

## MIDWEEK OF LENT 2

## WATER GIVES ME LIFE

MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

## AS WE GATHER

Water is life. Water is everywhere. Not only is this true in the world around us, but it is also true in the Scriptures. Throughout the Bible, we witness our Creator giving us new life—cleansing, reshaping, even re-creating—through the water of the Spirit and through the living and active Word of Jesus. Today our attention is drawn to the promised treasure of the life-giving water that God uses to claim us as His children and unite us to His Son’s death and resurrection. With the Savior, who steps into the water with us, we “daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever” (Small Catechism, Baptism, Fourth Part).

## INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the 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 Philipians 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 Even though You claimed us as Your own in the waters of Baptism, we often do not walk in the newness of life.

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, who blesses us with new birth in the water and the Spirit and assures us that our lives belong to Him. The almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins.

C **Amen.**

#### COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, through water You reshape and restore Your fallen creation, entering our lives in Baptism so that we may be cleansed by Your Spirit.

C **Renew our hearts and minds during this Lenten season as we receive the promised treasures of Your Word;**

P for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

#### FIRST READING

*Genesis 7:11–23*

<sup>11</sup>In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.

<sup>12</sup>And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. <sup>13</sup>On the

very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, <sup>14</sup>they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. <sup>15</sup>They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. <sup>16</sup>And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.

<sup>17</sup>The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. <sup>18</sup>The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. <sup>19</sup>And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. <sup>20</sup>The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. <sup>21</sup>And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. <sup>22</sup>Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. <sup>23</sup>He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

*Psalm 23*

P The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

C **He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.**

P He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

C **Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,**

P for You are with me;

C **Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.**

P You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

C **You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**

P Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

C **and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

**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.**

## SECOND READING

*1 Peter 3:17–22*

<sup>17</sup>For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

<sup>18</sup>For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup>in which He went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup>because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. <sup>21</sup>Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to Him.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

## VERSE

*Joel 2:13b*

Return to the LORD, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

## HOLY GOSPEL

*John 3:1–8*

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

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

<sup>1</sup>Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. <sup>2</sup>This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." <sup>3</sup>Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." <sup>4</sup>Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" <sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup>That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup>Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup>The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

SERMON

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Create In Me"

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 see the blessings You have poured out into our lives through the washing of water with the Word.**

- 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

**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.**

#### LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER

- C **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

#### BENEDICTION

- P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.
- C **Amen.**

HYMN "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" LPH 45 v 1 & 3