



**March 1, 2023
6:30 p.m.
Vespers Lenten Service**

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, ELCA

Reverend Maggie Westaby

5304 N 44th Ave

Wausau, Wisconsin 54401

Web Address: stjohnwausau.org

E-mail: pastor.maggie.westaby@gmail.com

Email: stjohnwausau@msn.com

Office: (715) 675-6950

Wednesday, March 1st 2023

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WELCOME

Blessed be the Holy Trinity † one God, who journeys with us these forty days, and sustains us with the gift of grace.

Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Behold, unveiled the vesper skies: the evening has begun.

Let prayer and praise like incense rise as sets the golden sun.

How blest are you, all loving God, who weaves both day and night.

A starry mantle for our road, the shadow and the light.

Stay with us, Christ, our rest prepare as labor ebbs with night.

And holy dreams woven with prayer till dawns the splendid light.

PRAYER

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.

OPENING HYMN

God, Who Made the Earth and Heaven

1 God, who made the earth and heav-en, dark - ness and light:
 2 And when morn a - gain shall call us to run life's way,
 3 Guard us wak - ing, guard us sleep-ing, and, when we die,
 4 Ho - ly Fa - ther, throned in heav-en, all - ho - ly Son,

you the day for work have giv - en, for rest the night.
 may we still, what - e'er be - fall us, your will o - bey,
 may we in your might - y keep - ing all peace - ful lie.
 Ho - ly Spir - it, free - ly giv - en, blest Three in One:

May your an - gel guards de - fend us, slum-ber sweet your mer - cy send us,
 From the pow'r of e - vil hide us, in the nar - row path - way guide us,
 When the last dread call shall wake us, then, O Lord, do not for - sake us,
 grant us grace, we now im - plore you, till we lay our crowns be - fore you

ho - ly dreams and hopes at - tend us all through the night.
 nev - er be your smile de - nied us all through the day.
 but to reign in glo - ry take us with you on high.
 and in wor - thier strains a - dore you while a - ges run.

Text: Reginald Heber, 1783–1826, st. 1, alt.; William Mercer, 1811–1873, sts. 2, 4, alt.; Richard Whately, 1787–1863, st. 3, alt.
 Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872–1958
 Outside USA: Arr. from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906.

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BLESSING IN THE TURNING *By Jan Richardson*

May you know
the slow mystery
in which mourning
becomes a dance,
turning you toward
the gladness
that wants to meet you
in your grief.

May comfort
come to enfold you,
not to take away
all sorrow
but to infuse it
with tenderness,
with rest,
with every grace
it has.

May you give yourself
to the rhythms
of joy,
even when your steps
are stumbling,
even when you are
most fragile
and faltering.

May you know
the dancing that comes
in the dying,
moving you in time with
the heart that
has held you
always,
even when you
could not hear
its beating,
even when you
could not bear
its love.

READING: Exodus 16:1a-5

16 The whole congregation of the Israelites set out from Elim and came to the wilderness of Sin. ²The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of God in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and ate our fill of bread, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” ⁴Then God said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Day by Day

1 Day by day, your mer-cies, Lord, at - tend me, bring - ing com - fort
 2 Day by day, I know you will pro - vide me strength to serve and
 3 Oh, what joy to know that you are near me when my bur - dens

to my anx-i-ous soul. Day by day, the bless-ings, Lord, you send me
 wis - dom to o - bey; I will seek your lov - ing will to guide me
 grow too great to bear; oh, what joy to know that you will hear me

draw me near - er to my heav'n-ly goal. Love di - vine, be - yond all
 o'er the paths I strug-gle day by day, I will fear no e - vil
 when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer, Day by day, no mat - ter

mor - tal mea - sure, brings to naught the bur-dens of my quest; Sav-ior,
 of the mor - row, I will trust in your en - dur - ing grace, Sav-ior,
 what be - tide me, you will hold me ev - er in your hand. Sav-ior,

lead me to the home I trea - sure, where at last I'll find e - ter - nal rest,
 help me bear life's pain and sor - row till in glo - ry I be - hold your face,
 with your pres - ence here to guide me, I will reach at last the prom - ised land.

Text: Carolina Sundell Berg, 1852-1903; or Robert Leaf, 1916-2005
 Music: BELOTT EN DAG, Oskar Ahnfelt, 1813-1882
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OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God,

Our treasures come only from you. It is only through your goodness, that we have received so much. We came into this life with nothing, and we leave the same way. Guide us, and inspire us, to share ourselves and the resources we have. May these offerings be used for the goodness of your creation.

Amen.

Watch, O Lord

Refrain – All

Watch, O Lord, with all those a - wake this night,
 watch, O Lord, with all those who weep; give your
 an - gels and saints charge o - ver all who sleep.

Leader *All*

1 Tend your ail - ing ones:
 2 Soothe your suf - f'ring ones: in your love, Lord.
 3 Hold your griev - ing ones:
 4 Guard your lit - tle ones:

Leader *All*

Rest your wea - ry ones:
 Heal af - flict - ed ones: in your love, Lord.
 Raise your fall - en ones:
 Guide your search - ing ones:

Leader *All* *Refrain*

Bless your dy - ing ones:
 Shield your joy - ous ones: in your love, O Lord of all.
 Mend your bro - ken ones:
 Grant us all your peace:

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950, based on a prayer attributed to Augustine

Music: WATCH, O LORD, Marty Haugen

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LORD'S PRAYER

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May God, the giver of love, provide you with strength.

May Christ, the resurrection and the life, provide you with hope.

May the Holy Spirit, the source of rebirth, provide you with renewal.

And may the Three In † One, bless you in this Lenten journey.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

What a Friend We Have in Jesus



1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged— take it to the Lord in prayer.
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge— take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—
Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - rows share?
Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!
Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness— take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve in love.

Thanks be to God.

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