

*The LORD is*  
**GRACIOUS**  
*and*  
**COMPASSIONATE**



*Lent Retreat Guide*



CHURCH OF THE  
SAVIOR

## MORNING PRAYER

Rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil. *Joel 2:13*

### CONFESSION OF SIN

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Leader: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All: Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Leader: Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

### OPENING SENTENCE

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Leader: Lord, open our lips.

All: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Leader: The Lord is full of compassion and mercy:

All: Come, let us adore him.

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;  
serve the Lord with gladness  
and come before his presence with a song.  
Know this: The Lord himself is God;  
he himself has made us, and we are his;  
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving;  
go into his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.  
For the Lord is good;  
his mercy is everlasting;  
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

## PSALM 32

- <sup>1</sup> Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, \*  
and whose sin is put away!
- <sup>2</sup> Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, \*  
and in whose spirit there is no guile!
- <sup>3</sup> While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, \*  
because of my groaning all day long.
- <sup>4</sup> For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; \*  
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.
- <sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you, \*  
and did not conceal my guilt.
- <sup>6</sup> I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." \*  
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.
- <sup>7</sup> Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of  
trouble; \*  
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.
- <sup>8</sup> You are my hiding-place;  
you preserve me from trouble; \*  
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

<sup>9</sup> “I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; \*  
I will guide you with my eye.

<sup>10</sup> Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; \*  
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,  
or else they will not stay near you.”

<sup>11</sup> Great are the tribulations of the wicked; \*  
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; \*  
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.  
Amen.

## CANTICLE 10

## ISAIAH 55:6-11

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Seek the Lord while he wills to be found; \*  
call upon him when he draws near.  
Let the wicked forsake their ways \*  
and the evil ones their thoughts;  
And let them turn to the Lord, and he will have compassion, \*  
and to our God, for he will richly pardon.  
For my thoughts are not your thoughts, \*  
nor your ways my ways, says the Lord.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth, \*  
so are my ways higher than your ways,  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.  
For as rain and snow fall from the heavens \*  
and return not again, but water the earth,  
Bringing forth life and giving growth, \*  
seed for sowing and bread for eating,  
So is my word that goes forth from my mouth; \*  
it will not return to me empty;  
But it will accomplish that which I have purposed, \*  
and prosper in that for which I sent it.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

<sup>43</sup> The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.”

<sup>44</sup> Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. <sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

<sup>46</sup> “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.

“Come and see,” said Philip.

<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”

<sup>48</sup> “How do you know me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

<sup>49</sup> Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.”

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” <sup>51</sup> He then added, “Very truly I tell you, you will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man.”

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

## COLLECT

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O God, by your Word you marvelously carry out the work of reconciliation: Grant that in our Lenten fast we may be devoted to you with all our hearts, and united with one another in prayer and holy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## GENERAL THANKSGIVING

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Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

## GRACE

## ROMANS 15:13

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May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

## ENTERING THE SILENCE

### COLLECT FOR THE GOOD USE OF LEISURE

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O God, in the course of this busy life, give us times of refreshment and peace; and grant that we may so use our leisure to rebuild our bodies and renew our minds, that our spirits may be opened to the goodness of your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### QUIETING OUR HEARTS

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The next few hours have been set aside for you as a gift from the Lord and an opportunity for your soul to meet with God. At the beginning of today's retreat, you may want to start with a simple quieting practice. Although many of us long for moments of silence and stillness, once we have the space, it takes some time and intentionality to enter into it. Here are some simple suggestions to begin:

- Find a place to sit where you can be alert and comfortable. Or, if moving your body helps silence your heart and mind, find a place to walk that will be mostly uninterrupted.
- Light a candle to remind you of the presence of God in this place.
- Set a small, reasonable goal for an amount of time to be completely silent, refraining even from reading, writing or other quiet activities. Perhaps start with 5-10 minutes of silence.
- Take some deep breaths, noticing tension or anxiety in your mind and body.
- Ask God to give you a brief prayer or phrase to express your intention, desire or need for this time. It can be as simple as "Help, Lord," or "Peace," or "Here I am."
- Allow the silence to fill your mind and body as you focus on God's nearness. Allow yourself to let go of whatever else comes to mind, perhaps using your brief prayer phrase to bring your attention back.

## **FIRST HOUR: 9:30 - 10:30**

### *Where do I need God's Grace and Compassion?*

This is the first question I invite you to consider: where do you most need or desire to experience the grace and compassion of God? Grounding ourselves in God's love, compassion, and grace lays a solid foundation for our Lenten journey.

### **HANDS DOWN / HANDS UP PRAYER**

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Bring to mind the things that you need to let go of today, large or small.

Turn your hands down to indicate letting these things go.

Turn your hands up and ask to receive from God during your time in silence today.

Repeat this process of releasing and receiving as God draws your attention to areas where you can let go or open yourself to receive.



Read the passage and imagine the scene as Jesus looks over the crowd and recognizes their hunger. Imagine what happens as Jesus asks the disciples to distribute their small amount of food to the crowd.

<sup>29</sup> Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down. <sup>30</sup> Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. <sup>31</sup> The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

<sup>32</sup> Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way.”

<sup>33</sup> His disciples answered, “Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?”

<sup>34</sup> “How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked.

“Seven,” they replied, “and a few small fish.”

<sup>35</sup> He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. <sup>36</sup> Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. <sup>37</sup> They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. <sup>38</sup> The number of those who ate was four thousand men, besides women and children. <sup>39</sup> After Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan.

