



# LORD, HAVE MERCY

For Our Incessant Idolatry

**PEACE**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan  
Wednesday, March 12, 2025

## **Welcome to Worship**

God's grace welcomes you, and so do we — the pastor and members of Peace! Jesus Christ is the only Savior of all people. By his perfect life, innocent death and triumphant resurrection, Jesus saves all sinners. We learn these truths from the Bible — God's complete plan for our salvation and his guidebook for our lives. Peace greets you with a warm welcome. We look forward to seeing you again soon.

## **MIDWEEK SERIES: LORD HAVE MERCY**

It is one of the most common prayers of God's child. "Lord, have mercy!" Mercy is the withholding of punishment or negative consequences that a guilty person deserves. Thus, when we pray, "Lord, have mercy," 1) we are acknowledging that we have lived in ways deserving of God's condemnation and punishment, and 2) we are begging God to not condemn or punish us. How important is that prayer? If you cannot say it with sincerity, you cannot be saved. For if you cannot speak that prayer, you cannot possibly believe you need a Savior. Therefore, God gave us his law, in part, so that we would see our need for mercy. St. Paul writes, "I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law" (Romans 7:7). And God gave us the gospel that we might know he has shown us mercy.

Thus, it is good and right that in this solemn season of Lent, we would review God's law as revealed in the Ten Commandments and connect it with Christ's passion. We will how we have shattered all the Commandments and are deserving of punishment. However, will we also see how Jesus took the suffering we deserved upon himself. Seeing both, may the Spirit empower us to pray, "Lord, have mercy!" and confidently believe that in Christ, we have God's mercy in inexhaustible abundance.

### **Week 1: For Our Incessant Idolatry**

Week 2: For Demonstrating Irreverence and Despising Your Rest

Week 3: For Treating Others Like Trash, Not Treasure

Week 4: For Failing to Live With Integrity

Week 5: For Abusing Your Commandments

## **TODAY'S FOCUS: LORD HAVE MERCY FOR OUR INCESSANT IDOLATRY**

If a loved one needed serious heart surgery, would you prefer a first-year medical student to perform the operation, or would you rather it be a seasoned doctor who has done that surgery two-thousand times? How about if you were accused of a serious crime you didn't commit? Would you be content with a legal intern defending you? Or might you want a more experienced, skilled attorney? You want the person who will best care for you. So, apply that reality to the First Commandment.

When God tells us not to have any other gods, our sinful nature's first inclination is to think it is because God is a narcissist who craves the attention. That is projecting what we are often like onto him. But God commands us to have no other gods, not because he seeks attention, but because he knows there is no one who loves us as much as he does. . . no one who can care for us anywhere close to as well as he can. It is he, by an infinite margin, who can best care for us. Therefore, when we love or trust anyone or anything else more than God, the sin doesn't simply offend him. It is incredibly self-destructive. As we begin our worship series on the Ten Commandments, by the Spirit teach us to say, "Lord, have mercy, for our incessant idolatry."



# Order of Service: Evening Prayer

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*For many centuries, Christians have observed special midweek Lenten services. These services cause us to contemplate the reflective nature of our faith as well as review the passion history.*

*Please stand.*

## Opening Dialogue

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**Who made heaven and earth.**

Brothers and sisters in Christ, during the days of Lent, we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of God.

The time of Lent reminds us that to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, we must also know the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to confess your sins, ask our Father for forgiveness, and commit yourselves to this struggle.

## Confession

*Lord, to You I Make Confession st. 1*



Lord, to you I make con- fes - sion: I have sinned and gone a - stray;



I have mul-ti-plied trans - gres-sion, Cho-sen for my-self my way.



Led by you to see my er - rors, Lord, I trem-ble at your ter-rors.

## Absolution

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son T and of the Holy Spirit.

During these days of Lent, let us implore God to give us renewal and his Holy Spirit. May we continue to abide in the true faith and at the last be received by him through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.



For your Son has suf-fered for me, Giv'n him - self to res-cue me,



Died to save me and re - store me, Rec - on - ciled and set me free.



Je - sus' cross a-lone can van-quisth These dark fears and soothe this an-guish.

