

# Full to the Brim

*Prodigal  
grace*

**March 27, 2022 + Fourth Sunday in Lent**

*An asterisk \* invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read responses found in **bold**.*

*You are welcome to sing during worship if you are vaccinated!*

*Welcome to First Lutheran Church!*

## **Gathering in God's Presence**

**Prelude** — “Rockingham Old”

Setting by Robert Bucklee Farley  
Heidi Engman, GAC Music Scholar

**Words of Welcome**

**\*Gathering Hymn** — no. 666

“What Wondrous Love Is This”  
Led by Heidi Engman, GAC Music Scholar

**\*Confession and Forgiveness**

If you ask any parent with a teenager what it's like to wait up for their child to meet curfew, they will tell you—they're standing at the door. The porch light is on. No one can sleep until that child is home safe. Friends, I think God is like that for us. The porch light is on. The door is unlocked. We might be late for curfew, but God is just so glad we're home. So let us pray the prayer of confession together, trusting that no matter what we do or what we leave undone, the porch light is always on. Let us pray.

The prodigal son isn't given a name, but we know his name. It sounds like ours.

**And we know his story. It sounds like ours.**

For who among us hasn't burned a bridge?

**Who among us hasn't forgotten that we belong to one another?**

Who among us has not ached for home?

**The prodigal son isn't given a name, but we know his name.**

Forgive us God. We want to come home.

Holy One,

**we confess that we have wandered far from you:**

**we have not trusted your promises,**

**we have ignored your prophets in our own day,**

**we have squandered our inheritance of grace,**

**we have failed to recognize you in our midst.**

**Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you.**

**Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love,  
and help us to love our neighbor. Amen.**

Family of faith, the word ‘prodigal’ can be defined as wasteful or imprudent, hence the name, “Prodigal Son.” However, ‘prodigal’ can also be described as extravagant and excessive. Friends, we worship a prodigal God—a God who is extravagant in mercy and excessive in grace.

So rest in this good news: in ☩ Jesus’ name, your sins are forgiven. For no matter how many times we run, no matter how far we go or how lost we get, God is standing at the end of the driveway waiting for us. The doors are open. The feast is for you. This grace is extravagant. **Thanks be to God, amen.**

\***Kyrie** — pg. 156, front of hymnal, from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Setting Five

### \*Lenten Litany

God’s reach is endless.

**God’s mercy is unstoppable.**

God’s grace is lavish.

**God’s love is constant.**

God’s wisdom is vast.

**God’s hope is stubborn.**

God’s presence is here—

**with us, among us, moving through us.**

Breathe easy. Breathe deeply.

**We are in God’s house.**

Let us worship the One who welcomes us home.

### \*Prayer of the Day

May God be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

God of open doors, we often long to come home to you, to love, and to ourselves, but we aren’t always sure how to get there. We know that we need you, but the road back to you is heavy with distractions. So if we can dare to be so forward, we pray—reach into the cacophony of our hearts and minds and make yourself known. Quiet everything but your Word for us today. Leave us awestruck. Drown out the distractions. Come as thunder or come as a still, small voice. Turn on the light. Speak through these words. Find the parts of us that are lost. In Jesus’ name, with hope we pray, **amen.**

## Hearing & Responding to Scripture

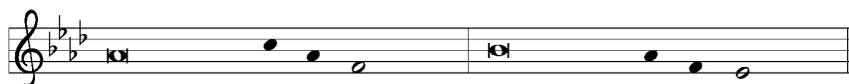
### A Reading from the book of Joshua — Joshua 5:9-12

9The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

10While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. 11On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people. **Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm 32 — sung responsively by verse



1Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven,

and whose sin is | put away!

2Happy are they to whom the Lord im- | putes no guilt,

and in whose spirit there | is no guile!

3While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away,

because of my groaning | all day long.

4For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night;

my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.

5Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- | ceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin.

6Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of trouble;

when the great waters overflow, they | shall not reach them.

7You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble;

you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.

8I will instruct you and teach you in the way that | you should go;

I will guide you | with my eye.

9Do not be like horse or mule, which have no | understanding;

who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will | not stay near you."

10Great are the tribulations | of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust | in the Lord.

11Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice | in the Lord; shout for joy, all who are | true of heart.

