

**ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**March 19<sup>h</sup>, 2023—9:45 AM**

**“The Foolish Bridesmaids”**

*We Proclaim and Practice Christ's Love*



**CALL TO WORSHIP**

It is time to wake up,  
**for God is about to surprise us.**

It is time to prepare,  
**for God's love is about to change the world.**

It is time to get ready,  
**for God needs us to proclaim the good news.**

It is time to start planning,  
**for God's invitation will fill our church.**

It is time to worship,  
**for God is here now!**

**OPENING SONG *Blessed Be Your Name***

Blessed be Your name in the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow; blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name when I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness; blessed be Your name

Ev'ry blessing You pour out I'll turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in Lord still I will say

**Chorus**

Blessed be the name of the Lord; Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord; Blessed be Your glorious name

Blessed be Your name when the sun's shining down on me  
When the world's all as it should be, blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name on the road marked with suffering  
Though there's pain in the offering, blessed be Your name

Ev'ry blessing You pour out I'll turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in Lord still I will say *Chorus*

(Bridge)

You give and take away; You give and take away  
My heart will choose to say; Lord blessed be Your name *Chorus*

### **GREETING**

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

### **OPENING LITANY**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe,

**for in your wisdom you have formed us.**

You feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

**We bless you and praise your name forever.**

You set free those who are bound.

**We bless you and praise your name forever.**

You raise up those whose courage falters.

**We bless you and praise your name forever.**

You provide for our every need.

**Accept our grateful praises.**

You have called us from all peoples.

**We rejoice and bless your name forever.**

You bless your people with peace.

**We bless you and praise your loving grace.**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe,

**for in your wisdom you have formed us.**

**SPECIAL MUSIC** *The Glory of These Forty Days*

**Chancel Choir**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray: **God of holy anticipation, you have promised that you would return at a time unknown to us. Make us ready, so that when you return we might be welcomed into your kingdom with open arms. We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

### **FIRST READING Psalm 43:2a, 3-5**

<sup>2</sup>God, You are the One in whom we take refuge,

<sup>3</sup>O send out your light and your truth;

let them lead me;

let them bring me to your holy hill

and to your dwelling.

<sup>4</sup>Then I will go to the altar of God,

to God my exceeding joy,  
and I will praise you with the harp,  
O God, my God.  
<sup>5</sup> Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you disquieted within me?  
Hope in God, for I shall again praise him,  
my help and my God.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 25:1-13**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 25<sup>th</sup> Chapter

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ <sup>7</sup>Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ <sup>9</sup>But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ <sup>12</sup>But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ <sup>13</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SONG *Cornerstone***

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame  
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name  
(REPEAT)

Chorus  
Christ alone cornerstone  
Weak made strong in the Saviour's love  
Through the storm He is Lord  
Lord of all

Verse 2  
When darkness seems to hide His face  
I rest on His unchanging grace  
In every high and stormy gale  
My anchor holds within the veil

My anchor holds within the veil

Verse 3

When He shall come with trumpet sound

Oh may I then in Him be found

Dressed in His righteousness alone

Faultless stand before the throne

## **SERMON**

### **SONG *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah***

- 1 Light one candle to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel,  
God fulfills the promise.
- 2 Light two candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,  
gently lead them homeward.
- 3 Light three candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway  
for the King of glory.
- 4 Light four candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He is coming, tell the glad tidings.  
Let your lights be shining!

## **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**

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

## **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**  
*We share words of peace with one another.*

## **OFFERING**

Offerings to the ministry here at St. James can be given in several ways:

- You can give an offering with your time. There are many opportunities for you to serve both here at Church and out in our community.
- Monetary donations can be given in the offering plate.
- You can mail offerings to the Church office or drop them off.
- You can sign up for online giving at [stjamesmc.org](http://stjamesmc.org), where you can sign up for recurring offerings or a one-time donation. You can scan the code above to go directly to our website.



*We thank you for your continued support of our ministry!*

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

We dedicate these gifts to you, Generous God,  
even as we dedicate our lives to you.

Keep us true to our promise,  
that we may witness to you  
with all that we are and all that we do. **Amen.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

### **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.**

**DISTRIBUTION** *Communion will be served on the main level continuously. Come forward to receive the bread and the wine. Grape juice is available in the middle of the tray in pre-filled cups, which also include a wafer. Gluten-Free wafers in pre-filled sets are available upon request.*

### **SONG (during distribution) *Great Are You Lord***

You give life You are love  
You bring light to the darkness  
You give hope You restore ev'ry heart that is broken  
And great are You Lord

*Chorus*

It's Your breath in our lungs  
So we pour out our praise  
We pour out our praise  
It's Your breath in our lungs  
So we pour out our praise to You only

*Bridge*

And all the earth will shout Your praise  
Our hearts will cry these bones will sing  
Great are You Lord  
(REPEAT)

**POST COMMUNION BLESSING AND POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.  
**Amen.**

Let us pray: **Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. 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.

**Amen.**

**SONG** *Stand In Your Love*

When darkness tries to roll over my bones  
When sorrow comes to steal the joy I own  
When brokenness and pain is all I know  
I won't be shaken I won't be shaken

*Chorus*

My fear doesn't stand a chance  
When I stand in Your love  
(REPEAT)

*Verse 2*

Shame no longer has a place to hide  
I am not a captive to the lies  
I'm not afraid to leave my past behind  
I won't be shaken I won't be shaken

*Bridge*

There's power that can break off every chain  
There's power that can empty out a grave  
There's resurrection power that can save  
There's power in Your name power in Your name

*Ending*

Standing in Your love

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**