

Lent

Fourth Sunday
in

St. James Lutheran Church
2040 Oakwood Ave NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

We Grow, We Go, We Gather

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Online Giving: www.stjamesgr.com/give

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Pastor: Rev. Dr. Glenn E. Schaeffer
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LENT 4

MARCH 10, 2024

EMPTY WORDS

AS WE GATHER

You are daily assailed by empty words: idle small talk, advertising slogans, and news reports that play on your fears. Political and business leaders spew cant, clichés, and spin. Perhaps even your friends and family get in on the act, betraying you with flattery and falsehoods. King David was only too familiar with such afflictions: “*When one comes to see me,*” he said, “*he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity; when he goes out, he tells it abroad*” (Psalm 41:6). Our Lord’s powerful Word was David’s refuge from vain and malicious talk. It is your refuge too. In Baptism, Jesus Christ has lifted you out of the verbal cesspool and placed you firmly on the rock of His Word. That Word is never empty, but it shall accomplish that which He purposes for you.

PRESERVICE MUSIC, CALL TO WORSHIP & WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

“A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth” (*LSB* 438)

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 145:10–13

- P** All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD,
- C** and all Your saints shall bless You!
- P** They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom and tell of Your power,
- C** to make known to the children of man Your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of Your kingdom.
- P** Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations.
- C** The LORD is faithful in all His words and kind in all His works.

CALL TO CONFESSION

P Let us make our confession to our God, seeking His grace and forgiveness.

HYMN

“Lord Jesus, Think on Me” (*LSB* 610:1, 4)

ABSOLUTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins.

C Amen.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. O pitying Lord Jesus, grant us of Your gentleness and forbearance, of Your compassion and love, and of Your tenderheartedness, that filled with Your grace we may always find fitting and salutary words to speak and willingly forgive the wrongs and evils done us. This we ask in Your precious and mighty name.

C Amen.

HYMN

“O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” (*LSB* 450:1, 6)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Psalms 52:1–9

A The Old Testament Reading is from Psalms, the fifty-second chapter.

¹Why do you boast of evil, O mighty man? The steadfast love of God endures all the day. ²Your tongue plots destruction, like a sharp razor, you worker of deceit. ³You love evil more than good, and lying more than speaking what is right. ⁴You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue. ⁵But God will break you down forever; He will snatch and tear you from your tent; He will uproot you from the land of the living. ⁶The righteous shall see and fear, and shall laugh at him, saying, ⁷“See the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and sought refuge in his own destruction!” ⁸But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever. ⁹I will thank You

forever, because You have done it. I will wait for Your name, for it is good, in the presence of the godly.

A O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 41

P Blessed is the one who considers the poor!

C **In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;**

P the LORD protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land;

C **You do not give him up to the will of his enemies.**

P The LORD sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness You restore him to full health.

C **As for me, I said, “O LORD, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against You!”**

P My enemies say of me in malice, “When will he die and his name perish?”

C **And when one comes to see me, he utters empty words, while his heart gathers iniquity; when he goes out, he tells it abroad.**

P All who hate me whisper together about me; they imagine the worst for me.

C **They say, “A deadly thing is poured out on him; he will not rise again from where he lies.”**

P Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

C **But You, O LORD, be gracious to me, and raise me up, that I may repay them!**

P By this I know that You delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over me.

C **But You have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in Your presence forever. Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

EPISTLE

James 3:1–10

A The Epistle is from James, the third chapter.

¹Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ²For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his

whole body. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. ⁴Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

A O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

A HYMN:

“O the Blood of Jesus” (Selah)

Verse 1

O the blood crimson love
Price of life's demand
Shameful sin placed on Him
The Hope of ev'ry man

Chorus

*O the blood of Jesus washes me
O the blood of Jesus shed for me
What a sacrifice that saved my life
Yes the blood it is my victory*

Verse 2

Savior Son Holy One
Slain so I can live
O see the Lamb the great I Am
Who takes away my sin (Chorus)

Bridge

O the blood of the Lamb
O the blood of the Lamb
O the blood of the Lamb
The precious blood of the Lamb
What a sacrifice that saved my life
Yes the blood it is my victory

Verse 3

O what love no greater love
Grace how can it be
That in my sin yes even then
He shed His blood for me (Chorus)

Ending

What a sacrifice that saved my life
Yes the blood it is my victory

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HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 26:57–62

- P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-sixth chapter.
- C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

⁵⁷Then those who had seized Jesus led Him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸And Peter was following Him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put Him to death, ⁶⁰but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹and said, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” ⁶²And the high priest stood up and said, “Have You no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against You?”

