



March 22, 2023

LAKE OCONEE LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

*God writes His Word on our Lives, building us into a Family engaged
in Spirit-filled Service.*



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MERCY IN RELATIONSHIPS

In this service for Lent in our In View of God's Mercy series, we look at our lives through the lens of God's love toward us in the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus. In this service, we will come to understand that within the communities God has placed us, we are given the grace to treat one another as Christ has cared for us in his love and mercy.

Opening Sentences

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

People: We are united in Christ.

Pastor: Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

People: We are united in Christ.

Pastor: Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

People: We are united in Christ.

Pastor: Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

People: We are united in Christ.

Pastor: It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron.

People: We are united in Christ.

Pastor: It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.

People: We are united in Christ.

Pastor: For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life
forevermore.

People: Amen.

Hymn

“Jesus, Refuge of the Weary” Hymn 423



1 Je - sus, ref - uge of the wea - ry, Blest Re - deem - er,
2 Do we pass that cross un - heed - ing, Breath - ing no re -
3 Je - sus, may our hearts be burn - ing With more fer - vent



whom we love, Foun - tain in life's des - ert drea - ry, Sav - ior
pen - tant vow, Though we see You wound - ed, bleed - ing, See Your
love for You; May our eyes be ev - er turn - ing To be -



from the world a - bove: Of - ten have Your eyes, of - fend - ed,
thorn - en - cir - cled brow? Yet Your sin - less death has brought us
hold Your cross a - new Till in glo - ry, part - ed nev - er



Gazed up - on the sin - ner's fall; Yet up - on the
Life e - ter - nal, peace, and rest; On - ly what Your
From the bless - ed Sav - ior's side, Grav - en in our



cross ex - tend - ed, You have borne the pain of all.
grace has taught us Calms the sin - ner's deep dis - tress.
hearts for - ev - er, Dwell the cross, the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: Girolamo Savonarola, 1452-98; tr. Jane F. Wilde, 1826-96, alt.
Tune: Erbaulicher Musicalischer Christen-Schatz, 1745, Basel
Text and tune: Public domain

Confession and Forgiveness

Pastor: “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander
be put away from you, along with all malice” (Ephesians 4:31).
We confess to God that we have often been bitter towards
others, expressed sinful anger to them, clamored against them

and have engaged in slander and malice. We have refused to forgive and have pursued revenge rather than reconciliation.

People: **Holy God, we confess that we have not loved others as you have loved us. We have sinned against them, and in so doing we have sinned against you. We have not kept our tongues from evil but have slandered others. We have not sought peace but have pursued sinful revenge. Forgive our transgressions. Bring reconciliation and restoration to our relationship with you and our relationships with others.**

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, God's mercy is greater.)

Pastor: Hear the good news! God's Word declares that "God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). In the mercy of Almighty God, his Son Jesus was given to die for you to remove the guilt of your sin. For Christ's sake God forgives you all your sins and gives you his righteousness, making you holy in his sight. His mercy endures forever because his love for you is steadfast.

People: **Amen.**

The Prayer of the Day

Pastor: Gracious Lord, as we continue our Lenten pilgrimage, we do so in view of your mercy. Although we have not loved one another as you command, you continue to show your mercy to us. In view of your mercy, transform us so that we view others as precious and love them as you have loved us. Strengthen us by the Holy Spirit so that we might live graciously toward our neighbors. We pray through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The First Reading

Genesis 45:1-15

Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, "Make everyone go out from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.' And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

The New Testament Reading

Ephesians 4:25-32

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

The Gospel Reading

John 13:34-35

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Hymn

"Son of God, Eternal Savior" Hymn 842



1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and
2 As You, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, So may we for
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and



truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us
oth - ers live. Free - ly have Your gifts been grant - ed;
Prince of Peace; Hush the storm of strife and pas - sion,
truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us



Hal - lows all our hu - man race, You our Head, who, throned in
Free - ly may Your ser - vants give. Yours the gold and Yours the
Bid its cru - el dis - cords cease. By Your pa - tient years of
Hal - lows all our hu - man race: By Your pray - ing, by Your



glo - ry, For Your own will ev - er plead: Fill us with Your
sil - ver, Yours the wealth of land and sea; We but stew - ards
toil - ing, By Your si - lent hours of pain, Quench our fe - vered
will - ing That Your peo - ple should be one, Grant, O grant our



love and pit - y, Heal our wrongs, and help our need.
of Your boun - ty Held in sol - emn trust will be.
thirst of plea - sure, Stem our self - ish greed of gain.
hope's fru - i - tion: Here on earth Your will be done.

Text: Somerset T. C. Lowry, 1855-1932, alt.
Tune: Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse . . . Contradanseu, c. 1710, Amsterdam
Text and tune: Public domain

The Message

The Prayers

Pastor: Almighty and merciful God, we approach your throne of grace today with broken relationships.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: When we have alienated ourselves from others due to falsehood, help us to speak the truth in love with our neighbor.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: When we have alienated ourselves from others due to bitterness and anger, renew a right spirit within us to work toward peace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: When we have alienated ourselves from others due to a refusal to forgive, soften our hearts so that we may forgive as you have forgiven us.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: We praise you that while we were yet sinners, you still loved us and sent Christ to die for us, reconciling us to you.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: In view of your mercy, lead us by your Spirit so that we will build one another up by extending your grace to others.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

People: Lord, grant me your grace both to will and to do what pleases you.

Pastor: All these things we pray in the name of Jesus, who reconciled us to You.

People: Amen.

The 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

The Blessing

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: May the merciful God, who is faithful to forgive the corruption
of your sin, empower you to give constructive words to others
and to forgive them as God has forgiven you, through Jesus
Christ to whom be the glory forever.

People: Amen.

Hymn

“On My Heart Imprint Your Image” (422)



On my heart im - print Your im - age, Bless - ed Je - sus, King of grace,



That life's rich-es, cares, and plea-sures Nev - er may Your work e-rase;



Let the clear in - scrip-tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me,



Is my life, my hope's foun - da - tion, And my glo - ry and sal - va - tion!

Text: Thomas Hansen Kingo, 1634–1703; tr. Peer O. Strømme, 1856–1921, alt.
Tune: Johann Balthasar König, 1691–1758

Text and tune: Public domain

Join us next week in our *In View of God's Mercy* series for Lent, as we look at our lives through the lens of God's love toward us in the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus. In this service, we recognize that we are called to serve in mercy the needs of those around us by Christ's example.

Lenten Wednesday Services for this year:

Wednesday, 3/29 Lunch at 12pm and Worship at 1 pm

Thursday, 4/6 Maundy Thursday Worship with Communion at 7pm

Friday, 4/7 Good Friday Worship at 7pm