

A Service of Holy Communion for the
Third Sunday in Lent

10:30 a.m. | March 23, 2025 | *Year C*



University Lutheran Church
66 Winthrop Street, Cambridge, Mass.
unilu.org

PRELUDE “As the Deer Runs to the River” [JULION] — Tune by David Hurd (b. 1950); setting by Marilyn Biery (b. 1959)

GATHERING

BELL AND WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God’s abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate One, you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. Amen.

Beloved in Christ, God’s arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In ✚ Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God’s house forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG ACS 1049 “Before the Waters Nourished Earth”

APOSTOLIC 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.**

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING Isaiah 55:1–9

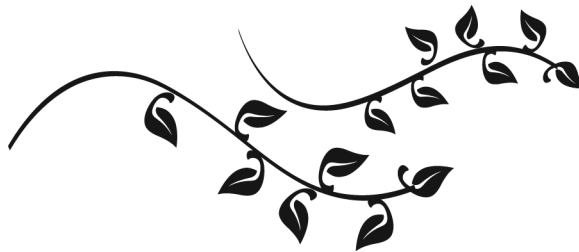
A reading from Isaiah.

¹Hear, everyone who thirsts; come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. ²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your earnings for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. ³Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. ⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. ⁵Now you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for the LORD has glorified you.

⁶Seek the LORD while the LORD may be found; call upon God while God is near; ⁷let the wicked forsake their way and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, who will have mercy on them, and to our God, who will abundantly pardon. ⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



PSALM Psalm 63:1-8

The congregation is invited to chant the verses along with the choir, as well as to sing the response at the beginning and when indicated.

With heart, and eyes, and lif - ted hands, For thee I long, to

thee I look, As trav - e - lers in thirst - y lands pant for the cool - ing

wa - ter - brook.

- ¹ O God, you are my God; eager- | ly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there | is no water.
- ² Therefore I have gazed upon you in your | holy place,
that I might behold your power | and your glory.
- ³ For your steadfast love is better than | life itself;
my lips shall | give you praise.
- ⁴ So will I bless you as long | as I live
and lift up my hands | in your name. **Response**

⁵ My spirit is content, as with the rich- | est of foods,
and my mouth praises you with | joyful lips,
⁶ when I remember you up- | on my bed,
and meditate on you in | the night watches.
⁷ For you have | been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I | will rejoice.
⁸ My whole being | clings to you;
your right hand | holds me fast. **Response**

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 10:1–13

A reading from First Corinthians.

¹I do not want you to be ignorant, dear family, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not become idolaters as some of them did, as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” ⁸We must not engage in sexual immorality, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰And do not complain, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing God will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL Luke 13:1–9

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

²Jesus 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 other people living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish just as they did.”

⁶Then Jesus 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?’ ⁸The gardener 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.’”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON *Emilie Casey*

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 331 “As the Deer Runs to the River”

APOSTLES' CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**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
and born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**Who descended to the dead
and on the third day rose again.**

**Who ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

Who will come again 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 OF INTERCESSION

Individuals will be invited to offer prayers aloud or write them in the book found at the entrance to the worship space. Prayers may also be typed in the Zoom chat box to be read by the intercessor.

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Each prayer petition may be concluded with one of these (or similar) responses:

God, in your mercy,

Bless we the Holy One!

or

Hear our prayer.

Thanks be to God!

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.
Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

MEAL

OFFERTORY ANTHEM “Sicut cervus” — Text: Psalm 42:1; setting:
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525–1594)

*Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum:
ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.*

As a deer longs for springs of water,
so longs my soul for thee, O God.

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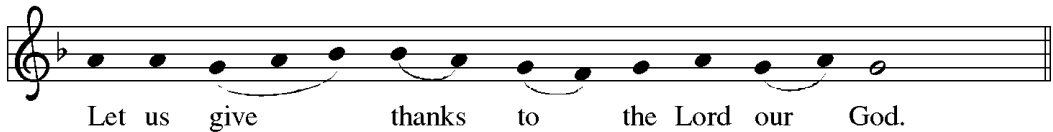
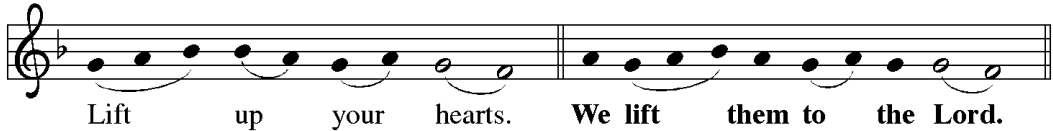
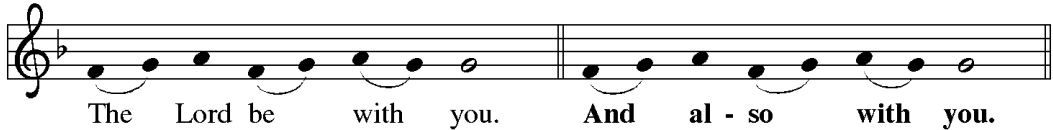
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OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . .

. . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The thanksgiving may include this acclamation:

Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

The thanksgiving may include this sung Amen:

A - men, a - men. A - men, a - men.

LORD'S PRAYER

In the Bible, Jesus often speaks of God as "Abba," Father, reflecting a profound intimacy with the creator of all worlds. Here, we extend that intimacy to name God as our Mother.

Friends, it gladdens the heart of Jesus when we pray:

**God our Mother, God our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO RECEIVE AND SHARE COMMUNION

All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

For those worshipping via Zoom, individuals may commune themselves and households may serve one another with the same words.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

ELW 486 "God Extends an Invitation"
(*Nuestro Padre nos invita*)

ELW 623 "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, ✝ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG ELW 618 “Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE “Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer” [CWM RHONDDA]
— Tune by John Hughes (1873–1932); setting by Paul Manz
(1919–2009)

SERVING TODAY

Presiding Minister and Preacher: Emilie Casey; *Assisting Minister:* Laurel Oberstadt-Petrik; *Reader:* Erika Zimmons; *Intercessor:* Gail Bucher; *Musicians:* Imogene Stulken, Lorraine Fitzmaurice, and the UniLu Choir; *Hospitality:* Ann Ferentz and Chris Pollari.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE are asked for:

Cheri Agaskar — UniLu member
David Bailey — friend of Gail Bucher
Ellen Bartlett — sister of Gail Bucher
Margrit Betke — UniLu member
Lorraine and Roland Blanchard — friends of Gail Bucher
Ed Bucher — UniLu member
Alice Conway — sister of Karin Kutrieb
Solveig Ericson — UniLu member
Bob Flannery — UniLu member
Barbara Frank — mother-in-law of Anne Howarth
George Gordon — UniLu member
Nancy Gould — UniLu member
Vera Ryen Gregg — UniLu member
Charles Jaferian — grandson of Nancy Gould
Jorge G. Miranda — friend of Ricardo A. Pulgar
Karen Nichols — UniLu member
Duncan McCoy Norton — son of Megan McCoy
Anne Minton — colleague of Imogene Stulken
The Ralston-Lamb family — UniLu members
Jeanette Searson — sister of Imogene Stulken
Judy Steele — sister of Phyllis Steele

For those affected by and recovering from wildfires in Oklahoma, especially those in Pastor Carrie's hometown of Stillwater.

For our siblings at Faith Lutheran Church in Cambridge and their pastors, Robin Lütjohann and Raphaela Mueller.

For our siblings in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we remember the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

For all who are seeking refuge, who are facing immigration challenges, who have been deported to homes that are not home, and who have been separated from their families.

(revised 3/20/2025)

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Carrie Ballenger, *Pastor*

Gracious Moyo, *Associate Pastor*

Laurel Oberstadt-Petrik, *Ministry Intern*

Kristian Kohler, *Office Administrator*

Lorraine Fitzmaurice, *Music Director—Choir / Building Manager*

Imogene Stulken, *Music Director—Organ*

Hanqi Zhang, *Tech Verger*

Mary Pederson Metelmann, *Council President*

Ed Bucher, *Treasurer and Bookkeeper*

Gail Bucher, *Service Deacon*

Chris Porter, *Financial Secretary*

Susan Worst, *Webmaster*

Joyce DeGreeff, *Lutheran Chaplain at Northeastern University*

Andrew Heisen, *Lutheran Chaplain at MIT*

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Welcome to University Lutheran Church, a Christian witness and ministry of and to members of the academic and wider communities in Cambridge-Boston — and, virtually, across the world! We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation, welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We are also a member congregation of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO).

Land Acknowledgment: *University Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pawtucket and Massa-adchu-es-et (Massachusetts) peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have called, and who continue to call, this land their home.*