## A Reading from Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians — 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

16From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. 17So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 19that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 20So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. **Thanks be to God.**

\*Gospel Acclamation — from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Setting Five

"Glory and Praise"



\*Gospel — Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

The Gospel of Luke, the 15th chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

1Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] 2And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

3So he told them this parable: 11b"There was a man who had two sons. 12The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. 13A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. 14When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. 17But when he

came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ 20So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 22But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

25“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. 27He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ 28Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. 30But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ 31Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon** — “Prodigal Grace”

Pastor Chris Culuris

**\*Hymn** — no. 587

“There Is Wideness in God’s Mercy”

**\*Affirmation of Faith** — 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 power of 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 of Intercession**

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Jesus formed the disciples in the ways of extravagant mercy and profound welcome. Lead your church to be a community marked by forgiveness, hospitality, and celebration. Send us to transform a world plagued by fear and condemnation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You make the land to produce a harvest that sustains your entire creation. Equip farmers and farm workers to treat the land in a humane way. Nourish the earth with ample rainfall and abundant sunshine. Help us to heal grounds tainted by pollution or misuse. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Countries are divided and leaders often harbor grudges. Reconcile nations that experience conflict. Act quickly to bring an end to war, especially the conflict in Ukraine. Anoint peacemakers trained in the art of diplomacy and foster a spirit of collaboration among political rivals. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your people cry for help in times of distress. Resolve disagreements among family members. Save those experiencing financial hardship. Hear our prayers for those who are sick or grieving. Console us with the promise that everything can become new. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your love comes to us when a table is set and a feast is prepared. Bless the feeding ministries of this congregation and broader community. Bring an end to hunger in our community and around the world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## Offering

*Music at the Offering*

“Amazing Grace”

Setting by Cathy and David Mockleburn  
Nancy Timm, handbells; Sharon Malm, piano

# Sharing the Meal

\***The Great Thanksgiving** — pg. 161, front of hymnal, from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Setting Five

\***Sanctus** — pg. 162, front of hymnal, from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Setting Five

## \*Words of Institution and Prayers

God who knows us, we are amazed by you. Your love never runs out, your hope never runs dry, your joy never gives up. We wish that we could be more like you in that way. In a world that loves scarcity, your abundance is shocking. In a world that knows fear, your joy is compelling. In a world that knows anxiety, your peace is captivating. We long for these things.

Show us a life of expansive faith. Show us a life of overflowing joy. Show us a life of absorbing beauty. Show us a life of engrossing purpose. Show us a life that is as honest, and rich, and meaningful as the one Jesus led.

And until that expansive and holy day, we will continue to gather at this Table. Until that day we will continue to look for you in our midst.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

God, we are amazed by you. Your love never runs out, so bring that never-ending love here. Together we pray: **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 the Table**

Jesus has always been one to invite.  
 He said, “Drop your nets and follow me.”  
 He said, “Let the little children come.”  
 He said, “Stand up from your mat, you are healed.”  
 Jesus has always been one to invite, and that has not changed.

So friends, you are invited to this Table. Each and every one of us—with our doubts, our fears, our scars, our joy, our dreams, our hopes, our questions—we are invited to God’s table. And here we will be met. Here we will be fed. Here we are given a taste of an expansive life that is full to the brim with love, overflowing with joy.

So come.  
 Not because you must, but because you can.  
 Come. You are invited. This Table is for you.

**Distribution of Communion**

**Lamb of God** — pg. 164, front of hymnal, from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Setting Five

**Communion Blessing & Prayer**

**Departing to Serve God’s World**

**Announcements**

**\*Sending Hymn** — no. 1062, from *All Creation Sings*

“Build a Longer Table”



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,  
 2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;  
 3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.  
 4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.  
 where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.  
 Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.  
 Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,  
 For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,  
 When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,  
 So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.  
 Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.  
 Christ tears down our fenc - es; all are wel - come here.  
 None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

## \*Blessing & Dismissal

As you leave this place, may you be awestruck by the beauty of this world.

May you laugh, and may it be contagious.

May you overflow with love for those around you.

May you be effusive with hope and quick to point out joy.

And in all of your living, and breathing, and being, may you find yourself full to the brim with God's Holy Spirit, and may it change your life. In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself—  
go in peace, full to the brim. **Thanks be to God.**

