

SAVIOR
SERVANT
FRIEND



ENCOURAGER

Mid-Week Lenten Service

March 26th, 2025

Christ Lutheran Church

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MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICE—WEEK FOUR

Savior, Servant, Friend—Encourager

March 26, 2025

AS WE GATHER

In this special service for Week 4 of Lent, we recognize that Jesus encourages us in our faith to live our life for Him.

*“I have called you friends, for all that I have heard
from my Father I have made known to you.” ~ John 15:15*

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: We gather for worship today to be encouraged by the powerful presence of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Pastor: May the God of endurance and encouragement grant us

All: To live in harmony with one another and in accord with Christ Jesus. (Romans 15:5)

Pastor: So if there is any encouragement in Christ,

All: Any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit,

Pastor: Any affection and sympathy,

All: Complete my joy by being of one mind,

Pastor: Having the same love,

All: Being in full accord and of one mind. (Philippians 2:1-2)

Pastor: Therefore encourage one another

All: And build one another up, just as you are doing. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

OPENING HYMN

“Be Thou My Vision”

**Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art;
Thou my best thought, by day or by night;
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.**

**Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true Son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.**

**Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise;
Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart;
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art.**

**High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven’s joys, bright heaven’s Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Encourage us, our Savior, Servant, Friend, with Your word of forgiveness as we confess our sins.

All: My heart is weighed down by shame and guilt, by my sins and failures.

Pastor: My words have discouraged and torn others down.

All: My confidence has been misplaced and misdirected.

Pastor: My faith has faltered as I have trusted in idols and myself.

All: My soul is tried and burdened by the loads that I have carried.

Pastor: My spirit needs a word of forgiveness and encouragement.

All: Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

(Please silently reflect on our need for the encouraging friendship of Jesus.)

Pastor: Take courage, friends! Jesus forgives you of all of your sins. Let your hearts be strengthened, your souls be refreshed, your minds be renewed and your spirits be encouraged. Jesus has nailed your sins to the cross and thrown them into the tomb. Having been forgiven by Jesus, let us now live for Him.

All: What a Friend we have in Jesus.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

† GOD’S WORD †

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 41:8-11

(ESV page 714)

⁸ But you, Israel, my servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
⁹ you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, “You are my servant,
I have chosen you and not cast you off”;
¹⁰ fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
¹¹ Behold, all who are incensed against you
shall be put to shame and confounded;
those who strive against you
shall be as nothing and shall perish.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE READING

1 Thessalonians 5:5-11

(ESV page 1174)

⁵For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.**GOSPEL READING**

Matthew 8:5-13

*(ESV page 966)*Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 8th chapter.**All: Glory to You, O Lord.**

⁵When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, ⁶“Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.” ⁷And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” ⁸But the centurion replied, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. ⁹For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” ¹⁰When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. ¹¹I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹²while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ¹³And to the centurion Jesus said, “Go; let it be done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was healed at that very moment.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.**PREPARATION HYMN**

“How Firm a Foundation” (vs. 1-4)

LSB 728

**How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He has said,
Who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?**

**“Fear not! I am with you. O be not dismayed,
For I am your God and will still give you aid;
I’ll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.”**

**“The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no never, no never, forsake.”**

**“When through fiery trials your pathway will lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, will be your supply.
The flames will not hurt you; I only design
Your dross to consume and your gold to refine.”**

SERMON

“Encourager”

Matthew 8:5-13

OFFERING *(You are invited to place your financial gifts to the Lord in the offering plates as they are passed through the pews. You can also give your one-time or recurring gifts to the Lord through the "Vanco Mobile" app for your phone or by clicking on the "Give" tab on our website.)*

OFFERTORY

[Piano Solo]

PRAYERS

Each petition concludes with the following response:

Pastor: Lord,

All: Hear our prayer.

LORD’S PRAYER

Pastor: Hear us as we pray in Jesus’ name and as He has taught us:

All: 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.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: And now may the strength and promises, the peace and blessing of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit go with you and encourage you! Amen.

All: What a Friend we have in Jesus!

CLOSING HYMN

“Rock of Ages”

LSB 761

**Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood, from Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure: cleanse me from its guilt and pow’r.**

**Not the labors of my hands can fulfill Thy Law’s demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone.**

**Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling.
Naked, come to Thee for dress; helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior, or I die.**

**While I draw this fleeting breath, when mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown, see Thee on Thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee.**

SERVICE NOTES

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