- P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

THE APOSTLES' CREED

HYMN

“In Silent Pain the Eternal Son” (*LSB* 432)

SERMON

Psalm 41:6

OFFERING

THE GENERAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN INTRODUCTION

P In the fifth stanza of “*My Song Is Love Unknown*,” author Samuel Crossman makes a singular word choice as he poetically writes of Jesus: “Yet cheerful He to suffering goes that He His foes from thence might free.” The use of the word *cheerful* may be surprising, but its derivation comes from the Middle English *chere*, meaning “*face*” or “*demeanor*.” Originally, it related to an individual’s bearing. Jesus went through His time of suffering for us with a noble bearing and in a triumphant way, and He was happy to set us free even if it meant suffering. The Prince of Life turned the cross of sorrow and shame into a tree of salvation and beauty!

HYMN

“My Song Is Love Unknown” (*LSB* 430:1, 5)

COLLECTS (pp. 283-284 in *LSB*)

BENEDICTION

P The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“In the Cross of Christ I Glory” (*LSB* 427)

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This Week at St. James

Today (3/10)..... Gizmo on FB – 8:00 AM
Worship Service - 9:30 AM
Bible Study – 11:00 AM
F.I.F. Meeting -11:00 AM

Wednesday (3/13).....Darrell Bible Study – 10:00 AM
Lenten Dinner (Urbanski & Bifulco Families) – 5:30 PM
Mid-Week Lenten Service – 6:30 PM

Thursday (3/14)..... ISJ Parent Chapel – 7:50 AM
Dorcas @ Shots on the River – 12:30 PM
Adult Bells – 6:00 PM
Adult Choir – 7:15 PM

Saturday (3/16).....LWML Zone Meeting (Gathering Room) – 7:30 AM

Sunday (3/17)..... Gizmo on FB – 8:00 AM
Communion Service - 9:30 AM
Rwandan Mission Luncheon – 11:00 AM

Looking Ahead

Serving Today (3/10)

Officiant Pastor Glenn Schaeffer
Lector Cheri Hood
Organist..... Beth McKay
Deacon(s) Dave Hood
Ushers Sherry Schmidt / Adam Ferris
Video/Sound/Recording..... Nathan Urbanski/John & Marjie Weiss
KidzTime Open
March Altar Guild..... Kelsey Butler

Serving Next Sunday (3/17)

Lector Irene Talen
Organist..... Beth McKay
Deacon(s) Bryan Ensing / Craig Popma
Ushers Dale & Grace Rosema / Jim & Nancy Spears
Video/Sound/Recording..... Nathan Urbanski/John & Marjie Weiss
KidzTime Cindy McAuliffe
March Altar Guild..... Kelsey Butler

Financial Discipleship: March 3, 2024

General Fund	\$6,070.00
<i>Needed each week for budget \$5,769.00 (+\$301.00)</i>	
ISJ Tuition Fund	\$200.00
Tessaró Ministry (Nigeria Mission)	\$195.00
Pastors Rwanda Trip	\$100.00
TOTAL Contributions	\$6,565.00

Announcements

March Newsletter Paper copies of the newsletter are available on the table in the lobby.

Join us for our midweek Lenten services. They are on Wednesday evenings starting at 6:30 p.m. Come for the preservice meal as well. We begin to serve the meal at 5:30 p.m. but arrive when you can. This week the meal will be prepared and served by Urbanski and Bifulco Families.

Rwandan Luncheon! Today is the final day to sign up for the luncheon.

You're Invited to Participate in St. James' Leadership Retreat -- On the weekend of April 12-13th, you are invited to participate in St. James' leadership retreat. The retreat will begin on Friday evening (7 p.m.-9 p.m.) and will continue Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.). The retreat will be held at the Warner Building (downtown Grand Rapids). We will spend the time in prayer and studying God's Word. We will identify the opportunities and challenges we are facing as a congregation and begin to develop a plan to address these opportunities and challenges. If you plan to attend the retreat, please sign up on the sheet is on the table in the lobby by the church office by April 2."

Dear Members of St. James, On March 13th after our Lenten Service, the governing board will be hosting a policy meeting to share and answer any questions about the following policies:

- Code of Conduct Policy
- St. James Tuition Assistance Fund
- ISJ School Board Members Policy
- Canceling Service Policy

Again, these meetings are meant to bring clarity and understanding to the approved policies. Our goal is that awareness of them leads to implementation of them with

fidelity. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday, Feb. 28th. Copies of the policies can be found on the table in the coat room.

HOW TO DO ONLINE GIVING--VERY EASY

St. James has changed our online giving tool to Servant Keeper. Servant Keeper is experienced and provides highly secure transactions. We have been using Servant Keeper for many years to manually maintain our giving database.

It will take you about five minutes to set this up. I have detailed the directions below.

