**SALT Parish**

**Wednesday, March 15, 2023**

**First Lutheran Church, Meadowlands**

***“Open My Ears, Lord”***

**Opening Dialog**

P: As children, we hear:

***C:* Don't touch! Slow down!**

P: As teenagers, we hear:

***C: Your curfew begins in an hour.***

P: As adults, we hear:

***C: Cash or credit?***

P: In the water and the word, we hear:

***C: You are loved, my precious child.***

**Gathering Song *“Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty”*** Hymn #533

Vs. 1 Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there,  
 where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer.  
 Oh, how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light, and grace!

Vs. 2 Gracious God, I come before thee; come thou also unto me;  
 where we find thee and adore thee, there a heav'n on earth must be.  
 To my heart, oh, enter thou, let it be thy temple now!

Vs. 3 Here thy praise is gladly chanted, here thy seed is duly sown;  
 let my soul, where it is planted, bring forth precious sheaves alone,  
 so that all I hear may be fruitful unto life in me.

Vs. 4 Thou my faith increase and quicken, let me keep thy gift divine;  
 howsoe'er temptations thicken, may thy word still o'er me shine  
 as my guiding star through life, as my comfort in all strife.

Vs. 5 Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let thy will be done indeed;  
 may I undisturbed draw near thee while thou dost thy people feed.  
 Here of life the fountain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

**Greeting**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

***C: And also with you.***

**Prayer**

P: Open our ears, Lord, to heed your will for our lives. Help us not only to hear, but to listen and understand with our hearts. In Jesus' name we pray.

***C: Amen.***

**Lesson: Isaiah 50:4-5**

4 The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain  
the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. 5 The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backwards.

**Psalm 40:1-8**

1 I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.  
**2 He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.**3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear,  
and put their trust in the Lord.

**4 Happy are those who make the Lord their trust, who do not turn to the proud,  
to those who go astray after false gods.**5 You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts towards us; none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted.

**6 Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear.  
Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required.**7 Then I said, ‘Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.  
**8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.’**

**Lesson: Matthew 13:10-17**

10 Then the disciples came and asked him, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’ 11He answered, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 13The reason I speak to them in parables is that “seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.” 14With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:  
“You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive. 15 For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing,  
and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn— and I would heal them.”  
16But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. 17Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

**Message**

**Hymn of the Day *“Listen, God Is Calling”*** Hymn #513

***Refrain: Listen, listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,***

***offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy.***

Vs. 1 Jesus gave his mandate: share the good news

that he came to save us and set us free. ***Refrain***

Vs. 2 Let none be forgotten throughout the world.

In the triune name of God go and baptize.

***Refrain: Listen, listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,***

***offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy.***

Vs. 3 Help us to be faithful, standing steadfast,

walking in your precepts, led by your Word. ***Refrain***

***Refrain: Listen, listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,***

***offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy.***

**Prayers**

P: Lord of all life, when we cannot see the beauty of your creation,

***C: open our eyes, that all living things thrive and grow.***

P: When we neglect the poor, the sick, and the grieving,

***C: open our hands to do your work in the world.***

P: When we ignore the cries of injustice in our midst,

***C: open our ears, that all will know your love.***

P: When we are hardened against our neighbor,

***C: open our hearts and heal our resentment.***

P: When we are closed to the grace you long to give us,

***C: open our lives and turn us to follow in the way of the cross.***

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

***C: Amen.***

**Lord’s Prayer** ELW pg. 145

P: Let us pray as Jesus has taught us.

***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.***

**Peace** Page 143

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all.

***C: And also with you.***

**Offering *“We Give Thee but Thine Own” vs. 1*** *Hymn #686*

We give thee but thine own, what e’er the gift may be;

All that we have is thine alone a trust, O Lord from thee.

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray, Blessed are you, O God maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love; through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, or Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Blessing**

P: Go into the world with eyes open to the transforming light of Christ, hands open to serve those you meet, ears open to the call of the Spirit, hearts open to the bountiful love of God, and lives open to follow Christ to the cross. The God who opened for us the way of everlasting life + bless you now and forever. ***C: Amen.***

**Sending Hymn *“Now the Day is Over”***  vs. 1-4 ELW #570

Vs.1 Now the day is over; night is drawing nigh;  
 shadows of the evening steal across the sky.

Vs. 2 Jesus, give the weary calm and sweet repose;  
 with your tend'rest blessing may our eyelids close.

Vs. 3 Comfort ev'ry suff'rer watching late in pain;  
 those who plan some evil, from their sin restrain.

Vs. 4 Through the long night-watches may your angels spread  
 their bright wings above me, watching round my bed.

**Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

***C: Thanks be to God.***