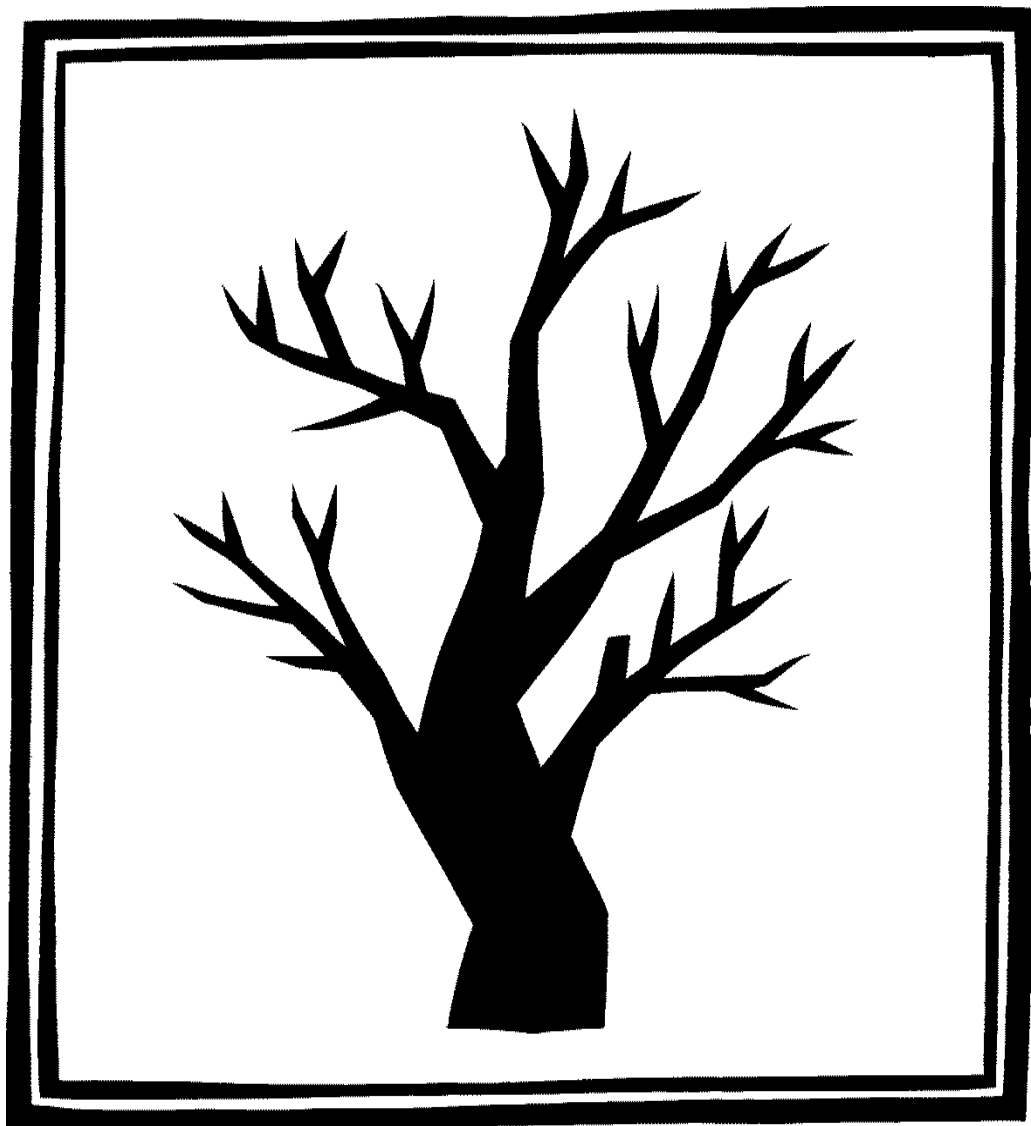




Salem Lutheran Church
401 S. Lake St. Lake Mills IA 50450

Welcome to the House of the Lord

WEEK THREE: COMPASSION
March 23, 2022 – 7:00pm



TURNING TOWARD GOD’S ABUNDANCE: a lenten service of word and prayer
Lent is a season of repentance, turning to God and asking for God’s goodness to wipe away our sins and show us how to live anew. Lent also turns us toward Easter and the abundant life God will offer through the Three Days. This Lenten midweek service turns us toward God’s abundance by focusing on five divine attributes drawn from the gospel texts for Lent (year C): faithfulness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and love. Each service is designed for sustained reflection on the gospel in the context of contemplative prayer, readings, silence, and song.

THE BARREN FIG TREE

Greeting

The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Opening Prayer

O God, rich in mercy, full of kindness, out of your great love, you raise us up from sin and death and make us alive together with Christ. Write your word upon our hearts and restore in us the image of your love that, by your Spirit, our way of life may become the way of Christ, through whom we pray.

Amen.