1. Go to the church website www.StJamesGR.com. On the upper right side, you will see a tab called GIVE. Click on this.
2. You will need to sign up as a new user, so click on the SIGN-UP tab (upper right).
3. Enter your email. You will need to set up a new account--click NEXT.
4. Fill in your Name, Address, and Mobile number.
5. Select a password.
6. Click on Create Profile.
7. Then Sign In to your account.
8. You will see a list of Gifts--it will be empty.
9. Click on the three stacked horizontal bars next to St. James Lutheran Church.
10. Select Payment Method. Add Payment Method.
11. You can select a Bank Account (checking or savings) Credit Card or Debit Card. Enter your account information. You can enter information for more than one of them if you wish.
12. Click on GIVE NOW to make your initial donation. You can select one of the choices or click on OTHER to indicate your gift amount.
13. If you prefer to make a Recurring Gift--choose SCHEDULED GIFTS--you can select your interval for giving--every week, every two weeks, or once a month.

That is it! Now you don't have to worry about envelopes or checks or cash!

We Thank You for your continued support of the St. James Community. May God Bless You! Jim Spears, Treasurer St. James Governing Board PS: If you have questions or problems with this, please contact me. Jim: (616)-690-9550 jrspears@gmail.com

Second best sale

Friends in Faith is having a DROP-OFF date on Saturday, April 20 and 27 here at church. Simply start collecting your donations for the Second-Best Sale, load them into your vehicle, and bring them to the church from 9-1 p.m. We are asking for all large items to be brought that day due to the inability to store them. We cannot accept mattresses, box springs, analog (tube-type TVs), nursery furniture, medical items, or any items that are not usable or saleable. Members of Friends in Faith will be here to unload your car and take everything into church for you! How great is that!?! We also ask that clothing be clean and gently used. Smaller items can be brought to the church any time the church is open. Please call Pastor before you come. If items need to be brought sooner or if you have any questions, please contact Walt at 616-970-7407 or Dale Rosema at 616-262-1390. Set-up for the Sale will begin on Sunday, April 28. VOLUNTEERS are needed on Sunday after Church to begin laying out and sorting the items for the sale. Volunteers are also needed. Monday and Tuesday for sorting and pricing. They are also needed for Thursday through Saturday to assist customers. It's a great time to get to know each other and help support our Youth and Church functions. Work for an hour or enjoy the 9-4 days with everyone. A sign-up sheet will be by the office. If you have any questions, please see Walt Kryzanowski or Dale Rosema.

Dorcas Society March Gathering

Our luncheon last month was attended by only a few due to the weather, so let's try this again! We will meet on Thursday, March 14th at 12:30. We will meet at Shots on the River (5760 West River Dr. in Belmont) at 12:30 pm. We will continue a brief discussion of suggestions to keep our senior members connected to the church in worship and other activities. We need your input and help in allowing St James to continue to be a welcoming place for senior members. In order to give the restaurant an accurate count, please RSVP to Rachel Palmer (616-883-6949) or at palmerrm@comcast.net or via Facebook messenger. Please respond by Wednesday, March 13th. If you need a ride, please don't hesitate to ask. We welcome all women from the congregation.

Israel pilgrimage (2024)

Would you like to go on a journey to Israel and experience the land where the God of the Universe walked and saved humanity? Pastor Frank Graves is planning on taking a 10-day pilgrimage to Israel (Sept, 18-27 2024). He has journeyed there 8 times prior. The cost is \$5247 (from Detroit and Orlando). The cost includes entrance into all sacred sites, lodging (at least 4-star plus), air and ground transportation, full breakfast and dinner (lunch is at your expense), and all tips, etc. If you have an interest, please contact him at: revbev65@hotmail.com or 616-929-2267. The initial deposit is \$500 and can be paid by credit card. He has complete trip details and itineraries available by the church entry (you

decide). We would love to have you experience the land where our Savior Jesus, grew up, ministered, suffered, died, and rose again for us. The journey is life changing and the Bible comes alive in a special new way when you visit personally. Brochures are available on the table in the church lobby.

Easter Breakfast! The Easter morning breakfast will be hosted by the men of the congregation. The breakfast will be served from 8:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. with the Easter service starting at 9:30 a.m. Eggs, pancakes, and sausage will be served. You are invited to provide the other breakfast “fixings.” If you are planning to attend and/or want to provide something for the breakfast, please sign up on the sheets of paper that are located on the table by the church office by Sunday, March 24th.

40 Days for Life: Are you willing to pray for one hour to end abortion? 40 Days for Life is a pro-life effort that consists of 40 days of praying, fasting, and holding a peaceful vigil in front of an abortion facility. The spring campaign is underway and will go through to March 24. The peaceful prayer vigil is taking place in front of Planned Parenthood at 425 Cherry Street SE in Grand Rapids. This facility provides the abortion pill and refers for abortions. If you would like to participate in the vigil, you can register, and pick your day, and your time by going to: www.40daysforlife.com/GrandRapids.