



Fifth Sunday in Lent
Immanuel Lutheran Church ELCA
Forest City, Iowa
Pastors Rod Hopp & Zech Anderson, Intern Elizabeth Carr
March 17, 2024 9:15am
www.immanuelfamily.com

Building community in the name and likeness of Jesus Christ.

TEACH ME

poem by Rev. Sarah Speed

Teach me about the ways of the wind,
About the ways of the world, about the ways of the heart.
Teach me about the soft crook of my lover's arm,
And the way two souls can hold each other close.
Teach me about forgiveness, about the language of *I'm sorry* and the softness of sincerity.
Teach me about abundance, about *seventy-times-seven* and *all the days of my life*.
Teach me about joy, about its contagious weaving and its soul-healing.
Teach me about mercy, about open hands and deep breaths.
Teach me about the dawn of time and the stars in the sky.
Teach me what matters most. Teach me what is mine to do.
Teach this achingly curious heart until I run out of questions or I run out of days.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, and I will have a life well-lived.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Why are you here?

I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind, with a fire burning in my bones.

I see it! You're in the right place! This is God's house. The door is open to you.

Why are you here?

I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind, with a fire burning in my bones.

We see that in you! You're in the right place. This is God's house. The door is open to you.

Let us worship God.

Let us learn from the Spirit. Amen!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Like a tenacious toddler, Peter was *full* of questions, because Peter was eager to learn. I wish I was more like that. I still have so much to learn.

So friends, let's be like Peter. Let's return to Christ with the humility of a student as we pray together the prayer of confession. Let this be a moment of learning. Let us pray:

Holy God, we long to be lifelong learners. We long to approach you with curiosity and an open mind. Instead, we often live as if we know best. We forget that the disciples called you "Rabbi, Teacher." Forgive us for the times when we fail to be curious. Forgive us for the times when we assume we know best. Forgive us for the moments when we imagine that our learning is done and that we have all the answers. Like Peter—who was brave enough to ask, "How many times should we forgive?"—make us brave. Spark a desire in us to learn, and may our curiosity carry our faith into deeper waters. With hope and humility we pray. Amen.

Family of faith, when Peter asked Jesus, "How many times should I forgive?" Jesus responded with abundance. That abundance exists for you as well. No matter what you have done or left undone, no matter what lessons you have learned or are still learning, God's abundant grace exists for you. God's love will never run out. So hear and rest in this good news: You are forgiven. You are loved. You are invited to serve. Thanks be to God! **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN: "O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days"

#319

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Teaching God, we want to learn your ways. We want to learn the ways of forgiveness. We want to learn the ways of grace. We want to learn your ways of love. That is part of why we return to your text week after week, because we are hungry to be more like you. So as we prepare to listen to your good Word, calm the noise in our minds. Center our spirits to focus on you so that we might learn and hear what we have missed in this story before. God, we want to learn your ways. Meet us here. Speak your truth. Help us listen. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 119:9-16 [read responsively]

⁹How shall the young keep their way clean? By keeping to your word.

¹⁰**With my whole heart I seek you; let me not stray from your commandments.**

¹¹I treasure your promise in my heart, that I may not sin against you.

¹²**Blessed are you, O LORD; instruct me in your statutes.**

¹³With my lips I recite all the judgments of your mouth.

¹⁴**I take greater delight in the way of your decrees than in all manner of riches.**

¹⁵I will meditate on your commandments and give attention to your ways.

¹⁶**My delight is in your statutes; I will not forget your word.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-22

*Announcement: **Glory to you, O Lord.***

*Conclusion: **Praise to you, O Christ.***

CHILDREN'S SERMON / SERMON

Pastor Zech

HYMN OF THE DAY: **"Love Your Neighbor and Forgive"** (Go to Dark Gethsemane tune, 347)

"Love your neighbor and forgive", words so simple yet so hard

We have wounds because we've lived, calluses enfold our hearts

Jesus reaches out to touch wounds and hearts that hold too much.

Sounds of bombs and bullets ring war is all we've ever known

Pacifists are frames as weak, we rely on might alone

Jesus paves the paths of peace even as the threats increase.

Love is risky, peace is faint, and forgiveness feels naïve

All are sinners, all are saints and we all God's grace receive

So we follow mercy's way softening our hearts to grace.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that questions are a building block of faith.

“How many times should I forgive?” “Jesus, where are you going?”

“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”

We believe that humble curiosity can open our eyes.

“Where does it hurt?” “What do you need?” “How can I help?”

We believe that God is a teacher.

“Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.” “Here I am.” “Send me.”

We believe that faith invites our whole being to engage,

with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our strength.

We believe. Help our unbelief. **In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH: *L: Hear us, O God. C: Your mercy is great.*

Ruby Sue Albertsen

Chris McCormick

Casey Sink (Audrey’s daughter)

Liam Bartleson

Jill (Lewison) Nedved

Jennie Spencer

Hayden Despenas

family of Carroll Reines

Lucky Truong

Parker Farland

Tim Schmidt

Missionary Karen Anderson

Donna Kvale

Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Magallanes

SHARING OF THE PEACE: *L: The peace of Christ be with you always. C: And also with you.*

OFFERING: “Ubi Caritas”

Choir

OFFERTORY: “As the Grains of Wheat”

#465

OFFERING PRAYER

ALL: Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING / Holy, Holy, Holy from Now the Feast & Celebration, Marty Haugen
Eucharistic Prayer / Eucharistic Acclamations
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ / Lord’s Prayer

COMMUNION:

“Lord Jesus, Think on Me”

#599

“As We Gather at Your Table”

#522

“Jesus, Remember Me”

#616

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING / CANTICLE: **“Praise to You, O God of Mercy”**

#208

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

SENDING HYMN: **“Now the Green Blade Rises”**

#379

BLESSING / DISMISSAL:

Go in peace. Share your bread. **Thanks be to God.**