



LENTEN SERVICE 4

March 18, 2026 – 10:30 AM & 6:30 PM

“Bow the Knee: Before Mercy”

Luke 18:9-14

Pastor Scott Gustafson will be sharing the message with us today. Pastor Jonathan Chapa is the Liturgist and Eileen Hass, organist.

As We Gather: Tonight, we come before God not with pride, but with humility, remembering the words of our Lord in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. God’s mercy is not earned by our works but

freely given to those who bow the knee in repentance. As we reflect on our need for His forgiveness, we gather to acknowledge that it is only through His mercy that we are justified and restored. This evening, we bow before the mercy of God, trusting in His compassion for our salvation.

THE INVOCATION

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

C **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

“*Savior, When in Dust to Thee*” LSB 419 – tune TLH 166

1. *Savior, when in dust to Thee
Low we bow the adoring knee;
When, repentant, to the skies
Scarce we lift our weeping eyes;
O, by all Thy pains and woe
Suffered once for us below,
Bending from Thy throne on high,
Hear our penitential cry!*
2. *By Thy helpless infant years,
By Thy life of want and tears,
By Thy days of deep distress
In the savage wilderness,
By the dread, mysterious hour
Of the insulting tempter’s pow’r,
Turn, O turn a fav’ring eye;
Hear our penitential cry!*
3. *By Thine hour of dire despair,
By Thine agony of prayer,
By the cross, the nail, the thorn,
Piercing spear, and torturing scorn,
By the gloom that veiled the skies
O’er the dreadful sacrifice,
Listen to our humble sigh;
Hear our penitential cry!*
4. *By Thy deep expiring groan,
By the sad sepulchral stone,
By the vault whose dark abode
Held in vain the rising God,
O, from earth to heav’n restored,
Mighty, reascended Lord,
Bending from Thy throne on high,
Hear our penitential cry!*

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OPENING SENTENCES

- P Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love.
C **Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.**
P The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the contrite in spirit.
C **We bow before His mercy and rejoice in His grace.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

- P Let us confess our sins before God, acknowledging our pride and self-righteousness.
C **Merciful God, we confess that we have trusted in ourselves and looked down on others. We have not relied on Your mercy, but have relied on our own works. Forgive us for Jesus' sake, and grant us hearts that bow humbly before Your mercy. Amen.**
P Almighty God in His mercy has sent His Son to die for you and forgive your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I announce His mercy to you: Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

COLLECT FOR MERCY

- P O Lord, You are gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. Give us humble hearts to bow before Your mercy, confessing our sins and trusting in Your forgiveness. Grant that we would walk in Your ways, reflecting Your compassion to the world, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C **Amen.**

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING

Psalm 51:1-12

51 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. ²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin! ³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. ⁵Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. ⁶Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. ⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. ⁹Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit.

- A O Lord, have mercy on us.
C **Thanks be to God.**

(10:30 AM) SPECIAL MUSIC by the TLS Middle School Choir

(6:30 PM) SPECIAL MUSIC *“Were You There?”* by the Trinity Youth Bell Group

THE EPISTLE READING

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

⁷ So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

A O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 18:9-14

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the eighteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Just As I Am, Without One Plea”

LSB 570

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|---|---|
| 1. <i>Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.</i> | <i>O Lamb of God, I come, I come.</i> |
| 2. <i>Just as I am and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,</i> | 3. <i>Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.</i> |
| | 4. <i>Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,</i> |

*Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

5. *Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

6. *Just as I am; Thy love unknown
Has broken ev'ry barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

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THE SERMON: “Bow the Knee: Before Mercy”

APOSTLES' CREED

- C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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.**

LUTHER'S PRAYER

(10:30 MORNING:)

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

(6:30 EVENING)

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your

hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

ATTENDANCE / CONNECT TIME & OFFERING

During this time, please sign the attendance book found in the pew or use your mobile device to fill out the Connect Card or submit prayer requests on our app or online at www.trinitymerrill.com/live. You can also visit our app or www.trinitymerrill.com/give to learn more about other ways to support the ministries at Trinity. (When filling out the attendance book – please list the names of all in attendance in your family)

