

## **Greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ**

### **The Worship Folder**

The following document is the worship folder for tonight's midweek Lenten Service. Prayerfully read through it and then study it in detail.

### **Update on closures and cancellations**

All Divine Services, Bible Studies, Preschool, ChildCare**PLUS**, and meetings are cancelled and closed till April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Preschool and afterschool catechizing classes will, God willing, reconvene April 13<sup>th</sup> after the Easter break. Again this is subject to the shelter-in-place decree being lifted.

### **Check out our website at [trinitylutherantaylorville.org](http://trinitylutherantaylorville.org)**

Rob Davis is doing a great job in keeping it updated. Let others know about it.

### **Facebook**

Rob is working on getting us up and running on Facebook. When this happens, we will attempt audio and video downloads. *(I must say this, I have a face for radio and a voice for silent movies. But we will give it a try.)*

### **Easter Services**

We are at this time planning to have all three Easter weekend services including also Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. This is if the shelter-in-place is lifted. If not, we will heed the government guidelines and directives. We may have to go with reserve seating if the limit is 50 or less.

If we are not able to gather, we hope to have something on Facebook, either video or audio. Then, the first Sunday we are able to gather with organist present, we will celebrate Easter. Easter is a movable date year to year. Every Sunday is a remembrance of Christ's resurrection. Thank God He has given us liberty in this matter through Jesus Christ.

Now sit back, read, ponder and inward digest the Word of God. Be at peace. The Lord is with you.

*Pastor Blomquist*

## Living among the Bible's Trees: Tree of the Lord's Planting

Lenten Midweek 5

March 25, 2020

### As We Gather

The trees of the Bible help us realize why we need a Savior, how God provided a Savior for us in the person of Jesus Christ, and how the saved lives of repentant believers look. Today we consider how God brings low the haughty and raises up the humble and repentant. Our Lord Jesus is like a sprig from the top of a cedar, "planted" by God (and risen) to become a new, glorious tree. Though those who rely on Him are seemingly insignificant, like a mustard seed, they grow as the Church to give shelter to all people who flock to our Lord and His gracious mercy.



+ PREPARATION +

### Hymn "Christ, the Word of God Incarnate"

LSB 540



1 Christ, the Word of God in - car - nate, Lord and Son of  
2 Christ, the liv - ing bread from heav - en, Food for bod - y,  
3 Christ, the shoot that springs tri - um - phant From the stump of  
4 Christ, our good and faith - ful shep - herd, Watch - ing all Your



A - bra - ham; Christ, the ra - diance of the Fa - ther,  
food for soul; Christ, the man - na dai - ly giv - en,  
Jes - se's tree; Christ, true vine, You nur - ture branch - es  
lambs and sheep; Christ, the gate that guards the sheep - fold,



Per - fect God, the great I AM; Christ, the light, You  
Nour - ish, strength - en, make us whole. Feed us with the  
To bear fruit a - bun - dant - ly. Graft us in - to  
Nev - er - fail - ing vig - il keep. When we stray, Good



shine un - van - quished, Light and life You bring to all; Light our  
food of heav - en, Fore - taste of the feast to be; Quench our  
You, O Sav - ior; Prune our hearts so we re - main Fruit - ful  
Shep - herd, seek us, Find us, lift us, bear us home; Lamb of



path with Your own pres - ence, Grant us grace to heed Your call.  
thirst with liv - ing wa - ter Spring - ing up e - ter - nal - ly.  
branch - es in Your vine - yard Till e - ter - nal life we gain.  
God, our shep - herd, keep us; Let us hear Your voice a - lone.

5 Christ, the way that leads unfailing  
To the Father's home on high,  
Christ, the truth that frees the captive,  
Christ, the life that cannot die.  
Mediator to the Father,  
Sacrifice and great High Priest:  
Lead us to Your heav'nly mansions,  
There to share Your wedding feast.

6 Christ, the Alpha and Omega,  
Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
Christ, the life and resurrection,  
Christ, the Church's glorious head:  
Praise and thanks and adoration  
And unending worship be  
To the Father and the Spirit  
And to You eternally.

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### Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

### Opening Sentences

*Psalm 1:1–3; 96:12–13; Isaiah 61:1, 3*

P Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord.

C **He is like a tree planted by streams of water.**

P The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; . . .

C **that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.**

P Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord,

C **for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth.**

### Confession and Absolution

*Psalm 80:19; Isaiah 61:1, 3*

P Let us confess our sins to God, our heavenly Father.

