



**March 19, 2023**

**The Fourth Sunday in Lent  
Service of Holy Communion**

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

**+GATHERING+**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.*

**WELCOME**

**PRELUDE**      Prelude and Fugue in D Minor      J.S. Bach

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,  
who looks upon us in compassion,  
forgives our sin,  
and heals our lives.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection*

**Have mercy, O God,  
against you, you alone,  
we have sinned.  
In your compassion,  
cleanse us from our sin  
and take away our guilt.  
Create in us a new heart  
and give us a steadfast spirit.  
Do not cast us away,  
but fill us with your Holy Spirit  
and restore your joy within us.**

**Amen.**

As tender as parent to child,  
so deep is God's compassion for you.  
As high as heaven is above earth,  
so vast is God's love for you.  
As far as east is from west,  
so far God removes your sin from you,

renewing your life through Jesus Christ.  
Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love.  
Blessed be God forever.

**Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness**  
**ELW 843**

- 1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness  
with a liberating light;  
praise the One who frees the pris'ners,  
turning blindness into sight.  
Praise the One who preached the gospel,  
healing ev'ry dread disease,  
calming storms and feeding thousands  
with the very bread of peace.
  
- 2 Praise the One who blessed the children  
with a strong yet gentle word;  
praise the One who drove out demons  
with a piercing, two-edged sword.  
Praise the One who brings cool water  
to the desert's burning sand;  
from this well comes living water  
quenching thirst in ev'ry land.
  
- 3 Praise the one true love incarnate:  
Christ, who suffered in our place;  
Jesus died and rose for many  
that we may know God by grace.  
Let us sing for joy and gladness,  
seeing what our God has done.  
Praise the one redeeming glory;  
praise the One who makes us one.

## GREETING

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

**And also with you.**

## KYRIE

Pg. 31

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY.

Let us pray.

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **+WORD+**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.*

## CHILDRENS' BIBLE STORY TIME

*Children may leave worship with the teachers for Bible Story Time. They will return during the Hymn of the Day.*

**FIRST READING****1 Samuel****16:1-13**

A reading from Samuel

*Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the LORD, designating David as the LORD's chosen successor to Saul.*

<sup>1</sup>The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." <sup>2</sup>Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" <sup>3</sup>Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." <sup>4</sup>Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" <sup>5</sup>He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

<sup>6</sup>When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." <sup>7</sup>But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." <sup>8</sup>Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." <sup>9</sup>Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." <sup>10</sup>Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." <sup>11</sup>Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." <sup>12</sup>He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said,

“Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.”<sup>13</sup> Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 23 The King of Love My Shepherd is ELW 502**

The King of Love My Shepherd Is



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness  
 2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed  
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in  
 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
 soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant  
 love he sought me, and on his shoul - der  
 Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my



I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.  
 pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.  
 com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.

- 5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;  
 thine unction grace bestoweth;  
 and, oh, what transport of delight  
 from thy pure chalice floweth!
- 6 And so, through all the length of days,  
 thy goodness faileth never.  
 Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise  
 within thy house forever.

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821–1877

Music: St. COLUMBA, Irish tune

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**SECOND READING****Ephesians****5:8-14**

A reading from Ephesians.

*Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our activity is truly pleasing to God.*

<sup>8</sup>Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—<sup>9</sup>for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. <sup>10</sup>Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup>For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; <sup>13</sup>but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, <sup>14</sup>for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

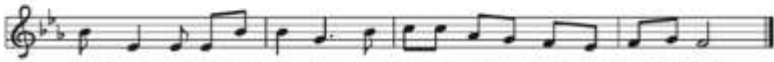
“Sleeper, awake!  
Rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION****Pg. 34**

Noth-ing in all cre - a - tion can sep - a - rate us from the love of God,



Noth-ing in all cre - a - tion can sep - a - rate us from the love of God.

