

First Sunday in Lent

All In for Creation - Feb. 22, 2026; 9 a.m.



St John's
Lutheran Church

(An usher rings the church bell at 8:55 a.m.)

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

(Acolytes light the candles)

Linda Ranney

Invocation

We gather in the name of God, who created us,
who was born to be with us, + who guides us still.

Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

God knows our hearts, the guilt we carry, the heartache that keeps us awake,
the burdens we bear. God knows that “happy are they who are forgiven,”
and so, we confess in confidence of God’s forgiveness.

(A brief silence)

Good and gracious God,

We have sinned

**and fallen short of the good you desire for us
and for all creation.**

**We have seen the earth as resources to extract
and forgotten to marvel at its beauty.**

**We have doubted your ability to provide
and hoarded more than we need.**

**We have ignored the needs of the vulnerable,
and when you called us to follow you to greater wonders,
we remained where we were and clung to control.**

Forgive our sin and our selfishness.

**Draw us out of ourselves,
more deeply into your love,
and more fully into a world in need.**

God knows our sin before we do
 and meets every confession with abundant grace.
 In Christ we are alive and completely forgiven.
 God's goodness has the final word.
 May this gift renew our faith and lighten our load
 so we are prepared to care for the world God so loves.
Amen.

Kyrie

From *No Greater Love Mass* by Michael Joncas

(Cantors sing verses)

1 You were sent to heal the contrite. You came to call sinners. You plead
 for us at the right hand of the Father. *Kyrie eleison.*

Refrain: (All)

1. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
 2. Chri - ste e - le - i - son.
 3. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Ky - ri - e, Chri - ste, Ky - ri - e, Ky - ri - e,

Ky - ri - e - le - i - son.
 Chri - ste e - le - i - son.
 Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

2 You raise the dead to life in the Spirit. You bring pardon and peace to the
 sinner. You bring light to those in darkness. *Christe eleison. Refrain*

3 You reconcile us to God and one another. You heal the wounds of sin and
 division. You intercede for us with your Father. *Kyrie eleison. Refrain*

Apostolic Greeting

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

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Creator God, **you made a magnificent cosmos and crafted us human beings as part of it. Draw us into a fuller relationship with the water, air, creatures, and plants you made as our kindred. Where we have done harm, empower us to repair, that we live in harmony with one another, all creation, and you.**

Amen.

Reading: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7 (*please sit*)

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden’?” ² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Reading: Romans 5:12-19

¹² Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³ for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷ If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹ For just as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Time

Gospel Acclamation (*please stand*)

ELW Setting 3

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 4th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written,

‘One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’
and ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’ ”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’ ”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon (*please sit*)

“It’s not about the Fruit” Pastor Christine Emerson

Hymn of the Day (*please stand*)

ACS #922; *When We Are Tested* vs. 1, 2, 4

1 When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,

nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.

2 When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.

4 When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Savior, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the
third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right
hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I
believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life
everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Petition:
Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always!
And also with you.

Offering

(Ushers take up the collection)

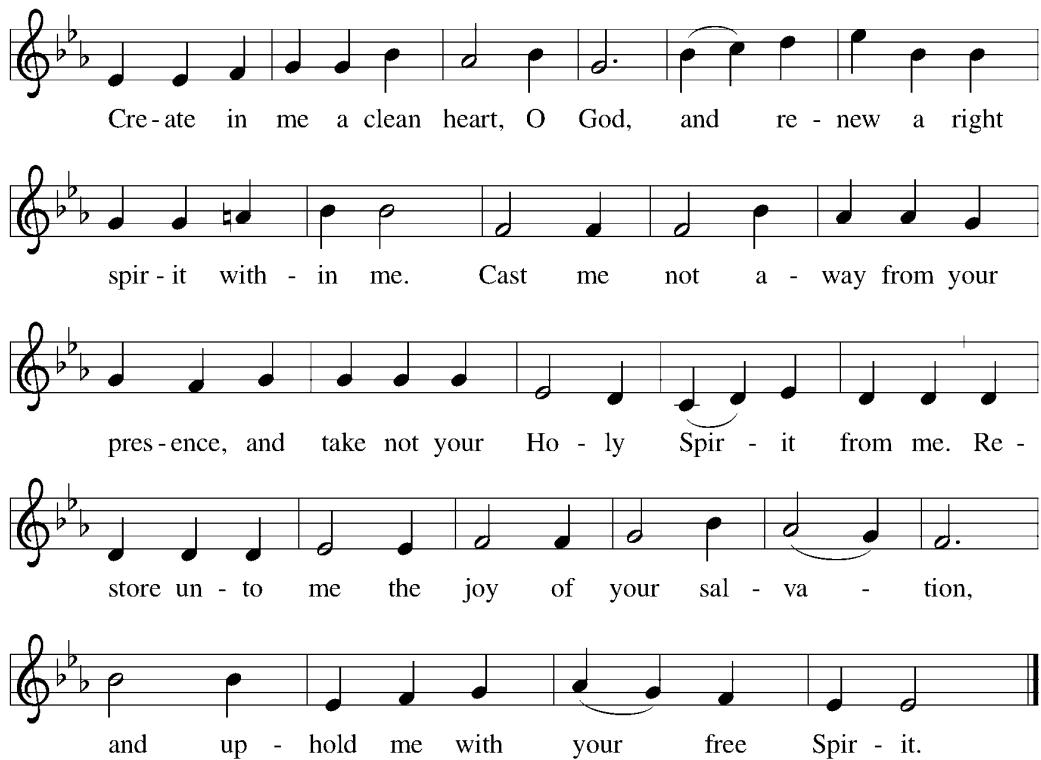
God of the Sparrow

text by Jaroslav J. Vajda, music by Carl Schalk, arr. Joel Martinson
St. John's Choir