## Prayer: Psalm 135

There is no god but you, Lord. Keep us from making idols fashioned in our own image, gods whose highest priority is our own desires. Remind us that you are the one who shaped the universe and redeemed your people from vain imagination so that we may worship you, the only true God; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## Week 1 Passion Reading

Luke 22:1-38

Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, <sup>2</sup> and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. <sup>3</sup> Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. <sup>4</sup> And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. <sup>5</sup> They were delighted and agreed to give him money. <sup>6</sup> He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

## **The Last Supper**

<sup>7</sup> Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.”

<sup>9</sup> “Where do you want us to prepare for it?” they asked.

<sup>10</sup> He replied, “As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, <sup>11</sup> and say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ <sup>12</sup> He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there.”

<sup>13</sup> They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

<sup>14</sup> When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. <sup>16</sup> For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”

<sup>17</sup> After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. <sup>18</sup> For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

<sup>19</sup> And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

<sup>20</sup> In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. <sup>21</sup> But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. <sup>22</sup> The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!” <sup>23</sup> They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

<sup>24</sup> A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. <sup>26</sup> But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. <sup>27</sup> For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. <sup>28</sup> You are those who have stood by me in my trials. <sup>29</sup> And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, <sup>30</sup> so that you may

eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

<sup>31</sup>“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. <sup>32</sup> But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

<sup>33</sup> But he replied, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, “I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.”

<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus asked them, “When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?”

“Nothing,” they answered.

<sup>36</sup> He said to them, “But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. <sup>37</sup> It is written: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors’; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment.”

<sup>38</sup> The disciples said, “See, Lord, here are two swords.”

“That’s enough!” he replied.

## Hymn

**2 Yet, though conscience’ voice appall me,  
Father, I will seek your face.  
Though your child I dare not call me,  
yet receive me to your grace.  
Do not for my sins forsake me,  
do not let your wrath o’ertake me.**

## First Reading

Isaiah 44:6-11

<sup>6</sup>“This is what the Lord says—  
Israel’s King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty:  
I am the first and I am the last;  
apart from me there is no God.

<sup>7</sup> Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it.  
Let him declare and lay out before me

what has happened since I established my ancient people,  
and what is yet to come—

yes, let them foretell what will come.

<sup>8</sup> Do not tremble, do not be afraid.

Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago?

You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me?

No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.”

<sup>9</sup> All who make idols are nothing,

and the things they treasure are worthless.

Those who would speak up for them are blind;

they are ignorant, to their own shame.

<sup>10</sup> Who shapes a god and casts an idol,

which can profit nothing?

<sup>11</sup> People who do that will be put to shame;

such craftsmen are only human beings.

Let them all come together and take their stand;

they will be brought down to terror and shame.

## Second Reading

Colossians 3:1-6

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup> For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

<sup>5</sup> Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

<sup>6</sup> Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.

# Sermon

## The First Commandment

*From Luther's Small Catechism*

You shall have no other gods.

*What does this mean?*

**We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.**

## Hymn

- 4 Lord, on you I cast my burden—  
sink it in the deepest sea!  
Let me know your gracious pardon,  
cleanse me from iniquity.  
Let your Spirit leave me never,  
make me only yours forever.

## Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

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 mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the leaders of our synod and district, for all pastors in Christ, for all who are servants of the Church, and for all the people of God, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For all who govern our nation and for all public servants, that they may be upheld and strengthened for every good deed, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ, let us give thanks to the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

*Silence for individual prayer may follow.*

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ our Lord:  
**to you, O Lord.**

## **Doxology**

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! **Amen.**

## 23B Shepherd Me, O God

Psalm

### Refrain



Shep - herd me, O God, be - yond my wants, be -  
yond my fears, from death in - to life.

- 1 God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want,  
I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love,  
I walk by the quiet waters of peace. *Refrain*
- 2 Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul,  
you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth,  
my spirit shall sing the music of your name. *Refrain*
- 3 Though I should wander the valley of death,  
I fear no evil, for you are at my side,  
your rod and your staff, my comfort and my hope. *Refrain*
- 4 You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred,  
crowning me with love beyond my pow'r to hold. *Refrain*
- 5 Surely your kindness and mercy follow me all the days of my life;  
I will dwell in the house of my God forevermore. *Refrain*

Text: Marty Haugen

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Our mission is to spread the gospel of Christ, to gather college students and the local community into a family of believers, and to share the message of hope and the promise of salvation through grace.