## \*Postlude — “Noël Nouvelet”

Setting by Paul Manz  
Heidi Engman, GAC Music Scholar

## Acknowledgements

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## Worship Assistants

Pastor: Chris Culuris

Director of Music: Emily Bruflat

Audio/Video: Leif Hammar, Amelia Staples, Rebekah Roemhildt

Acolytes: Simon Ribar, Maren Swenson, Ella Twaddle

Reader: Ezekiel Ribar

Greeter: Cole Engelhardt

Ushers: David Kennedy

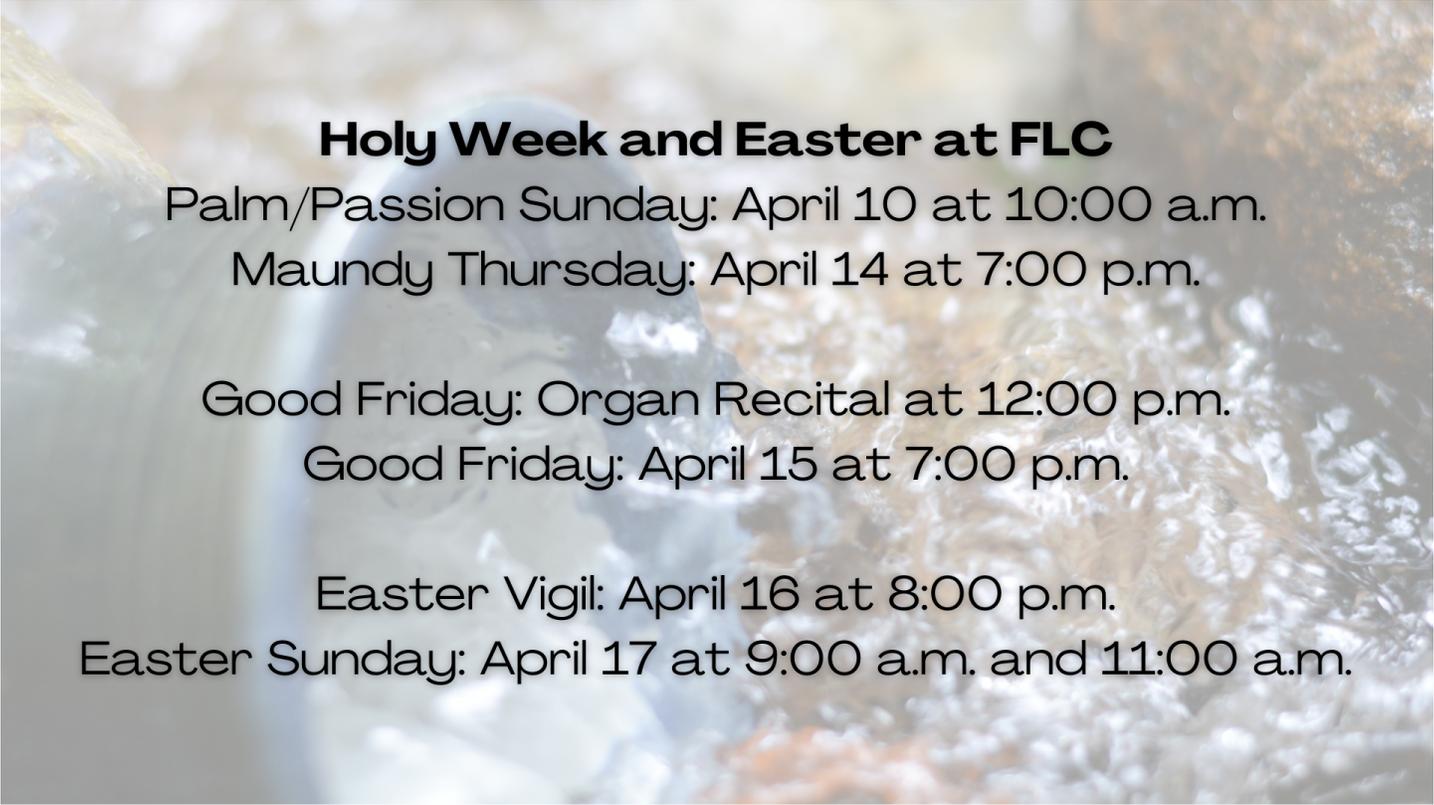
Musicians: Heidi Engman, GAC Music Scholar; Nancy Timm; Sharon Malm

## Announcements

- Our Lenten “Full to the Brim” series continues the next two Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. and Sundays at 10:00 a.m. All are invited into this very special time in our church year!
- Please find the sign-up sheet in the Gathering Space and volunteer to be a worship assistant. It would be very helpful to especially have our Holy Week and Easter volunteers decided in advance!
- Thanks for your generosity to the MN FoodShare campaign! There are still three weeks left:
  - The blue box will remain in the gathering space until April 10 to receive your donations.
  - Monetary donations are also welcomed. Checks can be made out to First Lutheran with “Food Shelf” noted in the memo line
- Save the Date: *Short Stories by Jesus* - A six-week discussion of Jesus’ parables, for Monday Morning Bible Study, beginning April 25 at 9:30 a.m. What did they mean to the people who heard them the first time? What do they mean today? All are welcome!
- To support Lutheran Disaster Response to aid the people of Ukraine, you can make a donation <https://www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response>

## Prayers

- We lift up prayers for those on our long-term list: Tom and Deb Johnson, Abigail Christenson, Betty Gustafson, Elgene Lund, Chuck Petry, Bob Cady, Joan Williams, Myrene Bunge, Glenn Stryker, Erika Schuldt, Gloria Kane, Gwen Powell, Nancy Maag, and Urusla McRostie.
- We pray for the families of those who have recently died: Martin Larson, Dale Haack
- We pray for all those families continuing to adjust to the loss of loved ones.



## **Holy Week and Easter at FLC**

Palm/Passion Sunday: April 10 at 10:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday: April 14 at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday: Organ Recital at 12:00 p.m.

Good Friday: April 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Easter Vigil: April 16 at 8:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday: April 17 at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.