*Choir*

Jesus says, I am the light | of the world;\* whoever follows me will have the | light of life

*Repeat Acclamation*

**GOSPEL****John 9:1-41**

The holy gospel according to John  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.*

<sup>1</sup>As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" <sup>3</sup>Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup>We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. <sup>5</sup>As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." <sup>6</sup>When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, <sup>7</sup>saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. <sup>8</sup>The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" <sup>9</sup>Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." <sup>10</sup>But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" <sup>11</sup>He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." <sup>12</sup>They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

<sup>13</sup>They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. <sup>14</sup>Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." <sup>16</sup>Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. <sup>17</sup>So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

<sup>18</sup>The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who



had received his sight <sup>19</sup>and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" <sup>20</sup>His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; <sup>21</sup>but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." <sup>22</sup>His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. <sup>23</sup>Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

<sup>24</sup>So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." <sup>25</sup>He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." <sup>26</sup>They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" <sup>27</sup>He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" <sup>28</sup>Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. <sup>29</sup>We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." <sup>30</sup>The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup>We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. <sup>32</sup>Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. <sup>33</sup>If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." <sup>34</sup>They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

<sup>35</sup>Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" <sup>36</sup>He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." <sup>37</sup>Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." <sup>38</sup>He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. <sup>39</sup>Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." <sup>40</sup>Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are

we?" <sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains." The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

### HYMN OF THE DAY **Let My Spirit Always Sing ACS 1020**

- 1 Let my spirit always sing,  
though my heart be wintering,  
though the season of despair  
give no sign that you are there,  
God to whom my days belong,  
let there always be a song.
- 2 Though my body be confined,  
let your word engage my mind,  
let the inner eye discern  
how much more there is to learn,  
see a world becoming whole  
through the window of the soul.
- 3 Let your wisdom grace my years,  
choose my words and chase my fears,  
give me wit to welcome change,  
to accept, and not estrange,  
let my joy be full and deep  
in the knowledge that I keep.
- 4 Let my spirit always sing,  
to your Spirit answering,  
through the silence, through the pain  
know my hope is not in vain,  
like a feather on your breath  
trust your love, through life and death.

## APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father  
and he will come to judge the living and the  
dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit  
the holy catholic church  
the communion of saints  
the forgiveness of sins  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

... Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

... revealed in Christ crucified. **Amen.**

## SHARE THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## +MEAL+

*God feeds us in the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**OFFERING** *An offering is gathered for the mission of the church,  
including the care of those in need.*

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM I Believe**      Sung by the Choir  
**anonymous poem: Music by Mark Miller**

I believe in the sun, even when it's not shining.  
 I believe in love, even when I don't feel it.  
 I believe in God, even when God is silent.

**OFFERTORY RESPONSE COME TO THE TABLE ELW 481**

Come to the table of mercy,  
 prepared with the wine and the bread.  
 All who are hungry and thirsty,  
 come, and your souls will be fed.  
 Come at the Lord's invitation;  
 receive from his nail-scarred hand.  
 Eat of the bread of salvation;  
 drink of the blood of the Lamb.

**OFFERING PRAYER**

God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is sure. Word and water, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Receive the gifts we bring, and nourish us to proclaim your abiding love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.

**Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

**DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**  
 Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**  
 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ;

You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with  
joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the  
choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of  
heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Pg. 36

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and  
God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the  
Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

# THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.  
Your mercy is everlasting  
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.  
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.  
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.  
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness  
to the land of milk and honey.  
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed  
one.  
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.  
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup  
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Bless this feast.

Grace our table with your presence.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.

Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.

Breathe new life into us.

