

Northern Lancaster Cluster of Lutheran Churches, Midweek Lenten Service
Muddy Creek Lutheran Church Wednesday, March 6, 2024, 7 p.m.

Series Theme: “*Open My Life, Lord*”

Tonight’s Theme: “*Open My Ears, Lord*”

SERVICE OF THE WORD FOR LENT

Online Edition

* = *Please stand as you are able* All congregational responses are in **bold**

Prelude: “*O Man, Bewail Thy Grievous Fall*” J. S. Bach

Welcome/Announcements/Waving Hello

*Opening Dialogue:

L: In the waters of Baptism, we hear: C: **You are my beloved precious child.**

L: Through the Word, we hear: C: **Take up your cross and follow me.**

L: In the Lord’s Supper, we hear: C: **I have given myself for you.**

L: Through the Spirit, we hear: C: **I have come to give you new life!**

All: **Open our ears, Lord, to hear your message of salvation to us!**

*Gathering Hymn: “*Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty*” #533

1. Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there,
where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer.
Oh, how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light and grace!
2. Gracious God, I come before thee; come thou also unto me;
where we find thee and adore thee, there a heav’n on earth must be.
To my heart, oh, enter thou, let it be thy temple now!
3. Here thy praise is gladly chanted, here thy seed is duly sown;
let my soul, where it is planted, bring forth precious sheaves alone,
so that all I hear may be fruitful unto life in me.
4. Thou my faith increase and quicken, let me keep thy gift divine;
Howsoe’er temptations thicken, may thy word still o’er me shine
as my guiding star through life, as my comfort in all strife.
5. Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let they will be done indeed;
may I undisturbed draw near thee while thou dost thy people free.
Here of life the fountain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

*Greeting – L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. C: **And also with you.**

*Opening Prayer: L: Let us pray: Open our ears, Lord, to heed your will for our lives. Help us
not only to hear, but to listen and understand with our hearts. In Jesus’ name we pray. C: **Amen.**

Choir Anthem: *Come to the Cross* R. Wilson

Scripture Reading - Isaiah 50:4-5

L: The first reading comes from Isaiah, chapter 50.

The Lord GOD has given me a trained tongue, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens, wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. ⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I did not turn backward. ”

L: The word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 40:1-8 (Congregational responses in bold)

L: Let us read Psalm 40 responsively as printed in your bulletin:

¹ I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

² **He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.**

³ He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.

⁴ **Happy are those who make the LORD their trust,
who do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after false gods.**

⁵ You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us; none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.

⁶ **Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear.
Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.**

⁷ Then I said, "Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.

⁸ **I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."**

*Gospel: Matthew 13:10-17

L: Please rise as you are able for the reading of the Gospel.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 13th chapter. C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Then the disciples came and asked Jesus, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" ¹¹ He answered, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ¹³ The reason I speak to them in parables is that 'seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.' ¹⁴ With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: 'You will indeed listen but never understand, and you will indeed look but never perceive. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, so that they might not look with their eyes, and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn—and I would heal them.'

¹⁶ "But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. ¹⁷ Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. L: The gospel of the Lord. C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon - Pastor Jim Goodyear, Bergstrasse Lutheran Church

*The 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

L: Lord of all life, when we cannot see the beauty of your creation,

C: **Open our eyes, that all living things thrive and grow.**

L: When we neglect the poor, the sick, and the grieving,

C: **Open our hands to do your work in the world.**

L: When we ignore the cries of injustice in our midst,

C: **Open our ears, that all will know your love.**

L: When we are hardened against our neighbor,

C: **Open our hearts and heal our resentment.**

L: When we are closed to the grace you long to give us,

C: **Open our lives and turn us to follow in the way of the cross.**

L: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for which we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C: **Amen.**

*Lord's Prayer: **Our Father, who are 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.**

*Blessing: Go into the world with eyes open to the transforming light of Christ, hands open to serve those you meet, ears open to the call of the Spirit, hearts open to the bountiful love of God, and lives open to follow Christ to the cross. The God who opened for us the way of everlasting life bless you now and forever. C: **Amen.**

*Hymn: "Dearest Jesus, At Your Word"#520

1. Dearest Jesus, at your word we have come again to hear you;
let our thoughts and hearts be stirred and in glowing faith be near you
as the promises here given draw us wholly up to heaven.
2. All our knowledge, sense, and sight lie in deeper darkness shrouded
till your Spirit breaks the night, filling us with light unclouded.
All good thoughts and all good living come but by your gracious giving.
3. Radiance of God's glory bright, Light of Light from God proceeding,
Jesus, send your blessed light; help our hearing, speaking, heeding,
that our prayers and songs may please you, as with grateful hearts we praise you.
4. Father, Son and Holy Ghost, praise to you and adoration!
Grant us what we need the most: all your gospel's consolation
while we here on earth await you, till in heav'n with praise we greet you.

*Dismissal P: Go in Peace, Serve the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude: *Postlude in G Minor*A. Hesse

Announcements

Welcome to tonight's Cluster Lenten Service! Immediately following the service tonight, all are invited to come downstairs to the Fellowship Hall for a time of refreshments. You may use the elevator if that is helpful.

Tonight's Offering can be put in any of the wooden boxes on the entry tables. The offering will go to support this year's Disaster Relief Mission Trip which will be in Port Charlotte, Florida. April 28 - May 4. Checks may be made out to: "North Lancaster Conference Dean's Fund", "Disaster Relief Trip" written on the memo line.

Participating Congregations in the Cluster Lenten Services:

St. Paul Lutheran, Adamstown
Faith United Lutheran, Denver
Muddy Creek Lutheran, Denver
Swamp Lutheran, Reinholds
Mellingers Lutheran, Schoeneck
Bergstrasse Lutheran, Ephrata
St. John Center Lutheran, East Earl

Upcoming Cluster Services:

*Next Wed. March 13, 7 p.m. at Mellingers Lutheran Church, Schoeneck. Pastor Sandy Gideon from St. Paul Lutheran will preach on "Open My Heart, Lord".

*Wed. March 20, 7 p.m. at St. John Center Lutheran Church, East Earl. Pastor Peter Schwabe-Fry from Muddy Creek will preach on "Open My Life, Lord".

*Thurs. May 9, 7 p.m. at Swamp Lutheran Church, Reinholds. Pastor Tim Craven from Mellingers Lutheran will preach at the cluster Ascension Day service.