

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS AT HOME WORSHIP
MARCH 10, 2024

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, you have taught us what it is to live in community with one another in sacrificial love. Give us hearts for service so that all might have their needs met, freeing your humanity to give back for the good of others and of all creation. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



SCRIPTURE READINGS: PSALM 89: 1-4

- ¹ I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.
² I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.
³ You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:
⁴ 'I will establish your descendants forever,
and build your throne for all generations.'"

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

MARK 12 : 28-44

- ²⁸ One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?"
²⁹ Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; ³⁰
you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." ³² Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; ³³ and 'to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself,' — this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.
³⁵ While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David? ³⁶ David himself, by the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.'" ³⁷ David himself calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?"

And the large crowd was listening to him with delight. ³⁸ As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, ³⁹ and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! ⁴⁰ They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

⁴¹ He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. ⁴³ Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴ For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise be to Christ.

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL BY ASSISTING MINISTER DICK WERP

Could Jesus be any clearer about God's expectations for us? Love your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength. In other words, "Love your God with every fiber of who you are!" Can you love that much? That deeply? Could anything be harder? Speaking of hard what about the widow's mite?

Later in our gospel lesson we learn that the Widow gave all she had. As Jesus said, "She acted out of her poverty, while others acted out of their wealth." Where does this leave us? Are we to give all we have to God? Does God want us to become homeless beggars by giving everything away to the church? How should we respond?

If you are like me, when you don't understand something, you just ignore it and move on. I just keep doing what I always thought best. But as I reflect on these commands, I think our God is trying to tell us that we must continually work on building our relationship with him because as humans we will never get it exactly right. We are engaged, each of us, in our own faith journey where we need to focus on how we love our God and how we continue to build our relationship with him.

One of the main ways we build our relationship is through the second commandment he gave us that day. To love our neighbor as we love ourselves. As we love each other, I believe we are demonstrating and building our love for our God. But is there anything harder for us to do? If you are like me, there are people in our lives and world that we don't like a lot, much less, love. How do we love a neighbor who steals or murders, hurts others by acts of hatred, or oppresses others through their judgmental righteous indignation? And yet that person is our neighbor and we are called to love him/her.

I think that all this is the struggle of our individual faith journeys. But, we can't do this work alone. I don't think any of us can. Thus, we are in a place where we need each other for the journey. To support each other in this difficult work, to confront each other out of love when we get off track, and to love each other when we are most unlovable. We need our faith family for our journey!

May God give us insight and wisdom to build our relationships with our God and our neighbor. Amen

HYMN OF THE DAY | GREAT GOD, YOUR LOVE HAS CALLED US

ELW # 358

https://youtu.be/YGRBhG_V4RI?feature=shared

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As we walk together through this season of contemplation and preparation, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

O God, your commandment to us is love. Keep us ever mindful that love is not a feeling but an action, the kind of action that allows your reign of justice and mercy to break into the world each day. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Your charge to love our neighbors as ourselves includes every living thing in all your vast creation. Fill us with such love for animals and plants that we cannot help but strive for the preservation of the ecosystems in which they thrive. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Guide leaders around the world to act in love for all people, rather than serving the interests of a few. Give them a spirit of cooperation, that all nations might work together for the flourishing of the whole world. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Walk with all those whose lives are diminished by pain, that they might know your loving and healing presence, and find comfort, strength, and hope to endure, especially Lori and her family, Ed Johnson, Terry, Dave, and all we lift up through our Prayer Chain. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Call to account those who keep up the appearance of piety while visiting injustice on others, especially when it is us. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Strengthen us to care for those in need through the outreach ministries of our community. To all who have hunger, give daily bread. To all who have bread, give hunger for justice. Bring aid and support to those who are poor, beaten down, abused, forgotten, silenced, or avoided, especially those seeking help through the Community Infant Program, the Little Free Pantry, Rise Against Suicide, and the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Provide for the work of the Joshua School and organizations like them. Empower the staff and parents of children living on the Autism Spectrum. Nurture the minds, bodies and spirits of these children and adults, that they might reach their highest quality of life. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Encourage and empower those impacted by war, tyranny, and gun violence. Still the sound of weapons. Teach us to seek security that comes from respect rather than violence. Strengthen and comfort the people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Palestine, Gaza, and all those throughout the world whose lives are impacted by violence. Remind us of what You require of us: That we do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with You. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, our help in every trouble, we pray for peace in the Holy Land. Protect those traumatized by ongoing violence, especially those with no access to safe spaces. Release people held hostage; provide food, water, fuel, and supplies for all in need; sustain medical personnel as they work in horrendous conditions; tend to those who are wounded; comfort all who grieve. Direct your people and its leaders into the way of peace. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We thank you for all the saints, from the first disciples to the present day, who modeled your great commandment for us. Inspire us to the same love of God and others each and every day. God of the journey, **hear our prayer.**

Confident that you walk alongside us in our need, we lift to you all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, through Jesus Christ our savior. **Amen.**

LENTEN BENEDICTION

Whatever wilderness the Spirit has brought you to:
Walk in boldness, as a beloved child of God.
Walk in peace, under the shelter of the Most High.
Walk in faith, knowing Christ walks with you. **Amen.**



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace.
Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person—questions, complexities and all.
Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

SHEPHERD CALENDAR OF EVENTS: MARCH 10 – MARCH 17, 2024

Sunday, March 10th – Great Commandment

9:30 a.m. - Hybrid In-Person/Zoom Worship w/Holy Communion
Hybrid In-Person/Zoom “Why Church?” Lenten Study
immediately following worship

Wednesday, March 13th

11:00 a.m. - Amazing Grace Bible Study
6:30 p.m. - Zoom Only “Why Church?” Lenten Study

Friday, March 15th

7:00 a.m. - Men’s Zoom Breakfast Bible Study
5:00 p.m. - Friday Night Perspectives Gathering

Sunday, March 17th - End of the Age

9:30 a.m. - Hybrid In-Person/Zoom Worship w/Holy Communion
Hybrid In-Person/Zoom “Why Church?” Lenten Study
immediately following worship

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

ED J. 3/1
EMILY T. 3/3
MICHELLE K. 3/5
T. SCHREIER 3/6
JANET K. 3/21
LYNN T. 3/25
DICK W. 3/27
NINA S. 3/30

DAILY NARRATIVE READINGS MARCH 10– MARCH 17, 2024

Monday, March 11, 2024 – Psalm 89:1-4 Psalm

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-891-4-psalm2024a>

Tuesday, March 12, 2024 – Psalm 102:12-17 Psalm

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-10212-17-psalm2024>

Wednesday, March 13, 2024 – Psalm 121 Psalm

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-121-psalm2024b>

Thursday, March 14, 2024 – Psalm 116:12-19 Psalm

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-11612-19-psalm2024>

Friday, March 15, 2024 – Psalm 22:1-2, 14-21 Psalm

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/psalm-221-2-14-21-psalm2024>

Saturday, March 16, 2024 – Deuteronomy 6:1-9 The Great Commandment

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/deuteronomy-61-9-the-great-commandment2024>

Sunday, March 17, 2024 – Mark 13:1-8, 24-37 End of the Age

<https://clergystuff.com/nl-devotions/mark-131-8-24-37-end-of-the-age2024>