THE BENEDICTION

- P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
- C **Amen.**

THE CLOSING HYMN

“Now the Light Has Gone Away”

LSB 887

1. *Now the light has gone away;
Father, listen while I pray,
Asking Thee to watch and keep
And to send me quiet sleep.*
2. *Jesus, Savior, wash away
All that has been wrong today;
Help me ev'ry day to be
Good and gentle, more like Thee.*
3. *Let my near and dear ones be
Always near and dear to Thee;
O bring me and all I love
To Thy happy home above.*
4. *Now my evening praise I give;
Thou didst die that I might live.
All my blessings come from Thee;
Oh, how good Thou art to me!*
5. *Thou, my best and kindest Friend,
Thou wilt love me to the end.
Let me love Thee more and more,
Always better than before.*

Text: Public domain

Mark Your Calendars - BOW THE KNEE, a dramatic musical for Easter will be presented here at Trinity Merrill on Saturday, March 21st at 7 pm and Sunday, March 22nd at 2:30pm. Plan to come see and hear what it must have been like to be in Jerusalem with Jesus during his life, death, and resurrection. Everyone is welcome!

Secret Prayer Support - It's soon Easter Reveal Time! It's hard to believe that April is here already; this year we get to celebrate Christ's resurrection on April 5! All of you who signed up for our Secret Prayer Support Program, please remember that Easter time is when you send a signed card to the person you have been praying for throughout Lent, revealing your identity. This is very important as people really want to know who gave of their time to pray for them. So, pick up a card, or make your own, but do get it in the mail at Easter Time! Thank you to each person who signed up to give this gift of prayer to another worshipper here at Trinity. May the Lord continue to bless you as you walk with Him!

Lenten Meals at Trinity - During the season of Lent, Trinity is once again gathering around the table for fellowship and nourishment as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

Lenten Lunches are served each Wednesday during Lent at 11:30 AM. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a simple meal and meaningful conversation with fellow members.

Lenten Dinners are served each Wednesday during Lent. Dinner will be served from 5:00 PM until just before the 6:30 PM worship service, providing a convenient and welcoming time to gather before evening worship. Contact the office if you would like to help or donate bars.

NO 6:00 PM Church Service on March 15 or March 22. Our Church is hosting the Bow the Knee Musical and will need March 15 for rehearsal and to set up the stage and props. The Musical itself will be held on March 21st at 7:00 PM and March 22nd at 2:30. This is an event you need to attend. It is a beautiful reenactment of Jesus' journey to the cross and resurrection. Bring your family and friends.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We are looking for assistance with the last Lenten Supper of the season on March 25th (5:00-6:30). We are asking for individuals or families to volunteer to help set up and help clean-up for this last final meal before Holy Week. We are also in need of bars so we can have dessert for this wonderful soup meal of Chicken Noodle Soup, Tomato Soup and grilled cheese sandwiches. Your help would be appreciated. Call the church office if you can assist in any way.

Maundy Thursday (April 2)

- Services are 1:00 PM & 6:30 PM w/ Holy Communion.
- The 1:00 PM service can be heard on the 730 AM and 96.3 FM dial on your radio at 6:00 PM.
- 8:00 PM Service will be First Communion for our Confirmands.

Good Friday (April 3)

- Services are 1:00 PM & 6:30 PM.
- The 1:00 PM service can be heard on the 730 AM and 96.3 FM dial on your radio at 6:00 PM.

Easter Sunday (April 5)

- Services are 6:00, 7:30, 9:00 AM (Traditional)
10:30 AM (Contemporary)
- All with Holy Communion
- The 6:00 AM service can be heard live on 730 AM and 96.3 FM dial on your radio and the 9:00 service will be broadcast at 10:30 AM.

EASTER BREAKFAST - Enjoy Easter Breakfast at Trinity Church on Easter morning. Breakfast will be served from 7:00 - 10:30 and will include pancakes (regular, banana, chocolate chip, & blueberry) pure maple syrup, scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon and some delicious sweets. Join us on Easter morning and bring the family!