Offertory (*please stand*)

(Ushers bring collection forward for acolytes to receive)

ELW #188; *Create in Me a Clean Heart*



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - - tion,
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Offertory Prayer

Let us pray. God who provides,
we return to you a portion of all that you have given us.
Bless and use these gifts,
our hands, our hearts, our ministry,
to care for the world you so love.
Now prepare us to receive you at this table
and in the world beyond our doors.
In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

Holy, Holy, Holy

ELW Setting 3

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -

san - na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

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 forever. Amen.

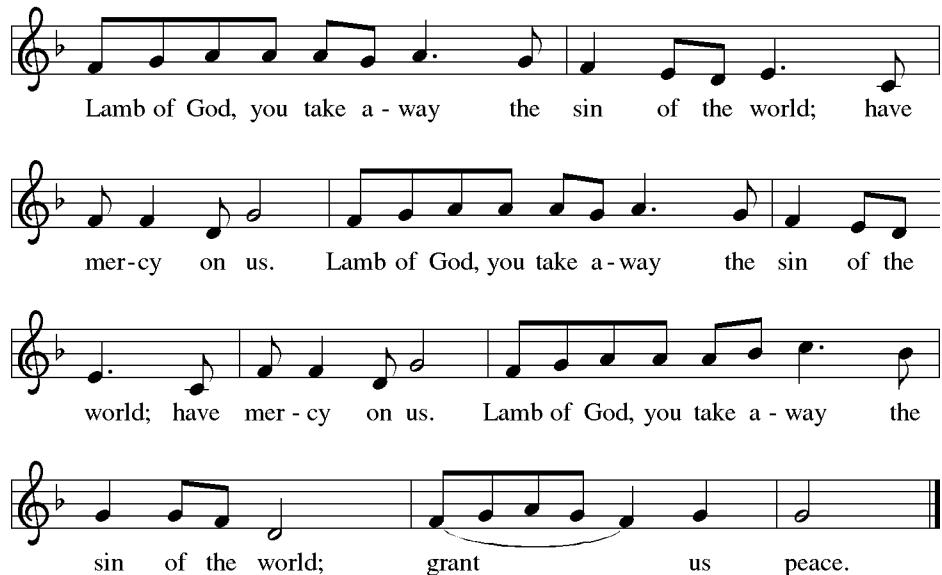
Invitation to the Table

(Acolytes prepare for communion distribution; ushers come forward to invite assembly by pew. Greeters will guide those wishing to receive at the altar: stop at credence table for a cup, then walk up side steps into the chancel)

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Come to the table; taste and see.

Lamb of God

ELW Setting 3



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Hymn

ELW #599; *Lord Jesus, Think On Me*

1 Lord Jesus, think on me,
 and purge away my sin;
 from selfish passions set me free
 and make me pure within.

2 Lord Jesus, think on me,

by anxious thoughts oppressed;
let me your loving servant be
and taste your promised rest.

- 3 Lord Jesus, think on me,
 nor let me go astray;
 through darkness and perplexity
 point out your chosen way.

- 4 Lord Jesus, think on me,
 that, when the flood is past,
 I may the eternal brightness see
 and share your joy at last.

Post-Communion Blessing & Prayer (*please stand*)

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Let us pray. God, **you have revealed yourself to us again in the holy mystery of bread and cup.**
Strengthen us by your presence,
draw us closer to one another as the Body of Christ,
and send us to reveal you in our all our words and ways.
Amen.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious unto you.
The Lord look upon you with favor
and + grant you peace.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

(Acolytes extinguish the candles)

ELW #808; *Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song* vs. 1, 2, 4

- 1 Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey;

I'll tell ev'rybody about you wherever I go:
you alone are our life and our peace and our love.
Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.

2 Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.
 May all of my joy be a faithful reflection of you.
 May the earth and the sea and the sky join my song.
 Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey.

4 I fear in the dark and the doubt of my journey;
 but courage will come with the sound of your steps by my side.
 And with all of the family you saved by your love,
 we'll sing to your dawn at the end of our journey.

Sending

Go in peace. Go all in for creation.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Linda Ranney

Altar Flowers

In Memory of Patricia Holstein by Gary Holstein

Chancel Flowers

In Honor of my daughter Kristen's birthday by Mary Haukeness-Mack

Serving at Worship Today

Presider	Pastor Christine Emerson
Assistant	--
Lector	Cora Klawiter
Acolytes	Sophie Ziegler, Wesley Ziegler
Ushers	Dave Benish, Dramus Peuse
Greeters	Sam Pederson, Lynn Yolitz
Communion Servers	Kathy Freitag, Penny Erickson, Cheryl Stage, Timothy Lincoln
Media & Streaming	Brett Issacson
Screen Operator	Scott Olsen

Musicians

Linda Ranney, piano/organ; Mark Lundin, Director of Music; St. John's Choir

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