

† 40 Days of Walking the Way †



Communion — The Way of Love:
Caring for All Creation

✠ The Divine Liturgy ✠

“Love the Creator & His Creation Like Jesus”
Saint Luke Lutheran Church | March 24, 2021

Invocation

Father, Creator of heaven and earth, ✠ **we thank you for your daily love and care.** ✠ Son Jesus, servant of all, ✠ **we follow your example.** ✠ Holy Spirit, presence of life, ✠ **rule and dwell in our hearts and community.** ✠ Father, Son, and Holy Spirit ✠ **we care for all your creation with our minds, bodies, and whole lives.**

(we make the sign of the cross, touching forehead, heart, and shoulders)

Into your loving hands ✠ **we place our worries, stresses, and burdens.** ✠ In stillness and patience ✠ **we wait on you in all things.**

(the Christ candle is lit to remind us that Jesus is present among us)

♪ *Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life.* ♪ (tune: GC2 23, twice)

Communion — The Way of Love

In the sacrament of Communion, the Creator

✠ **lovingly brings me into unity and union with himself.**

His self-giving love empowers you to enter into loving union

✠ **with the Church and all creation, including my own body.**

At the center of the sacrament of Communion is the mystery

✠ **of sharing bread and wine to remember and re-embodiment Jesus's story.**

As we share bread and wine in Jesus's memory,

✠ **he gives himself to me and makes me part of the Body of Christ.**

His body is the bread of life

✠ **that sustains me and turns me into a person of love.**

His self-sacrificial blood

✠ **heals my relationship with the Creator.**

He empowers us

✠ **to sacrifice myself instead of others.**

Through this mystery we are filled with the Lord himself

✠ **and learn to see him in, with, and under all his creation.**

The Creator's work of Communion

✠ **is given and shared through Love.**

♪ *We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand, We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand, And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land. And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love* ♪ *We will work with each other, we will work side by side, We will work with each other, we will work side by side, And we'll share with each other knowing God will provide. And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, Yes,*

they'll know we are Christians by our love. ♪ (tune: GC2 728)

Prayer for the Way

Father, help us to

✘ **daily walk on Jesus's Way of faith, hope, and love.**

Help us to live by Faith and in our Baptism

✘ **by surrendering & listening to the Creator.**

Help us to live by Hope and in Repentance

✘ **by confronting our past & waiting on the Creator.**

Help us to live by Love and in Communion

✘ **by sharing with the church & caring for all creation.**

Father, help us to

✘ **daily follow Jesus in all things. Amen.**

Song ✘ *LSB 418 "O Lord, throughout the Forty Days"*

♪ *O Lord, throughout the forty days your focus was to pray. You lived by faith and left behind Civilization's Way. ♪*

♪ *You were tempted to take control, but you would not give in. You knew that pow'r and wealth come from the evil way of sin. ♪*

♪ *In weakness and fragility, you trusted God above. Please teach us to deny ourselves and imitate your love. ♪*

♪ *We trust that you will give us strength to learn from you each day. Be with us as we follow you and walk Jesus's Way. ♪*

† Caring for All Creation †

"Caring for All Creation" Litany

The second practice of Love

✘ **is caring for all creation, including my own body.**

All creation, including your own body,

✘ **is the sacred temple and dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.**

Train your body for this

✘ **by keeping my desires under control.**

Be disciplined and self-restrained

✘ **in creating healthy and loving habits.**

Serving and caring for all creation

✘ **restores me to my primary Creator-given vocation as a human being.**

♪ *Lord of all creation, grant me grace to love all people, every race, and in each creature may I see that you love ev'ry bird and tree. ♪ Break down the wall that would divide your creation on every side. Your creature's good let me pursue; let selfless love be kind and true. ♪ Give me your courage, Lord, to speak whenever strong oppress the weak. Should I myself the victim be, help me forgive, and set them free. ♪ (tune: LSB 844)*

Reading ✕ 1 Corinthians 3:10-17, 6:9-20

The reading comes from 1 Corinthians 3 & 6. ✕ **We listen with open hearts.**
This is the word of our Creator. ✕ **Thank you, Lord, for speaking to us.**

“Letting Go of Self-Indulgence & Following with Self-Care” Litany

Do not serve your desires

✕ **with any unhealthy patterns of consuming.**

Do not do something

✕ **simply because it feels good.**

Do not consume

✕ **harmful chemicals, foods, or drinks.**

Do not get drunk

✕ **or use substances to hide from your pain.**

Do not have sex, even in your thoughts,

✕ **outside of lifelong marriage.**

Eat whole grains, vegetables,

✕ **beans, nuts, and fruits.**

Eat animal flesh only as an exception

✕ **and drink lots of water.**

Use man-made medicines

✕ **sparingly and temporarily, if you are able.**

Be free of sex, if you are able. If not, be in a male/female, lifelong marriage

✕ **that reflects the balanced whole of humanity and is open to children.**

Song ✕ *LSB 848 “Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service”*

♪ *Lord, whose love through humble service Bore the weight of human need,
Who upon the cross, forsaken, Offered mercy's perfect deed, We, Your
servants, bring the worship Not of voice alone, but heart, Consecrating to
Your purpose Every gift that You impart. ♪*

♪ *Still Your children wander homeless; Still the hungry cry for bread; Still the
captives long for freedom; Still in grief we mourn our dead. As, O Lord,
Your deep compassion Healed the sick and freed the soul, Use the love
Your Spirit kindles Still to save and make us whole. ♪*

♪ *As we worship, grant us vision, Till Your love's revealing light, In its height
and depth and greatness, Dawns upon our quickened sight, Making known
the needs and burdens Your compassion bids us bear, Stirring us to tireless
striving, Your abundant life to share. ♪*

♪ *Called from worship to Your service, Forth in Your dear name we go, To
the child, the youth, the aged, Love in living deeds to show; Hope and
health, goodwill and comfort, Counsel, aid, and peace we give, That Your
servants, Lord, in freedom May Your mercy know and live. ♪*

Reading ✕ 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

The reading comes from 2 Thessalonians 3. ✕ **We listen with open hearts.**
This is the word of our Creator. ✕ **Thank you, Lord, for speaking to us.**

“Letting Go of Empty Busyness & Following with Restful Work” Litany

Do not busy yourself

✘ **with empty and meaningless activities.**

Do not work for the money, pleasures,

✘ **and progress of Civilization that will be destroyed.**

Do not make empty promises

✘ **or lazily let others carry a greater burden of work.**

Do not push yourself

✘ **beyond your limits.**

Focus all your passion

✘ **and energy on the Creator’s work.**

Lower yourself

✘ **to serve all creation.**

Do everything

✘ **as though working for the Lord.**

Be reliable

✘ **and always follow through on your word.**

Get adequate rest and sleep.

✘ **Take Sabbath and retreat time.**

Song ✘ *LSB 857 “Lord Help Us Walk Your Servant Way”*

♪ *Lord, help us walk Your servant way, Wherever love may lead And bending low, forgetting self, Each serve the other’s need. ♪*

♪ *You came to earth, O Christ, as lord, But pow’r You laid aside. You lived Your years in servanthood; In lowliness You died. ♪*

♪ *No golden scepter but a towel You place within the hands Of those who seek to follow You And live by Your commands. ♪*

♪ *You bid us bend our human pride Nor count ourselves above The lowest place, the meanest task That waits the gift of love. ♪*

♪ *Lord, help us walk Your servant way Wherever love may lead And, bending low, forgetting self, Each serve the other’s need. ♪*

Reading ✘ Romans 12:18—13:14

The reading comes from Romans 12. ✘ **We listen with open hearts.**

This is the word of our Creator. ✘ **Thank you, Lord, for speaking to us.**

“Letting Go of Violence & Following with Kindness” Litany

Do not hate or hold grudges.

✘ **Do not complain, lie, be divisive, or abuse with your words.**

Do not control or manipulate.

✘ **Do not resist evil with evil or take revenge.**

Do not exploit, overwork, or abuse land, animals, or people

✘ **as objects or commodities for your gain or pleasure.**

Do not harm, kill,

✘ **or destroy the Father’s creation.**

Have compassion and mercy

✠ on all creatures, even strangers and enemies.

Be hospitable and live in balanced harmony

✠ with all land, animals, and people.

Pray for those who are against you

✠ and be loving to those who are unkind to you.

Help those who hurt you

✠ and respond to all evil by doing good.

Do to all creatures

✠ as you want done to you.

Message

Reflection

Let us reflect on how the word of Jesus is speaking into our lives this day.

(silence for reflection)

For giving in to our addiction to the Way of Civilization and not sharing with the Church, ✠ **Father, forgive us.** ✠ For putting our selfish interests first and not sacrificing ourselves for your Church, ✠ **Father, forgive us.** ✠ For competing with others and not cooperating, ✠ **Father, forgive us.** ✠ For acting like we own things and not living generously, ✠ **Father, forgive us.** ✠ For not faithfully living in Communion, ✠ **Father, forgive us.** ✠ Father, turn us back to walking in your Spirit. *♪ Lord Father we have wandered and hidden from your face. Rescue your whole creation with your almighty grace. From trust in wealth and weapons and blindness to your Way, save us and all creation with your own hands, we pray. ♪ (tune: LSB 449)*

Will you leave behind the Way of Civilization and walk in the Way of Jesus?

✠ **Yes, I renounce the Way of Civilization and pledge my full allegiance to Jesus.** ✠ Our heavenly Father heals all those who return to his loving arms. You are forgiven and set free from all slavery to live life in the Way of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! ✠ **Amen.**

Song ✠ *LSB 845 "Where Charity and Love Prevail"*

♪ Where charity and love prevail, there God is ever found; Brought here together by Christ's love, by love are we thus bound. ♪

♪ With grateful joy and holy fear God's charity we learn; Let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in return. ♪

♪ Forgive we now each other's faults as we our faults confess; And let us love each other well in Christian holiness. ♪

♪ Let strife among us be unknown, let all contention cease; Be God's the glory that we seek, be ours God's holy peace. ♪

♪ Let us recall that in our midst dwells Christ, His only Son; As members of his body joined, we are in him made one. ♪

♪ For love excludes no race or clan, That names the Savior's name; His family embraces all whose Father is the same. ♪

Benediction

May the Lord bless you with humility, reminding you that you are but dust. May he forgive and release you from your brokenness and addictions. May he shape you into the loving and trusting character and image of Jesus. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Song ✻ *LSB 424 "O Christ, You Walked the Road"*

- ♪ *O Christ, You walked the road Our wand'ring feet must go. You faced with us temptation's pow'r And fought our ancient foe. ♪*
- ♪ *No bread of earth alone Can fill our hung'ring hearts. Lord, help us seek Your living Word, The food Your grace imparts. ♪*
- ♪ *No blinding sign we ask, No wonder from above. Lord, help us place our trust alone In Your unswerving love. ♪*
- ♪ *When lures of easy gain With promise brightly shine, Lord, help us seek Your kingdom first; Our wills with Yours align. ♪*
- ♪ *O Christ, You walked the road Our wand'ring feet must go. Stay with us through temptation's hour To fight our ancient foe. ♪*
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- "40 Days of Walking the Way" - Join us on Wednesdays in Lent at 6:30 pm as we immerse ourselves in Jesus's Way of faith, hope, and love.
- Table Talk - Join us on Mondays at 6:00 pm for our table talk discussions on "The Patient Ferment of the Early Church." Kevin and Luke are leading us in a discussion about the character and practices of the early church and how we can shape our own direction and life as a church in similar ways.