

**Savior, Servant, Friend
Services for Lent
March 26, 2025**

Comforter

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

P By God's gracious invitation, we gather together in the presence of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Comfort, comfort my people

C Says your God. (Isaiah 40:1)

P Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

C I will fear no evil

P For you are with me

C Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)

P This is my comfort in my affliction,

C That your promise gives me life. (Psalm 119:50)

P Let your steadfast love comfort me

C According to your promise to your servant. (Psalm 119:76)



1 "Com - fort, com - fort ye My peo - ple, Speak ye peace," thus
 2 Yea, her sins our God will par - don, Blot - ting out each
 3 Hark, the her - ald's voice is cry - ing In the des - ert
 4 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed; Make the rough - er



saith our God; "Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, Mourn - ing
 dark mis - deed; All that well de - served His an - ger He no
 far and near, Call - ing sin - ners to re - pen - tance, Since the
 plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be -



'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem
 more will see or heed. She hath suf - fered man - y a day,
 King - dom now is here. O that warn - ing cry o - bey!
 fits His ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry of the Lord



Of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her
 Now her griefs have passed a - way; God will change her
 Now pre - pare for God a way; Let the val - leys
 Now o'er earth is shed a - broad, And all flesh shall



sins I cov - er And her war - fare now is o - ver."
 pin - ing sad - ness In - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
 rise to meet Him And the hills bow down to greet Him.
 see the to - ken That His Word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text and tune: Public domain

Confession and Forgiveness

P Sin threatens to separate us from the comfort we have in our Savior, Servant, Friend, Jesus.

C Lord Jesus, hear us now as we confess our sins to you.

- P** We have sought comfort and peace in all the wrong places.
- C** **We have tried to comfort ourselves by our desires and lusts.**

- P** We have failed to comfort others as we should.
- C** **We have torn down and harmed, slandered and lied.**

- P** We have found no comfort or peace in our sin and shame.
- C** **Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!**

(Please silently reflect on the discomfort of sin and the comforting assurance of Christ's forgiveness.)

- P** Comfort, comfort my people, says our God! Our friend Jesus faced the discomfort and pain of the cross in order to forgive us of all our sins. In the stead and by the command of our friend, Jesus Christ, I declare to you the forgiveness of all your sins and the comforting assurance that are set free from sin and shame.
- C** **What a friend we have in Jesus.**

Prayer of the Day

- P** Almighty and everlasting God, as we venture deeper into this Lenten season, draw us into an ever deeper friendship with you. Give us your Holy Spirit so that we can hear your Word, trust in your promises, fix our eyes on the cross, and be comforted by your loving-kindness. We pray this through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 51:1-6

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him. For the Lord comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Give attention to me, my people, and give ear to me, my nation; for a law will go out from me, and I will set my justice for a light to the peoples. My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and they who dwell in it will die in like manner; but my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness will never be dismayed.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle Reading

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

John 11:17-27

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

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

Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained

seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sermon Hymn:

Amazing Grace

LSB 744

Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost,
but now am found, was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved; How precious did
that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come: 'Tis grace has brought
me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me, his word my hope secures; He will my shield and
portion be as long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and mortal life shall cease: I shall possess, within
the veil, a life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun forbear to shine; But God, who called
me here below, will be forever mine.

Sermon:

Reverend Bill Whitehead

Prayers

P Friends, nothing is impossible for Jesus. And, so, we pray in the name of Jesus knowing that he can do immeasurably more than all that we ask or imagine. Let us pray: Jesus, your power and promises bring profound comfort to us in our hardships and struggles. Hear us now as we lift our prayers and raise our petitions to you.

C **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P Lord Jesus, bring comfort to every corner of your creation, and assure us with your promise to one day wipe away every tear from our eyes.

C **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P Comfort our deepest hurts and sorrows, and remind us that nothing is too far broken for your hope and healing.

C **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P Comfort the vulnerable and lonely, the weak and powerless, the grieving and impoverished—all the while using us as instruments of your comforting friendship.

C **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P Comfort those who are near the point of death and being called to your nearer presence.

C **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P Comfort your church around the world, especially the faithful gathered in places that are hostile toward the Christian faith.

C **Lord, hear our prayer.**

P Comfort us when we are afflicted by sin and assure us of your forgiveness—yet, bring discomfort to the parts of our lives that are far too comfortable in sin and waywardness.

C **Lord, hear our prayer, and comfort us as only you can. Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

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.**

Benediction

P Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. And, so, receive this blessing: The Lord bless and comfort you in all your afflictions so that you can be a blessing and a comfort to all in their afflictions. Amen.

C **What a friend we have in Jesus!**

Closing Hymn:

Blessed Assurance

Tune of LSB 466

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect communion, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight. Angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect submission, all is at rest. I in my Savior am happy and bless'd, Watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his love. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

Postlude:

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LEADING AND ASSISTING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Preacher Reverend Bill Whitehead
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