C **Heavenly Father, we confess that we are bound to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have “eaten forbidden fruit” in our thoughts, words, and deeds. We have not produced spiritual fruit in keeping with the new life You have won for us. For the sake of Jesus’ sacrifice on the tree of the cross, grant us Your forgiveness. Restore us, O Lord God of hosts! Let Your face shine, that we may be saved! Amen.**

P After His triumph over Satan’s temptations in the wilderness, Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth and announced that the prophecy of Isaiah was being fulfilled in Him. The prophet had written, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me . . . to grant to those who mourn in Zion . . . a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”

As a called and ordained servant of Christ I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm**

*Psalm 104:10–18; antiphon: v. 16*

P The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.

C You make springs gush forth in the valleys;  
**they flow between the hills;**

P they give drink to every beast of the field;  
C **the wild donkeys quench their thirst.**

P Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;  
C **they sing among the branches.**

P From Your lofty abode You water the mountains;  
C **the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your work.**

P You cause the grass to grow for the livestock  
C **and plants for man to cultivate,**

P that he may bring forth food from the earth  
C **and wine to gladden the heart of man,**

P oil to make his face shine  
C **and bread to strengthen man’s heart.**

P The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,  
C **the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.**

P In them the birds build their nests;  
C **the stork has her home in the fir trees.**

P The high mountains are for the wild goats;

**C the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers.**

**The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.**

## **Passion**

### **The Crowd Chooses Barabbas**

<sup>15</sup> Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup> And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. <sup>17</sup> So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” <sup>18</sup> For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up.

<sup>19</sup> Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.”

<sup>20</sup> Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. <sup>21</sup> The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” <sup>22</sup> Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” <sup>23</sup> And he said, “Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”

### **Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified**

<sup>24</sup> So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood; <sup>[b]</sup> see to it yourselves.” <sup>25</sup> And all the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!”

<sup>26</sup> Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged <sup>[c]</sup> Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

### **Jesus Is Mocked**

<sup>27</sup> Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, <sup>[d]</sup> and they gathered the whole battalion <sup>[e]</sup> before him. <sup>28</sup> And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” <sup>30</sup> And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

### **The Crucifixion**

<sup>32</sup> As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross. <sup>33</sup> And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), <sup>34</sup> they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. <sup>35</sup> And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. <sup>36</sup> Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. <sup>37</sup> And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” <sup>38</sup> Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. <sup>39</sup> And those who passed by derided him,

wagging their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” <sup>41</sup> So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, <sup>42</sup> “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup> He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” <sup>44</sup> And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### **First Reading**

*Ezekiel 17:1–24*

The word of the Lord came to me: [2] "Son of man, propound a riddle, and speak a parable to the house of Israel; [3] say, Thus says the Lord God: A great eagle with great wings and long pinions, rich in plumage of many colors, came to Lebanon and took the top of the cedar. [4] He broke off the topmost of its young twigs and carried it to a land of trade and set it in a city of merchants. [5] Then he took of the seed of the land and planted it in fertile soil. He placed it beside abundant waters. He set it like a willow twig, [6] and it sprouted and became a low spreading vine, and its branches turned toward him, and its roots remained where it stood. So it became a vine and produced branches and put out boughs.

[7] "And there was another great eagle with great wings and much plumage, and behold, this vine bent its roots toward him and shot forth its branches toward him from the bed where it was planted, that he might water it. [8] It had been planted on good soil by abundant waters, that it might produce branches and bear fruit and become a noble vine.

[9] "Say, Thus says the Lord God: Will it thrive? Will he not pull up its roots and cut off its fruit, so that it withers, so that all its fresh sprouting leaves wither? It will not take a strong arm or many people to pull it from its roots. [10] Behold, it is planted; will it thrive? Will it not utterly wither when the east wind strikes it—wither away on the bed where it sprouted?"

[11] Then the word of the Lord came to me: [12] "Say now to the rebellious house, Do you not know what these things mean? Tell them, behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took her king and her princes and brought them to him to Babylon. [13] And he took one of the royal offspring and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath (the chief men of the land he had taken away), [14] that the kingdom might be humble and not lift itself up, and keep his covenant that it might stand. [15] But he rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt, that they might give him horses and a large army. Will he thrive? Can one escape who does such things? Can he break the covenant and yet escape?

[16] "As I live, declares the Lord God, surely in the place where the king dwells who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant with him he broke, in

Babylon he shall die. [17] Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company will not help him in war, when mounds are cast up and siege walls built to cut off many lives. [18] He despised the oath in breaking the covenant, and behold, he gave his hand and did all these things; he shall not escape. [19] Therefore thus says the Lord God: As I live, surely it is my oath that he despised, and my covenant that he broke. I will return it upon his head. [20] I will spread my net over him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon and enter into judgment with him there for the treachery he has committed against me. [21] And all the pick of his troops shall fall by the sword, and the survivors shall be scattered to every wind, and you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken."