Silence

The beginning and end of our time of silence will be marked by the chiming of a prayer bowl

Opening Song

Each Winter As the Year Grows Older

ELW #252



- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-----------|------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----|
| 1 | Each | win - ter | as | the | year | grows | old - er, | we | each | grow | old - er, | |
| 2 | When | race | and | class | cry | out | for | trea - son, | when | si - rens | call | for |
| 3 | Yet | I | be - lieve | be - yond | be - liev - ing | that | life | can | spring | from | | |
| 4 | So | e - ven | as | the | sun | is | turn - ing | to | jour - ney | to | the | |
| 5 | O | Child | of | ec - sta - sy | and | sor - rows, | O | Prince | of | peace | and | |



too. The chill sets in a lit - tle cold - er; the
 war, they o - ver - shout the voice of rea - son and
 death, that growth can flow - er from our griev - ing, that
 north, the liv - ing flame, in se - cret burn - ing, can
 pain, bright - en to - day's world by to - mor - row's, re -



ver - i - ties we knew seem shak - en and un - true.
 scream till we ig - nore all we held dear be - fore.
 we can catch our breath and turn trans - fixed by faith.
 kin - dle on the earth and bring God's love to birth.
 new our lives a - gain; Lord Je - sus, come and reign!

Reading: *"little prayer"* by Danez Smith

let ruin end here

let him find honey

where there was once a slaughter

let him enter the lion's cage

& find a field of lilacs

let this be the healing

& if not let it be

From *Don't Call Us Dead* (Graywolf Press, 2017). Copyright © 2017 by Danez Smith. Used by permission of The Permissions Company, Inc., on behalf of Graywolf Press, www.graywolfpress.org.

Silence

The beginning and end of our time of silence will be marked by the chiming of a prayer bowl

Sung response***Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery***

ELW #334



1 Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your
 2 We re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed
 3 Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum - bling



death we are re - born; though you die - in all of
 on through act and word; ev - 'ry per - son lost and
 though our steps may be; one with you in joy and



his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you
 bro - ken wears the bod - y of our Lord, wears the
 sor - row, we the riv - er, you the sea, we the



rise with ev - 'ry morn.
 bod - y of our Lord.
 riv - er, you the sea.

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9***The Barren Fig Tree***

¹At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them — do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

⁶Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find

none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' ⁸He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

Time of prayer and reflection:

The leader invites the community into prayer.

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world. Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

You may wish to close your eyes and ask God to guide your sight and reflection. You are invited to light additional candles as you meditate and pray for guidance, for those who have gathered, for others who are unable to be with us, for healing, inspiration, for the needs of the community, our nation, the world.

Time of conversation: *There are many stories and images of trees in the bible. At creation the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are planted in the midst of the garden. In the psalms the righteous will be like trees firmly planted by streams of water. We speak of family trees because Israel was referred to as a tree firmly rooted, and prophets spoke of a shoot that would rise up from the stump of Jesse. The books of Acts, Galatians and 1 Peter, describe how Jesus hung on a tree. What kind of tree is Jesus describing in his parable of the barren tree? In the parable of the barren tree where do you see and experience God's abundance?*

Concluding prayer:

God of all compassion, gather our prayers in your mercy and grant to us what you know we need, that we may walk in the life and the peace of your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our hope and our salvation.

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.

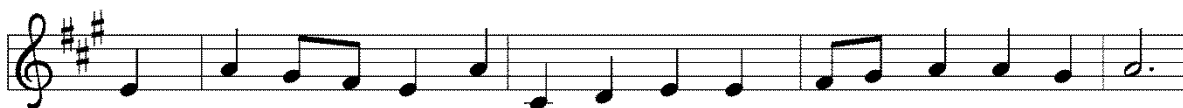
Concluding song

O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate

ELW #722



- 1 O Christ, your heart, com - pas - sion - ate, bore ev - 'ry hu - man pain.
- 2 As once you wel - comed those cast down and healed the sick, the blind,
- 3 O Christ, cre - ate new hearts in us that beat in time with yours,
- 4 O Love that made the dis - tant stars, yet marks the spar - row's fall,



Its beat - ing was the pulse of God; its breadth, God's vast do - main.
 so may all bruised and bro - ken lives through us your help still find.
 that, joined by faith with your great heart, be - come love's o - pen doors.
 whose arms stretched wide up - on a cross em - brace and bear us all:



The heart of God, the heart of Christ com - bined in per - fect rhyme
 Lord, join our hearts with those who weep that none may weep a - lone,
 We are your bod - y, ris - en Christ; our hearts, our hands we yield
 come, make your church a ser - vant church that walks your ser - vant ways,



to write God's love in hu - man deeds, e - ter - ni - ty in time.
 and help us bear an - oth - er's pain as though it were our own.
 that through our life and min - is - try your love may be re - vealed.
 whose deeds of love rise up to you, a sac - ri - fice of praise!

Blessing

Christ Jesus dwell in our hearts through faith,
 as we are being rooted and grounded in love,
 strengthened by the Spirit,
 and filled with all the fullness of God.

Amen.

A greeting of peace may be shared by all.



From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS020622.
New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of
the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by
permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation
on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission