

# Lenten Midweek Prayer

April 9, 2025



everything  
[in] between  
righteousness & mercy

Gethsemane Lutheran Church

3600 Hampton - St. Louis, MO 63109

Worship God, welcome all to nurture a community of harmony, healing, and justice.

*Welcome to worship! We're delighted you are here!*



Gethsemane Lutheran Church is a *Reconciling in Christ* Congregation. **You are welcome here.**



We ask all members, guests, and visitors to please fill out the **attendance slip** in your worship folder and place it in the offering plate.



Gethsemane Lutheran Church wishes to **acknowledge** and **honor** the Osage, Quapaw, Myaamia, Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Kaskaskia, and Kickapoo peoples upon whose ancestral homelands we gather for worship, as well as all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place—this land—and call it their home.

## OPENING

**Musical Prelude** *Seek Ye First*

Arr. by Mark Albrecht

### Responsive Prayer

**Presider:** Show us your mercy, O God,  
**All:** **and grant us your salvation.**

**P:** Give us the joy of your saving help again,  
**A:** **and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.**

**P:** Give peace in all the world;  
**A:** **for only in you can we live in safety.**

**P:** Keep the nations under your care,  
**A:** **and guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

**P:** Let your way be known upon earth;  
**A:** **your saving health among all nations.**

**P:** Let not the needy be forgotten,  
**A:** **nor the hope of the poor taken away.**

**P:** Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
**A:** **and sustain me with your Holy Spirit.**

**P:** Lord, hear my prayer,  
**A:** **and let my cry come before you.**

**Silence**

HYMN

# There Is a Longing in Our Hearts



There is a long-ing in our hearts, O Lord, for you to re -



veal your - self to us. There is a long-ing in our



hearts for love we on - ly find in you, our God.



1 For jus - tice,	for free - dom,	for mer - cy:
2 For wis - dom,	for cour - age,	for com - fort:
3 For heal - ing,	for whole - ness,	for new life:
4 Lord, save us,	take pit - y,	light in our



hear our prayer.	In sor - row,	in grief:
hear our prayer.	In weak - ness,	in fear:
hear our prayer.	In sick - ness,	in death:
deep - est night.	We call you;	we wait:



be near; hear our prayer, O God.

Text: Anne Quigley, b. 1955

Music: LONGING, Anne Quigley

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## GREETING

**P:** The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**A:** **And also with you.**

## PRAYER

**P:** O God, rich in mercy, full of kindness, out of your great love, you raise us up from sin and death and make us alive together with Christ. Write your word upon our hearts and restore in us the image of your love that, by your Spirit, our way of life may become the way of Christ, through whom we pray. **Amen.**

## PSALMODY

### PSALM 24

<sup>1</sup>The earth is the Lord's and all <sup>1</sup> that is in it,  
the world and those who <sup>1</sup> dwell therein.

<sup>2</sup>**For the Lord has founded it up- <sup>1</sup> on the seas  
and established it up- <sup>1</sup> on the rivers.**

<sup>3</sup>Who may ascend the mountain <sup>1</sup> of the Lord,  
and who may stand in God's <sup>1</sup> holy place?

<sup>4</sup>**Those of innocent hands and puri- <sup>1</sup> ty of heart,  
who do not swear on God's being, nor do they pledge by <sup>1</sup> what is false.**

<sup>5</sup>They shall receive blessing <sup>1</sup> from the Lord  
and righteousness from the God of <sup>1</sup> their salvation.

<sup>6</sup>**Such is the generation of those who seek <sup>1</sup> you, O Lord,  
of those who seek your face, O <sup>1</sup> God of Jacob.**

<sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O ever- <sup>1</sup> lasting doors,  
that the King of glory <sup>1</sup> may come in.

<sup>8</sup>**Who is this <sup>1</sup> King of glory?**

**The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, might- <sup>1</sup> y in battle!**

<sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O ever- <sup>1</sup> lasting doors,  
that the King of glory <sup>1</sup> may come in.

<sup>10</sup>**Who is this <sup>1</sup> King of glory?**

**Truly, the Lord of hosts is the <sup>1</sup> King of glory.**

# RESPONSORY

## Create in Me a Clean Heart *Offering Song*

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature. The music is written in a homophonic style with block chords and simple melodic lines.

spir - it with - in me, Cast me not a - way from your

The second system continues the musical notation with two staves, maintaining the same key signature and homophonic texture.

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

The third system continues the musical notation with two staves, maintaining the same key signature and homophonic texture.

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

The fourth system continues the musical notation with two staves, maintaining the same key signature and homophonic texture.

and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

The fifth system concludes the musical notation with two staves, maintaining the same key signature and homophonic texture.

# WORD

## SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 19:1-10

<sup>1</sup> He entered Jericho and was passing through it. <sup>2</sup> A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. <sup>3</sup> He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. <sup>5</sup> When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup> So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. <sup>7</sup> All who saw it began to grumble and said, “He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.” <sup>8</sup> Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.” <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.”

## POEM

Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

# Righteousness & Mercy

As children we were taught to tell the teacher.

(Justice was dealt when we spoke up.)

As children we were taught to always be kind.

(Friends were made when we spoke love.)

As children we were taught that Zaccheus climbed a tree.

(But we cut that tree down a long time ago.)

So what are the rules for this day and age?

Can we turn black and white into shades of gray?

Do we call each other out, for righteousness sake?

Do we call each other in? Do we grab something to eat?

As always, love is somewhere in between.

## MEDITATION ON SCRIPTURE

# HYMN OF THE DAY

## Righteous Mercy

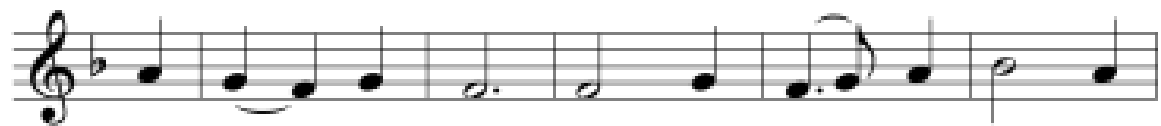
HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D ("Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus")

Words by Anna Strickland, 2023

Music by Rowland H. Prichard, 1830;  
harm. Ralph Vaughn Williams, 1906

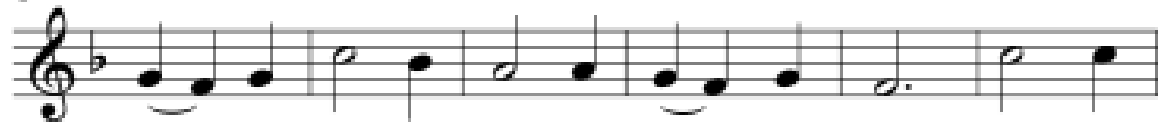


Since our child - hood you have taught us what is wrong  
Though there's wide - ness in your mer - cy, let us not  
Far too of - ten we hold on - to an - ger dressed



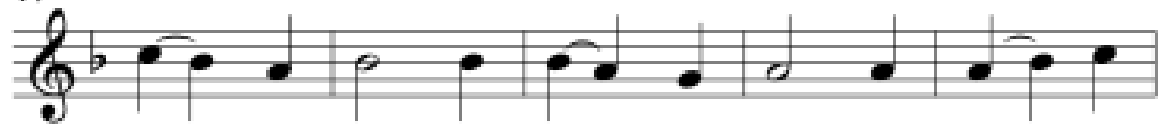
and what is right Nur - tur - ing our sense of  
a - buse that grace Called in - to this Chris - tian  
as righ - teous - ness We for - get we serve a

8



jus - tice, fuel - ing us to work and fight Keep that  
jour - ney, let our lives re - flect our faith When we  
God who calls us to re - la - tion - ship So when

14



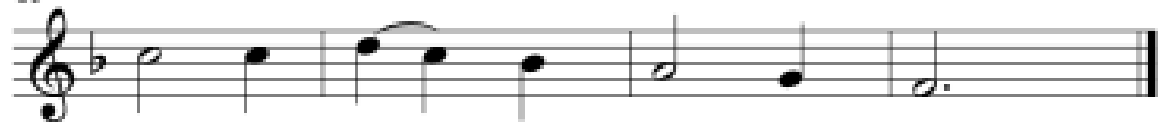
fire for jus - tice burn - ing in the sha - dow  
fal - ter and fall short of our com - mit - ment  
those who caused us harm re - pent and choose a

19



of our fear E - ven there your Spi - rit's stir - ring,  
to your will Hold us, wrap - ping us in your love  
bet - ter way Spi - rit move our venge - ful hearts

25



light - ing us a path that's clear  
as we work toward whole - ness still  
to choose love in - stead of wrath

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# PRAYERS

**P:** In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world. Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

...let us sing ...



Hear our prayer, Oh God.

## CLOSING PETITION

**P:** Gracious Jesus, our Lord and our God, at this hour you bore our sins in your own body on the tree so that we, being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness. Have mercy upon us now and at the hour of our death, and grant to us, your servants, with all others who devoutly remember your blessed Passion, a holy and peaceful life in this world and, through your grace, eternal glory in the life to come; where, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign, God forever. **Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**P:** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:



Our Fa-ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,  
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in  
heav - en. Give us to - day our dai - ly bread.  
For - give us our sins as we for-give those who sin a-against us.





## SENDING BLESSING

**P:** Christ Jesus dwell in our hearts through faith, as we are being rooted and grounded in love, strengthened by the Spirit, and filled with all the fullness of God. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN** *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light (v.1)*

**HYMN# 815**

I want to walk as a child of the light.  
I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world.  
The star of my life is Jesus.  
In him there is no darkness at all.  
The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

**MUSICAL POSTLUDE** *Open the Eyes of my Heart with Be Thou My Vision*

Arr. by Mark Hayes

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## Zacchaeus

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Luke 19:1-10

Digital painting

I had a lot of fun discovering new layers to this familiar story. I learned that Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore fig tree, which was a food source for poor people because the fruit was bitter and generally undesirable.<sup>9</sup> I had always imagined a fruitless tree, but the presence of fruit opened up interesting avenues to explore. The root word for sycamore tree is *σῦκον*, meaning “fig,” and as I did a study of other key words in the text, I noticed this same root word in *συκοφαντεω*, or “defrauded,” which was used to describe what Zacchaeus did to his community. It was curious to me that the root word for “defrauded” was “fig,” so I dug deeper to find that the Greek word was from the phrase “fig-informer” or a person who would notify authorities if one was exporting figs from Greece without paying a tax. It seemed that these “fig-informers” would use the threat of exposure to extort money from fig farmers. This is where the word “sycophant”

comes from, which evolved to more generally describe a “malignant accuser from love of gain,” which perfectly describes Zacchaeus.<sup>10</sup>

Jesus calls Zacchaeus out of his identity as “sycophant” into his new identity as “repentant host” who invites Jesus into his home and redistributes his ill-gotten wealth. Zacchaeus’s clothing holds a repeated pattern of four figs and halves of coins, referencing the fruits of his transformation.

The area where Zacchaeus sat in the tree is fruitless and dying. His actions were destructive and oppressive to his own community. The crowd is correct in grumbling about him; their anger is righteous, but Jesus offers mercy. In this visual metaphor, Jesus removes him from the tree so it has a chance to heal and nourish the whole community. Jesus’ clothing is patterned with suns, representing righteousness, and water, representing mercy, because it is through his merciful actions that righteousness for the community is achieved.

—Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

<sup>9</sup> *Fauna and Flora of the Bible*, by United Bible Societies. (United Bible Societies, 1980). 179-181.

<sup>10</sup> For discussion of the word “sycophant” (Strong’s G4811), please see: [blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4811/kjv/tr/0-1/](http://blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4811/kjv/tr/0-1/)



## Gethsemane is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation Affirmation of Welcome

Christ's welcome knows no boundaries! Therefore, our welcome knows no boundaries and we invite all people to full participation in the life of the congregation.

We at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Saint Louis embrace...

People of any race or ethnicity...

People who are male, female, transgender, intersex or any other gender identity ...

People of any age...

People wherever they are, or wherever they have been, on their faith journeys...

People who are single, married, widowed, divorced, separated or partnered...

People who are, gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, or any other sexual orientation...

People with a variety of political perspectives...

People who have, or had, addictions, phobias, abortions, or a criminal record...

People who are homeowners, renters, living with parents, or homeless...

People who are fully-abled, disabled, or of differing abilities...

People of differing educational backgrounds...

People of any socio-economic condition...

People not mentioned above, all of whom are created and loved by God!

As we celebrate and seek to preserve the beautiful, amazing diversity of God's creation, we pledge to ourselves and to all others that we will strive to live as a reconciling people in our life together and in our outreach to the world. We are committed to being a radically loving and welcoming community of faith.