[22] Thus says the Lord God: "I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and will set it out. I will break off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. [23] On the mountain height of Israel will I plant it, that it may bear branches and produce fruit and become a noble cedar. And under it will dwell every kind of bird; in the shade of its branches birds of every sort will nest. [24] And all the trees of the field shall know that I am the Lord; I bring low the high tree, and make high the low tree, dry up the green tree, and make the dry tree flourish. I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it."

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### **Second Reading**

*Mark 4:30–32*

<sup>30</sup>And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, <sup>32</sup>yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### **Responsory**

*Isaiah 11:1, 10; 1 Peter 2:24*

P There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a Branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

C **Christ Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree,  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.**

P In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—  
of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious.

C **Christ Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree,  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.**

- P There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a Branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
- C **Christ Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree,  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.**

**Sermon** *“From Humble Beginnings”*

We have trees in our yard that started out as saplings. Three pine trees survived and a couple of sugar maples. All are now huge and provides us with shade.

But there is one little sapling that is dear to my family’s heart, that would be, the little tree that we planted a year before we moved here. Our older three children still look for that tree every time they drive past St. John’s Lutheran Church (Ash Grove), Onarga, Illinois. They look to see if it is still there and how big it has grown.

Have you noticed how big the kingdom of God is? Considering how small it was? It started out no bigger than a mustard seed. But it has grown large like a mustard plant, large enough for birds to build their nest on its branches. It is large enough and strong enough for a bird to safely raise a family and to return again year after year.

This kingdom of God, that is, the reign of Christ, has grown from a small insignificant country of Israel. She was among the smallest of nations. She wasn’t a large empire like the Babylonian, Persian-Mede, Greek, and Roman empires. She actually was bounced around like a seed in the hand of the planter. There is nothing about Israel to impress the world or would indicate that from Her would come a King whose reign would cover the world.

This King had a humble start, too. He was born of a virgin, laid in a manger and raised in carpenter’s home. Nothing indicated that He would become the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Even His first group of followers consisted of twelve men, mostly fishermen, not soldiers or fighting men. This small tag of men could not have taken on the local Roman battalion let alone overthrow the empire. They were the smallest of armies and their leader a humble servant.

Yet, Christ established His kingdom through these followers. It was not by force and military might. It was by His sword, the Word of God with its two edges. The Law of God that put to death the sin within the heart of the hearer. The Gospel of Jesus Christ which created faith in the heart to believe Jesus to be the Savior of the world.

This sword went forth and now is conquering the world. It has grown large, large enough for people to find hope and rest. The branches of this kingdom are strong and large. It is able to provide a safe place for a family to gather and find refuge. It is able to provide protection year after year. It is able to reach out and cast a shadow over the entire world.



The message of salvation, the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ has caused the kingdom of God to grow. It continues to grow even though some of the branches are now missing and small twigs have fallen off. The kingdom of Christ continues to grow even though many have fallen away. It remains strong and sturdy.

We live in the kingdom of Christ. Here is where we find hope and peace. The world may falter and even fade away. But the Kingdom of Christ remains strong and will last forever. No disease, war, famine, natural disaster or Satan can overcome this Kingdom. It is ours forever.

So, stop and look at this mustard plant that has grown into a tree. Recall how small it was and how big it is now. Be at peace. The Kingdom of Christ is large enough to give refuge to all.

T AMEN T

*Reproducible Congregational Page*

**Among the Bible's Trees We Live**

James Pierce

O WALY WALY  
English

1 A - mong the Bi - ble's trees we live. How true they  
 2 When faith - ful lead - ers were ex - iled, Tak - en to  
 3 Re - bel - lious trees, we ought be hewn, But God a  
 4 Lord Je - sus Christ, God's on - ly Son, Whose bod - y

grow, as well they should. From them may we this Len - ten -  
 Bab - y - lon by force, The king en - throned in Is - ra -  
 new sprig plant - ed He, That 'neath its shel - t'ring branch - es  
 hung on Cal - v'ry's tree, O liv - ing Word, Your sac - ri -

tide Learn how our Lord died for our good.  
 el For - got the Lord with - out re - morse.  
 we Might know His grace, from sins set free.  
 fice Par - don pro - claims e - ter - nal - ly.

