

March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Fourth Sunday in Lent



8470 Landen Drive Maineville, Ohio

*At Abiding Word  
We gather around the Word (worship)  
We grow in the Word (education)  
And we share the Word with the world (outreach).*



**Abiding Word Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Wisconsin Synod**  
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### **Welcome!**

To all who have gathered here this morning we welcome you in the name of Christ our Lord. Through him we have access to God in boldness and confidence. (Ephesians 3:12) Please join us for coffee after the service. Join us at 11:00am for Bible Class today.

### ***OPEN DOOR POLICIES***

***God's Surprising Strategies for Getting Sinners Back Home***

### ***GRACE INSTEAD OF CONDEMNATION***

We assume people get what they deserve. We assume that what goes around comes around. We assume God helps those who help themselves. Those assumptions are false. God does not operate on the principle of merit but of grace. No one is beyond the reach of God's grace. God never turns it off. At the entrance of God's open door is not a Father looking to condemn us, but a Father who has eagerly longed for our return. When we do, he takes us in his loving arms and assures us we are still his child. When the weight of our sin makes us fearful of God's condemnation, he reveals his grace yet again.

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **CONFESSION**

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just**

**and will forgive us our sins**

**and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,**

**I am sinful by nature**

**and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;**

**I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and forever.**

**But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins**

**with his innocent suffering and death.**

**Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **536 Jesus, Ever-Abiding Friend**

- 1 Jesus, ever-abiding friend, my soul's rest and journey's end,  
blameless one who erased my sin for eternity;  
comfort through my deepest pain, love that sees beyond my shame,  
Christ, the sweetest, dearest name that my heart has ever known.
- 2 Jesus, Savior with crown of thorns, my soul's peace forevermore,  
constant, caring, redeeming Lord, life abundantly;  
rock of heaven, strength and shield, perfect holiness revealed,  
Christ, by whom my wounds were healed—name above all other names.

# THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, you receive us as your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge your merciful goodness, give thanks for all your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## FIRST READING

**ISAIAH 12:1-6**

<sup>1</sup>In that day you will say:

“I will praise you, Lord.

Although you were angry with me,  
your anger has turned away  
and you have comforted me.

<sup>2</sup>Surely God is my salvation;

I will trust and not be afraid.

The Lord, the Lord himself, is my strength and my defense;  
he has become my salvation.”

<sup>3</sup>With joy you will draw water  
from the wells of salvation.

<sup>4</sup>In that day you will say:

“Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;  
make known among the nations what he has done,  
and proclaim that his name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup>Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things;  
let this be known to all the world.

<sup>6</sup>Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,  
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING

## ROMANS 8:1–10

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

<sup>5</sup>Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. <sup>6</sup>The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. <sup>8</sup>Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup>You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. <sup>10</sup>But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**M:** There is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

## GOSPEL

## LUKE 15:1–3,11–32

<sup>1</sup>Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. <sup>2</sup>But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

<sup>3</sup>Then Jesus told them this parable:

<sup>11</sup>Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

<sup>13</sup>“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. <sup>14</sup>After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. <sup>16</sup>He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

<sup>17</sup>“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! <sup>18</sup>I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ <sup>20</sup>So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

<sup>21</sup>“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

<sup>22</sup>“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. <sup>24</sup>For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup>“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. <sup>27</sup>‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

<sup>28</sup>“The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

<sup>31</sup>“ ‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

**APOSTLES' CREED** *The Second Article (Redemption)*

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

*What does this mean?*

**I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.**

**He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.**

**All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.**

**This is most certainly true.**

**Offering**

*Stand*

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

## **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.**

<b><i>HYMN: THE FIRST SONG OF ISAIAH</i></b>
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<b><i>810</i></b>
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Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**Amen.**

<b><i>HYMN: REFORMATION SONG</i></b>
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### **Acknowledgments**

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