Send us forth,

burning with justice, peace, and love.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places,

with the earth and all its creatures,

with sun and moon and stars,

we praise you, O God,

blessed and holy Trinity,

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.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

*You are invited to come forward to the front of the nave to receive the Meal. The bread will be distributed by the Presiding Minister.*

*Gluten free wafers are available. Please ask. The wine, served in*

*small glasses, can be received on either side of the front. Also in each*

tray you will find glasses containing white grape juice as an alternative to the wine. Return to your seats via the side aisles, placing your empty glasses in the baskets provided along the way. In returning to your seats, pause to pray and give thanks for the life-giving graces you have received in this holy meal offered us by the crucified-risen Jesus.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

## COMMUNION

### COMMUNION HYMN *Lamb of God*

ACS p. 40

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

## TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Living God, as the disciples ate and drank with their risen Lord, we have been nourished with the very presence of Christ. Through this meal may we be strengthened to keep your word and to proclaim the power of your love in Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**



**+SENDING+**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS****BLESSING**

The peace of God,  
which surpasses all understanding,  
keep your hearts and your minds  
in + Christ Jesus.

**Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN *Be Thou My Vision* ELW 793**

- 1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
- 2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,  
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
- 3 Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,  
thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,  
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- 4 Light of my soul, after victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

**WORSHIP LEADERS for Sunday, March 19, 2023**

The Rev. Les Swenson, Deacon Gwynne Hopko

**Assistant Minister:** Terry Gustafson

**Lector:** Paul Martin

**Tech Team:** Abigail Griffin, Ken Griffin, Kyle Galvin, Noah Galvin

**Ushers:** Donald Millbrandt, Bill Golden, Kathy Golden

**Altar Guild:** Susan Provenzano, Ashley Provenzano

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### Easter Flowers and Special Gifts

There are several ways you can honor a loved one through special giving this Easter. Those wishing to adorn our sanctuary with flowers this Easter season may do so by completing the form and placing it in our offering plate on Sunday morning or mailing it to St. Andrew Lutheran Church, 1125 Stafford Avenue, Bristol, CT 06010.

#### EASTER FLOWERS

Those wishing to adorn our sanctuary with flowers this Easter season may do so by completing this form and placing it in the offering plate or leaving it in the church office door slot.



Donations of \$20.00 are requested.

All donations received will be used for the purchase of flowers.

Please make checks payable to St. Andrew Lutheran Church.

**GIVEN BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

All gifts are given to the Glory of God. Is there someone you'd like to recognize additionally with this gift?

In loving memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In thanksgiving for: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_



### SPECIAL GIFTS FOR EASTER

I would like to make a special Easter offering to the following St. Andrew fund:  
(Please designate amounts)

New Hymnal! **All Creation Sings**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Donations of \$16 per hymnal

Capital Improvement Fund                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

General Fund    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mission Endowment Fund                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL offering    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

All gifts are given to the Glory of God. Is there someone you'd like to recognize additionally with this gift?

In loving memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In thanksgiving for: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form by **March 26, 2023**

## God's Eyes Are Not Our Eyes

One heresy in the early church was called Donatism. The Donatists held that the sacraments were only efficacious if presided over by priests who were sinless. It didn't take the church long to realize that if it held to this policy there would be no sacraments for anyone. So if the gospel can be proclaimed through the preaching of a sinner, then we must allow for the possibility that God's healing may be accomplished through extraordinary means. God chooses a boy too young to be taken seriously to anoint as one chosen to lead Israel. When the prophet Samuel is sent by God to find the new king who will replace Saul, Samuel goes through a long line of all Jesse's tall, strapping, competent-looking sons of appropriate age. When none of them are chosen, finally Jesse sends for young David. All of the obvious-to-us choices were declined in favor of a boy. What we may see as authoritative, respectable, and trustworthy may not always align with God. Today's first reading reminds us that "the LORD does not see as mortals see" (1 Sam. 16:7).

This theme of sight runs throughout today's texts, both in terms of how God does not see as we see and also in Jesus' healing of a man born blind. Jesus chooses to heal a blind man on the sabbath with dirt and saliva, much to the dismay of the good religious people who were certain they knew better than to display such questionable judgment and behavior. Lent is a time to reevaluate. Let it also be a time to examine the ways in which we do not see what God is doing around us because we too think we know better. Bottom line: God often uses the unexpected to accomplish redemption.