

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 15, 2026; 9 a.m.



St John's
Lutheran Church

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

Welcome and Announcements

Temple Talk

Heather Day, Luther Park

Prelude

(Acolytes light the candles)

I Want Jesus to Walk With Me

African American Spiritual arr. Tammy Waldrop
JuBellation Handbell Choir

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



Ky - ri - e 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. Welcoming God, **there is no one whom you have rejected forever. There is nothing we can do to make you close the door to our relationship with you. You are always ready and waiting to befriend us again. In moments when we need it most, help us to notice your presence. Send us out with a keen sense of who the world has rejected, that we might be agents of friendship who welcome them in.**

Amen.

Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 *(please sit)*

¹ The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ² Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴ Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵ He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the LORD." ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." ¹¹ Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your

sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here.” ¹² He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him, for this is the one.” ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸ Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, ¹³ but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

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: John 9:1-41

The Holy Gospel according to John, the 9th Chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷ saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹ He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹² They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰ The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸ He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon *(please sit)*

"Was Blind but Now I See" Pastor Christine Emerson

Hymn of the Day *(please stand)*

ELW #793; *Be Thou My Vision* vs. 1, 2, 4

1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
thou my best thought both by day and by night,

waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

- 2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
- 4 Light of my soul, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

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)

Send Me Rains by Daniel Kantor
St. John's Choir; Eric Nielsen, soloist

(with assembly)

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.**

Offertory *(please stand)*

(Ushers bring collection forward for acolytes to receive)

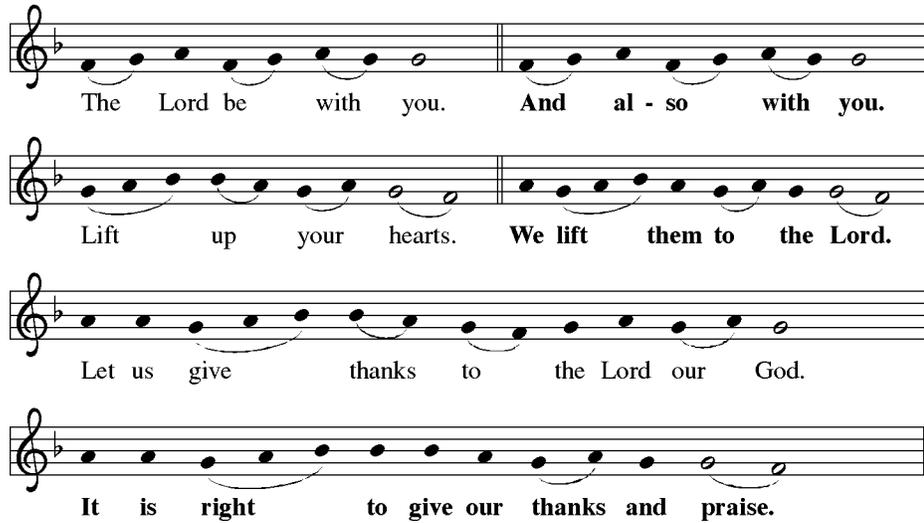
ELW #188; *Create in Me a Clean Heart*

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.

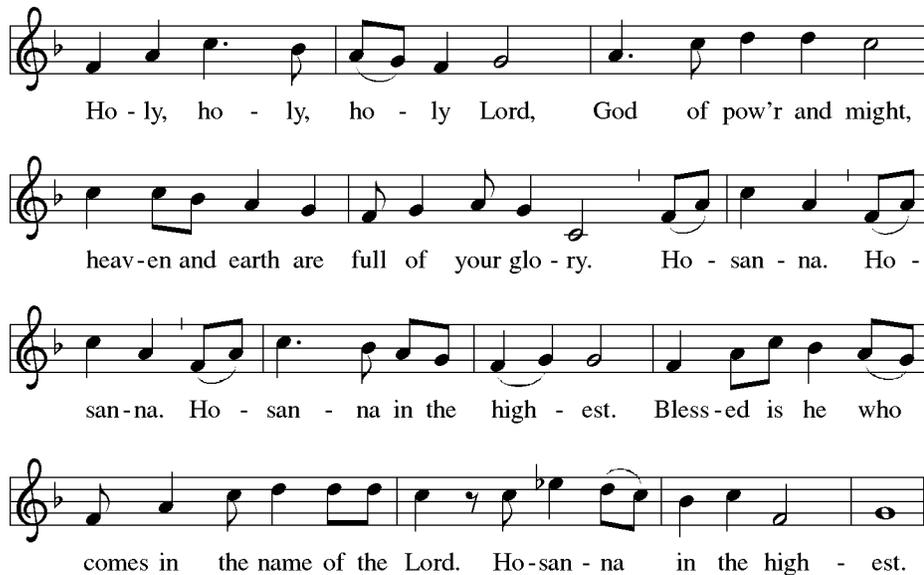
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

ACS #1014; *When We Must Bear Persistent Pain*

- 1 When we must bear persistent pain
and suffer with no cure in sight,
come, Holy Presence, breathe your peace
with gifts of warmth and healing light.
- 2 Support us as we learn new ways

to care for bodies newly frail.
Help us endure, and live and love.
Hear our complaint when patience fails.

3 We thank you for the better days
when we may smile to greet the sun,
to do your work with clearing mind,
and bless your name when day is done.

4 In ease or pain, in life and death,
to you our fragile lives belong,
and so we trust you in all things.
You are our hope, our health, our song.

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 #722; *O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate* vs. 1-3

- 1 O Christ, your heart, compassionate,
bore ev'ry human pain.
Its beating was the pulse of God;
its breadth, God's vast domain.
The heart of God, the heart of Christ
combined in perfect rhyme
to write God's love in human deeds,
eternity in time.

- 2 As once you welcomed those cast down
and healed the sick, the blind,
so may all bruised and broken lives
through us your help still find.
Lord, join our hearts with those who weep
that none may weep alone,
and help us bear another's pain
as though it were our own.

- 3 O Christ, create new hearts in us
that beat in time with yours,
that, joined by faith with your great heart,
become love's open doors.
We are your body, risen Christ;
our hearts, our hands we yield
that through our life and ministry
your love may be revealed.

Sending

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

Postlude

Linda Ranney

Altar Flowers

In Honor of My Grandchildren from Grandma Cloris

Chancel Flowers

In Memory of our Mothers' March Birthdays; Sharron Severson and Abigail Beguhn from Ed and Emily Severson.

Serving at Worship Today

Presider	Pastor Christine Emerson
Assistant	Kathy Freitag
Lector	Jim Boulter
Acolytes	Emory Hanson, Emerson Paplow
Ushers	Gary Kersten, Lynn Yolitz
Greeters	Larry Schaefer, Bryan Sedlander
Communion Servers	Cindy Komornick, Eric Nielsen, Patti Sontag, Mark Sontag
Media & Streaming	Scott Olsen
Screen Operator	Lois Mai
Musicians	Linda Ranney, piano/organ; Mark Lundin, Director of Music; St. John's Choir, JuBellation Handbell Choir; Paul Klomstad, guitar

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