) and the Bread of Life. The words of Christ in John chapter 6 are especially powerful and poignant. However, even Lutheran commentators commonly misunderstand them.

Read John 6:25-59 - When they found him on the other side of the sea, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

²⁶ Jesus answered them, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: You are not looking for me because you saw the miraculous signs, but because you ate the loaves and were filled. ²⁷ Do not continue to work for the food that spoils, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

²⁸ So they said to him, “What should we do to carry out the works of God?”

²⁹ Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God: that you believe in the one he sent.”

³⁰ Then they asked him, “So what miraculous sign are you going to do, that we may see it and believe you? What miraculous sign are you going to perform? ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

³² Jesus said to them, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the real bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴ “Sir,” they said to him, “give us this bread all the time!”

³⁵ “I am the Bread of Life,” Jesus told them. “The one who comes to me will never be hungry, and the one who believes in me will never be thirsty. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have also seen me, and you do not believe. ³⁷ Everyone the Father gives me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will never cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do my will, but the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me: that I should lose none of those he has given me, but raise them up on the Last Day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of my Father: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life. And I will raise him up on the Last Day.”

⁴¹ So the Jews started grumbling about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” ⁴² They asked, “Isn’t this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? So how can he say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”

⁴³ Jesus answered them, “Stop grumbling among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the Last Day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets, ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. ⁴⁶ I am not saying that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God. He is the one who has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Amen, Amen, I tell you: The one who believes in me has eternal life.

⁴⁸ “I am the Bread of Life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone may eat it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

⁵² At that, the Jews argued among themselves, “How can this man give us his^[e] flesh to eat?”

⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the Last Day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is real food, and my blood is real drink. ⁵⁶ The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like your fathers ate and died. The one who eats this bread will live forever.”

⁵⁹ He said these things while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

7. Many have incorrectly (but perhaps understandably) identified Jesus’ words here as describing Holy Communion. What makes it clear from these words and the broader context of Scripture that this is *not* what he’s speaking about?

8. If Jesus isn’t speaking about Holy Communion here, what does he mean when he speaks about eating his flesh and drinking his blood? (Hint: Remember the sections from Ezekiel, Revelation, and Isaiah.)

Summary

Key Points:

- Eating and drinking are used as pictures of taking the truths of God into our hearts and firmly believing them.
- God invites us especially to do this with the gospel message. When we “feed on” what Christ has done for us, we find a banquet of God’s love that will never fail to satisfy us.

The crowds who heard that true satisfaction and life could only be found in Jesus and his words were offended and left him. God grant us a different reaction. May we go back to his words and the truth of his incarnation, “chew” on what he tells us, “digest” it, and be fully satisfied!

During the Week

1. Examine your weekly schedule. Do you regularly set aside time to “feed” your soul with Jesus’ words? If not, make a plan to do so.