Imagine yourself in this scene as vividly as you can: what do you see? Do you feel hot, tired, hungry? What emotions do you experience?

As you imagine yourself in this scene, how do you experience Jesus’ compassion for you?

As you pray through this passage, where in your own life do you sense an invitation to receive God’s grace and compassion?

## **REST: 10:30 - 11:00**

*Take these thirty minutes to rest: you might take a nap, eat a snack, take a walk or do an activity that brings you joy. Receive the gift of this time.*

*If you would like to listen to music during this time, here are three suggested musical version of Psalm 103, which contains Savior's Lenten theme:*

- ["The Lord is Gracious and Compassionate"](#) (Vineyard)
- ["The Lord is Gracious"](#) (Taize)
- ["Psalm 103"](#) (Psalm Project Africa)

## SECOND HOUR: 11:00 - 12:00

### *What is God's Invitation to Me During Lent?*

During the Anglican liturgy for the Ash Wednesday service, the celebrant uses these words to invite us into the season of Lent:

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

As you listen to God's invitation to you this Lenten season, keep these different ways to observe Lent in mind.

### LECTIO DIVINA

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Read the passages on the next two pages slowly and meditatively. You may find it helpful to follow the traditional steps of lectio divina:

1. **Silencio:** quiet your mind and heart and enter into God's presence.
2. **Lectio:** read the passage slowly, paying attention to the words or images that capture your mind. Hear what God is saying to you.
3. **Meditatio:** read the passage again, listening to God's invitation to you and pondering the words in your heart.
4. **Oratio:** respond to God, talking to God about the thoughts and feelings that have arisen in your reading.
5. **Contemplatio:** wait in the presence of God, allowing the words of the scripture to sink into your soul.

## Isaiah 58

- <sup>1</sup> “Shout it aloud, do not hold back.  
Raise your voice like a trumpet.  
Declare to my people their rebellion  
and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.
- <sup>2</sup> For day after day they seek me out;  
they seem eager to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that does what is right  
and has not forsaken the commands of its God.  
They ask me for just decisions  
and seem eager for God to come near them.
- <sup>3</sup> ‘Why have we fasted,’ they say,  
‘and you have not seen it?’  
Why have we humbled ourselves,  
and you have not noticed?’
- “Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please  
and exploit all your workers.
- <sup>4</sup> Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife,  
and in striking each other with wicked fists.  
You cannot fast as you do today  
and expect your voice to be heard on high.
- <sup>5</sup> Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,  
only a day for people to humble themselves?  
Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed  
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?  
Is that what you call a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?
- <sup>6</sup> “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:  
to loose the chains of injustice  
and untie the cords of the yoke,  
to set the oppressed free  
and break every yoke?
- <sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your food with the hungry  
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—  
when you see the naked, to clothe them,  
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?
- <sup>8</sup> Then your light will break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing will quickly appear;  
then your righteousness will go before you,  
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

<sup>9</sup> Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;  
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

“If you do away with the yoke of oppression,  
with the pointing finger and malicious talk,  
<sup>10</sup> and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,  
then your light will rise in the darkness,  
and your night will become like the noonday.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord will guide you always;  
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land  
and will strengthen your frame.

You will be like a well-watered garden,  
like a spring whose waters never fail.

<sup>12</sup> Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins  
and will raise up the age-old foundations;  
you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls,  
Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

<sup>13</sup> “If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath  
and from doing as you please on my holy day,  
if you call the Sabbath a delight  
and the Lord’s holy day honorable,  
and if you honor it by not going your own way  
and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,  
<sup>14</sup> then you will find your joy in the Lord,  
and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land  
and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.”

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

### Hebrews 10:19-23

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

## PRAYER FOR DISCERNMENT

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As you consider what God is inviting you into during Lent, these questions may be helpful:<sup>1</sup>

- For what am I longing?
- What themes keep recurring in my life?
- Where am I struggling?
- What is most life-giving to me? What is least life-giving?

Pray in the confidence that God, with abundant grace and compassion, is inviting you deeper into life with Christ. Perhaps that will require self-examination, repentance, or fasting; perhaps it contains an invitation to dive into God's word or prayer. Whatever the specific invitation for you this Lent, these disciplines or practices are gifts to draw you into God's grace and spur you on to love God and love your neighbor.

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<sup>1</sup> Questions taken from Adele Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), p. 112.

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## MIDDAY PRAYER

### OPENING SENTENCES

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Leader: O God, make speed to save us.

All: O Lord, make haste to help us.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

### PSALM 126

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<sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the hills; \*  
from where is my help to come?

<sup>2</sup> My help comes from the LORD, \*  
the maker of heaven and earth.

<sup>3</sup> He will not let your foot be moved \*  
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

<sup>4</sup> Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel \*  
shall neither slumber nor sleep;

<sup>5</sup> The LORD himself watches over you; \*  
the LORD is your shade at your right hand,

<sup>6</sup> So that the sun shall not strike you by day, \*  
nor the moon by night.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; \*  
it is he who shall keep you safe.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in, \*  
from this time forth for evermore.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Leader: The love of God has been poured into our hearts through  
the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. *Romans 5:5*  
All: Thanks be to God.

## PRAYER

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Leader: Lord, have mercy.  
All: Christ, have mercy.  
Leader: Lord, have mercy.

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

## CLOSING COLLECT

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Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly city, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever.  
*Amen.*

## GRACE

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Leader: Let us bless the Lord.  
People: Thanks be to God.