**Series**  
**Hymn**  
*Among  
the  
Bible's  
Trees*

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**Offering**

*Psalm 96:8-9*

P Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name;  
C **bring an offering, and come into His courts!**

P Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness;  
C **tremble before Him, all the earth!**

*(Offerings can be mailed to, dropped off and when we gather again at the church.)*

**Hymn** "Fruitful Trees, the Spirit's Sowing"

*LSB 691*



1 Fruit - ful trees, the Spir - it's sow - ing, May we rip - en  
2 Lad - en branch - es free - ly bear - ing Gifts the Giv - er  
3 Root - ed deep in Christ our Mas - ter, Christ our pat - tern  
4 Fruit - ful trees, the Spir - it's tend - ing, May we grow till



and in - crease, Fruit to life e - ter - nal grow - ing,  
loves to bless; Here is fruit that grows by shar - ing,  
and our goal, Teach us, as the years fly fast - er,  
har - vests cease; Till we taste, in life un - end - ing,



Rich in love and joy and peace.  
Pa - tience, kind - ness, gen - tle - ness.  
Good - ness, faith, and self - con - trol.  
Heav - en's love and joy and peace.

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**Prayer of the Church**

P Let us pray for the Church here and around the world, and for people everywhere in their various needs.

For everyone weighed down by their bondage to sin and an inability to stop sinning by thought, word, and deed, let us pray to the Lord.

C **For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, open their ears to hear the Gospel anew; free them to live before You in Your kingdom.**

P For everyone who has fallen prey to society's distorted morality, let us pray to the Lord.

C **For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, surround them with faithful and caring members of the Body of Christ; call them back in repentance and hope.**

P For those who keep the peace at home or are deployed abroad, for those who

provide care and guidance in relationships, finances, and health, and for those who respond to natural disasters and crises of various sorts, let us pray to the Lord.

**C For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, accompany them with Your Holy Spirit; protect them from harm, and give them wisdom in all circumstances.**

P For ourselves and the Church around the world as we seek to produce true spiritual fruit, let us pray to the Lord.

**C For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, assure us that we are Your pleasant planting; forgive our errors and send us to serve in faithfulness and love.**

P These and any other things You would have us ask, heavenly Father, grant to us for the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

**C 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.**

**Hymn** "Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle"

LSB 454



1 Sing, my tongue, the glo - rious bat - tle; Sing the end - ing  
2 Tell how, when at length the full - ness Of the ap - point - ed  
3 Thus, with thir - ty years ac - com - plished, He went forth from  
4 Faith - ful cross, true sign of tri - umph, Be for all the  
5 Un - to God be praise and glo - ry; To the Fa - ther



of the fray. Now a - bove the cross, the tro - phy,  
time was come, He, the Word, was born of wom - an,  
Naz - a - reth, Des - tined, ded - i - cat - ed, will - ing,  
no - blest tree; None in fo - liage, none in blos - som,  
and the Son, To the e - ter - nal Spir - it hon - or



Sound the loud tri - um - phant lay; Tell how Christ, the  
Left for us His Fa - ther's home, Blazed the path of  
Did His work, and met His death; Like a lamb He  
None in fruit thine e - qual be; Sym - bol of the  
Now and ev - er - more be done; Praise and glo - ry



world's re - deem - er, As a vic - tim won the day.  
true o - be - dience, Shone as light a - midst the gloom.  
hum - bly yield - ed On the cross His dy - ing breath.  
world's re - demp - tion, For the weight that hung on thee!  
in the high - est While the time - less a - ges run.

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**Collect for Sunday**

P Let us pray.

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.

C **Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience;**

P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

### Collect for Peace

- P Let us pray.  
O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments
- C **and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness;**
- P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C **Amen.**

### Benediction

- P The blessing of God Almighty—who created you, forgave all your sins, and strengthens you for service in His kingdom—be upon you now and forever.
- C **Amen.**

### Dismissal

- P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.
- C **Thanks be to God.**

### Hymn: “O Blessed Spring”

LSB 595

1 O bless-ed spring, where Word and sign Em - brace us  
2 Through sum-mer heat of youth-ful years, Un - cer - tain  
3 When au-tumn cools and youth is cold, When limbs their  
4 As win - ter comes, as win - ters must, We breathe our  
5 Christ, ho - ly Vine, Christ, liv - ing Tree, Be praised for

in - to Christ the Vine: Here Christ en - joins each one to  
faith, re - bel - lious tears, Sus - tained by Christ's in - fus - ing  
heav - y har - vest hold, Then through us, warm, the Christ will  
last, re - turn to dust; Still held in Christ, our souls take  
this blest mys - ter - y: That Word and wa - ter thus re -

be A branch of this life - giv - ing Tree.  
rain, The boughs will shout for joy a - gain.  
move With gifts of beau - ty, wis - dom, love.  
wing And trust the prom - ise of the spring.  
vive And join us to Your Tree of Life.

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